

**Parish of Harpenden**  
**APCM**

Monday 24<sup>th</sup> May 2021

at

All Saints' Church at 8.00pm



**APCM Agenda**  
**Monday 24<sup>th</sup> May 2021**  
**All Saints Church, 7.45 for 8pm**

CONNECT, BELONG, SHARE, GROW

Our mission is to build connections, encourage belonging, and share an appealing faith that grows a vibrant Christian community at every stage of life.

We are an inclusive church, called to be caring, loving and welcoming to all.

**VOTE TO MEET BY ZOOM**

**8.00pm Meeting of Parishioners to elect Church Wardens**

**8.10pm Annual Parochial Church Meeting**

1 Apologies for Absence

2 Confirmation of the Minutes of APCM held on 5<sup>th</sup> October 2020

3 Election of Representatives to the PCC to fill the following vacancies:

All Saints 1 Vacancies

St Mary's 1 Vacancy

St Nicholas 7 Vacancies

To receive:

4 (a) Annual Finance Report

5 To receive reports on:

(a) The Deanery Synod

(b) Parochial Church Council

(c) Fabric, Goods and Ornaments

(d) Electoral Roll

(e) Safeguarding

(f) Link Magazine

6 Any other matter of parochial or general church interest:

(a) Reports from District Churches on highlights of 2020

(b) Rector's remarks

(c) Open discussion/questions on any other matter of parochial or general interest

**Notes:**

1 Nominations for Church Warden and PCC vacancies may be made on the evening



**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH OF HARPENDEN PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING**  
**held on MONDAY 5<sup>th</sup> October 2020 at 8pm at ALL SAINTS CHURCH and by Zoom**

Firstly, those present needed to agree for some parishioners to meet by zoom

No abstentions or against

**Churchwardens elected:**

1) Kevin Featherstone (St Mary's)

Proposed by Joyce Woodings

Seconded by Andrew Sykes

No abstentions or against

2) Tim Linacre (St Nicholas)

Proposed by Tim Hill

Seconded by Heather Richards

No abstentions or against

Chair: Rector

In attendance by Zoom:

Revd Sally Goodson, Revd James Hadley, Michelle McCulloch Julie Adridge, William Say, Liz Nichols, Jenny Clark, Agneta Burton, Katharine Pearse, Patricia Yates, Nina Featherstone, Ro Marriott, Rachael Threlfall, Sarah John, Helen and Peter Mellor, Maureen Randell, Marion Donaldson, Vicky Platt, Jackie Agg, Helen Champion, Christine Powell, Pauline Gilbert, David Williams, Fiona Marsh, Diana Hiorns, Christy Monson Sara Payne.

In person: Heather Richards, Philip Le Riche, Tony Gilbert, Peter Timms, Kevin Featherstone, Jean McIntosh, Judith Card, Elizabeth Card.

The meeting was opened with a reading and a prayer

**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from:

Ellen Hills

George Richards

Tamsen Wallis

Vicky Platt leaving at 8.30pm

**2. MINUTES OF APCM 29 APRIL 2019 AND MATTERS ARISING**

Matters arising - spelling correction Maureen Randell (not Randall)

No objections. Minutes accepted.

**3. ELECTION OF REPRESENTATIVES TO THE PCC TO FILL THE FOLLOWING VACANCIES:**

St Nicholas 1 vacancy



Heather Richards (2<sup>nd</sup> term) Proposed by Tim Halstead and seconded by Sue Hobley  
unanimously elected

St Mary's 1 vacancy  
William Say (2<sup>nd</sup> term) proposed by Kirsteen Say, and seconded by Sue Hill unanimously elected

All Saints 2 vacancies  
Tony Gilbert (1<sup>st</sup> term) Proposed by Judith Card & seconded by Roy Mutlow unanimously elected

1 remaining vacancy at All Saints

#### **4. ELECTION OF 4 REPRESENTATIVES TO DEANERY SYNOD**

Julie Aldridge proposed by Tony Gilbert and seconded by Peter Timms  
unanimously elected

Rosemary Farmer proposed by Timothy Linacre and seconded by Diana Davies unanimously elected

Richard Hurst proposed by Ian McNicoll and seconded by Jenny Evans  
unanimously elected

Agneta Burton proposed by Sheila Collingwood and seconded by Linzi James unanimously elected

#### **5. TO RECEIVE THE ANNUAL FINANCE REPORT.**

Peter Timms – Parish Treasurer

Peter expressed his gratitude to the 10 people on the finance team.

Comment on the finance report from Kevin Featherstone:

The Statement of Financial Activities shows that there was a deficit on unrestricted funds of £6,893. It is a very small deficit overall.

The £999 recorded as being spent on hymn books to Hymns Ancient and Modern Limited was the advert for an All Saints' priest and not for hymn books.

Rector expressed his thanks to Peter. The role of Parish Treasurer is a difficult role to fill. He has been a true manager and kept the leadership team up to speed. Peter has been an advocate when fighting on our behalf with the banks and the diocese. We are very grateful that he has steered us very well and left us in better nick. Peter has been well served by Caroline Martin and the Finance Committee.

Rector was very pleased to announce that Jackie Agg will take on the role of Parish Treasurer and will be elected at the next PCC meeting in November.

Accounts received unanimously

#### **6. TO RECEIVE REPORTS ON:**

- a) DEANERY SYNOD
- b) PARAOCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL
- c) FABRIC, GOODS AND ORNAMENTS
- d) ELECTORAL ROLL – 589

**e) SAFEGUARDING****f) LINK**

The reports were not read out. Parishioners had opportunity to read the reports ahead of the meeting. Reports received with 4 abstentions.

**7. ANY OTHER MATTER OF PAROCHIAL OF GENERAL CHURCH INTEREST:****a) Reports from District Churches on highlights of 2019****b) Rector's Remarks****c) Open Discussion/questions on any other matter of general interest**

a) The reports were not read out. Parishioners had opportunity to read the reports ahead of the meeting.

**b) RECTOR'S REMARKS**

Well as I said at our ADCM, 2019 seems a long time ago. And it was, over 9 months ago. Plus COVID-19 has so dominated 2020, it makes 2019 seem even a longer time ago.

2019 was a good year for the parish. It was for this parish a normal year in many ways. Our worship services continued to be well attended on the whole. We are served by a wonderful team of volunteers, Readers, Lay Leaders of Worship and musicians who kept our services at a high standard. Thank you to all for your amazing efforts in that regard.

Our finances were better, though we still struggle to meet all our yearly expenditure from yearly income, but we have healthy reserves and all in all, we are managing well with prudent people managing the finances.

Our Simply worship services grew in attendance. Some of our Sunday club attendance declined. But overall our work with families and children was good, even if it could be better. We planned to improve our work with a part-time families and young people's coordinator, but we have had to put that on hold in 2020 due to financial constraints.

All three district churches continued to be healthy in worship and in general community life with lots of vibrant activities, just read the annual reports for each church. All Saints went into vacancy in 2019 and it has lasted longer than we had anticipated. I want to thank the District Wardens and DCC and Ministry Team for their amazing efforts in keeping things going, not only well, but very well. Special thanks to Revd Paul Manuel for his help in supporting the mission and ministry of All Saints.

At a Parish level, Tea, Cake and Chat was a wonderful success and grew in 2019. Supply the local foodbanks continues due to an efficient parish team. Our Pastoral Care groups visit many of our parishioners. SAS, our youth group led by Pete Lovell, Sally Goodson, James Hadley and parent volunteers continued to be vibrant in 2019. We had a wonderful group of young people admitted to first communion.

Part of what made it a good year was being served by a good PCC. Thank you to all who serve on the PCC for the time and energy you give to help with church and district matters. Special thanks to Sara Payne our PCC Secretary who keeps us organised and serves us so effectively.

I want to thank Sally and James for their ministry and support. They are wonderful creative colleagues to work with.



There are so many to thank. If I haven't mentioned you, apologies. But I am very grateful for all the people who service in small and big ways.

As you can see, it was a good year. In many ways a normal year for this parish. Yes like any parish we had some challenges, but nothing significant in terms of being a major problem. We are blessed to have such a relatively even keel, that is not luck, but the result of many good people giving time, energy and talents to make it happen. I am so grateful.

I want to take this occasion to comment on 2020. First, we have faced a most significant crisis, the pandemic. I want to thank the parish for the way it has responded. Within a few weeks in March, we had a large team of volunteers in each church, telephoning and running errands for the elderly and vulnerable. This continues. Special thanks to the Parish Office, Sara and Pauline, for stepping up to help organise a lot of this. I want to take a moment to register my special thanks to Sara for her wonderful service as Parish Administrator as she moved on this past month to a new exciting and much better paying job for her and her family.

Back to this year, each church found techy people to help us get worship up and running online. Thank you to ALL who have helped to make that happen. It is now the main way we worship as a parish each week. In spite of huge challenges, we are maintaining church life. It is not the same and diminished in many ways. But it is happening and many people, including new people are being encouraged and sustained by it. We have been helped by very good management of our finances and by people's generous regular giving and very generous response to our special appeal. Hugh challenges remain and we will continue to do our very best with our resources to meet these challenges.

I want to say thank you to **Michelle McCulloch** for your years as Parish Warden. Because of my sabbatical last year she stayed longer; I think it is nearly five years as warden. Michelle is one of the most organised and efficient persons I have worked with. She is one of those can do persons. Give her a task and she not only does it, but does it extremely well. I can hardly think of an occasion when she was not calm, cool and collected. I have no idea what she is like at home after one of our meetings, but I am not going to ask Gordon cause I want to only remember how she was such a calming and wise and efficient support to me and to the parish. I have a small token of my and the parish's appreciation, not very creative, but in these COVID times necessary. Thank you so much Michelle.

I would also like to **Tony Gilbert** who has served I think four years as Parish Warden. I imagine many people underestimate Tony. He is not the type to blow his own horn or put himself forward in any sort of self-promoting way. However, underneath that somewhat quiet and gentlemanly exterior is a powerhouse of wisdom and thoughtfulness and efficiency. Over the years I keep being amazed at the things he thinks of that we hadn't, with the result we were saved from creating problems or overlooking important matters. He is always kind and encouraging. Similarly, never rattled. Doing his duties as warden with meticulous care and competence. I have a small token of my and the parish's appreciation, not very creative, but in these COVID times necessary. Thank you so much Tony.

c) Open Questions – no questions.

Tony Gilbert speaks on behalf of the wardens and parish expressing our thanks to Dennis and also to the rest of the clergy for leading us through these very difficult and challenging times.

The meeting closed at 21:30 with The Grace.

**PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF ST NICHOLAS, HARPENDEN**  
**REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 December 2020**

The trustees present their report and the financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2020.

The trustees who served during the year and up to the date of this report are

Clergy:

Revd Canon Dr Dennis Stamps (Incumbent),

Revd Sally Goodson,

Revd James Brown (from October 2020)

Elected members:

Jacqueline Agg (from 25 November 2020), Julie Aldridge, Agneta Burton, Judith Card, Rosemary Farmer, Kevin Featherstone (from 5 October 2020), Wendy Fulford, Tony Gilbert, Claire Glendinning, Ann Halstead (from 23 March 2021), David Howell, Richard Hurst, Sarah John, Tim Linacre (from 5 October 2020), Anne MacDougall, Michelle McCulloch (until 5 October 2020), Christie Monson, Linda Oakes, Loretta Ramswell (until 11 March 2020), Heather Richards, William Say, Peter Timms (until 5 October 2020), Tamsen Wallis, David Williams.

### **AIMS AND PURPOSES**

The Parochial Church Council of St Nicholas, Harpenden has complied with the duty in section 4 of the 2011 Charities Act to have due regard to guidance published by the Charity Commission (i.e. public benefit statement). Every PCC member is a trustee of The Parochial Church Council of St Nicholas, Harpenden.

The Parochial Church Council of St Nicholas, Harpenden (hereafter, 'Parish of Harpenden') is committed to encourage the work of God in mission and ministry in the Parish by sustaining the parish vision statement: **CONNECT, BELONG, SHARE, GROW** - Our mission is to build connections, encourage belonging, and share an appealing faith that grows a vibrant Christian community at every stage of life. In addition, we state that we are an inclusive church, called to be caring, loving and welcoming to all.

The Parish has the responsibility of cooperating with the incumbent, the Reverend Canon Dr Dennis Stamps, and the associate vicars, Reverend Sally Goodson and Reverend James Brown, to promote this vision and to promote the whole mission of the Church - pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical.

### **Objectives**

In order to achieve our aims and purposes, the PCC:

- Seeks to connect with the whole community by ensuring a pattern and variety of styles of worship services in all three churches that are open to everyone in the community.
- Seeks to connect with the wider community by encouraging each church to serve all ages in the community by offering select services through programmes and by making available the use of our facilities and resources.
- Seeks to encourage belonging by providing courses and classes in preparation for baptism and confirmation and providing social events and activities for all ages.
- Seeks to share an appealing faith by creating welcoming churches with quality worship services and a range of interesting courses and events to supplement.
- Seeks to grow a vibrant Christian community, by enabling a wide variety of volunteer roles that sustain the life and mission of the church and by offering personal and corporate opportunities for people to grow in faith and understanding.

- Seeks to support these objectives and church activities by maintaining the fabric of our three churches and their halls.

### **Achievements and performance**

2020 saw the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic and the associated restrictions imposed by the UK Government to safeguard public health. The Parish fully complied with these restrictions. The effect was to curtail many of our normal activities, while stimulating us to adjust so that we continued to fulfil our mission. During 2020, the Parish undertook a number of activities to help realise our mission and its aims and objectives. Across our three churches, our achievements and performance, in these respects, can be summarised as follows.

### ***Connecting with the whole community by ensuring a pattern and variety of styles of worship services in all three churches that are open to everyone in the community.***

At St. Nicholas Church, the normal pattern of services embraces a range of styles of worship, designed to have a wide appeal and to be inclusive as possible. This includes Holy Communion, Sung and Said Eucharist, Sung Evensong, morning and evening prayer, Morning Praise (lay-led Service of the Word with a sermon) and Simply Worship (simple informal service with a family focus). With the onset of the pandemic restrictions, clergy and volunteers made great efforts to ensure the Church was able to respond quickly to the challenges by offering a range of online services, from Sunday worship (including communion and Morning Praise formats) to morning and evening prayers, Advent lessons, Christmas carol services and Christingle.

All Saints' Church quickly moved to Zoom worship services within a month of the first lockdown. When allowed to do so, the Church opened for private prayer in the summer of 2020, on one morning a week. Once it became possible to do so, the worship service evolved into a mixed-mode format. In the second lockdown, it moved back to Zoom-only services, but with a difference as Christmas approached. Some more reflective services were included with a regular pattern of two worship services and two Holy Communion services per month. A series of Advent videos were produced and uploaded onto YouTube and a nativity video produced with the younger members of the Church. The many other activities planned for the Christmas period - including opening the Church for a Christmas experience and carol services were cancelled, but were replaced by other virtual events.

St. Mary's had four regular services of different styles, both before and during the pandemic restrictions. These typically comprised the Mid-week Holy Communion; Common Worship every Sunday (apart from the 1st Sunday when it is a Service of the Word); and Simply Worship once a month. These were publicised to the whole community via its website, Facebook, email and external noticeboards. The levels of participation became harder to record with the activities shifting to an online format, but numbers seemed stable throughout the year. The monthly Simply Worship services comprised pre-recorded sessions and two services in Church. The Bible Reading Notes group continued to meet monthly via Zoom.

### ***Connecting with the wider community by encouraging each church to serve all ages in the community by offering select services through programmes and by making available the use of our facilities and resources.***



The regular programme of St. Nicholas Church includes Sunday Clubs for children and Toddler Time, offering age-appropriate activities focused on building fellowship and an understanding of the Bible and our faith. From the first lockdown, St Nicholas encouraged families to participate in age appropriate Simply Worship services online. The breakout groups following online Sunday services and the weekly online coffee groups have provided the opportunity for all ages to connect and support one another. Church Watch volunteers enabled St Nicholas to stay open to the public when allowed, and a team of volunteers enabled access for private prayer. Regular collections for the foodbank provided the opportunity for anyone in the community to drop food and non-food items off which were then delivered to the two existing projects that we support: The Salvation Army in Harpenden and FEED, the food bank at the Vineyard Church in St Albans. Many community groups benefit from being able to use the church and hall, including St Nicholas Primary School, 21st Harpenden Brownies, 10th Harpenden Guides and Rangers and 12th Harpenden Scout Group, although many suspended indoor face to face activities in 2020.

All Saints' Church hall is normally almost fully booked throughout the year. In 2020, the restrictions altered this pattern. Two early groups to resume their activities were the nursery Fingertips and the Harpenden Child Contact Centre. Dance Groups for school age children also resumed, as well a Yoga class for adults. Most of the other groups (bird watchers, flower arrangers, as well as Brownies and Guides) suspended their activities in the hall. The Church also allows the Harpenden Money Advice Centre - a charity helping those in financial difficulty - to use its building during weekdays.

St. Mary's Church seeks to connect with the wider community by opening the Church and hall to external groups such as a Nursery, the WI, ballet classes, lace makers and for private hire. Again, many of these activities had to be suspended during the COVID restrictions, although the Nursery continued for much of the year. The Tuesday Afternoon Group held meetings prior to the lockdown restrictions. The seasonal visits to Homedell House had to be suspended, but a group from Church went to sing carols outside Homedell in Advent. When open, the Church supported the local foodbanks.

***Encouraging belonging by providing courses and classes in preparation for baptism and confirmation and providing social events and activities for all ages.***

Courses in preparation for baptism and for confirmation are regularly organised at the Parish-level, each year. This year, these had to be suspended due to the lockdown restrictions.

St. Nicholas Church regularly offers a wide range of courses, classes, social events, and activities: including coffee after services, Sunday clubs for children, the Harpenden Julian meeting, home study groups, the Bible reading fellowship group, Mothers' Union, Supper Club, afternoon tea for the bereaved and a range of other events. Many of these activities were very much restricted by the pandemic. The Christmas Fayre was scaled-down and relocated outdoors. Participation in online events such as the interactive Christmas Carols and the Quarantine Quiz sought to raise spirits and bring people together. Cornelia's coffee shop has provided a social hub for the community whenever it has been possible for it to open.

All Saints' Church: Younger members of the congregation are catered for with activities that they can do during the service. At the end of the service, the children are encouraged to share what they have done with the rest of the congregation. As well as this, the Church held numerous social events over Zoom to support those feeling lonely during the lockdown period.

St. Mary's Church continued its all-age service called Simply Worship once a month. With respect to social events, the regular pattern of Fairtrade Breakfasts; summer fete; shared walks; Little Lunch; Harvest Supper; and many other activities had to be suspended. Other activities occurred, however: St. Mary's hosted two online quizzes (with 8 or 9 teams) and zoom coffee get-togethers once or twice a week from April 2020 onwards. Members of the congregation participated in the 'Bike and Hike' event in September. Christmas table arrangements were delivered to house-bound members of the congregation.

***Sharing an appealing faith by creating welcoming churches with quality worship services and a range of interesting courses and events to supplement.***

St. Nicholas Church: wherever possible the Church has offered worship services in church. Services like the September Pet Service made use of the greater freedom to meet outdoors and offered another way to engage with our community. The quality of our online services is high, a great deal of effort has gone into providing live services rather than pre-recorded material, and the congregation strongly reflected their appreciation of the quality of the shared online worship in the autumn survey. The quality of the musical element of services has never been higher thanks to the Director of Music, the members of the choir and music groups and during the restrictions they recorded individually in their own homes, producing excellent results.

All Saints' Church: The Church offered a lent course, as well as various small groups that met in members of the congregation's homes. During the lockdown period the Church Pastoral Contact team spent time regularly calling members of the congregation, to stay in touch and make sure their needs were being met with regards to shopping etc. This was greatly appreciated by families and individuals, giving a sense of connection. During the periods of lockdown, the Church has offered social events and prayer services outside the normal pattern of worship services.

St. Mary's Church: During 2020, the Church has worked hard to make its online services as appealing as possible. A broad participation was maintained, and good use made of online technology. When the congregation has been allowed in Church (albeit socially distanced), it was felt important to make the Church look and feel as normal as possible. Church music continued, though without singing. Flowers have been provided by the relevant team throughout - for livestreamed services from the Church, for example.

***Growing a vibrant Christian community, by enabling a wide variety of volunteer roles that sustain the life and mission of the Church and by offering personal and corporate opportunities for people to grow in faith and understanding.***

St. Nicholas Church relies heavily on the goodwill of volunteers in so many capacities. From membership of formal committees like the DCC, clearly structured volunteering positions like those of the District Wardens, Treasurer, Property Manager, Lettings and so on, to those who fill the requirement for the church/hall to be cleaned, arrange flowers, serve in Cornelia's, act as Altar Servers, welcomers and sidespeople, keep the church open where possible via volunteering for the Church Watch rota or for private prayer, run the sound and light equipment, provide music and bell ringing, maintain the grounds and Garden of Remembrance, organise the food bank donations, lead or help with Sunday club and Toddler Time, help organise groups like the Mothers' Union, Supper Club, home groups, prayer groups, and a whole host of other roles. Without these willing volunteers our community would not be as vibrant, as supportive,

as inclusive, or as able to be a force for good in our wider community. In addition, the Parish Office has coordinated volunteers' efforts to provide essential practical support and befriending to anyone in need during the pandemic. Invitations for volunteers to come forward and fill specific roles or use their talents to support the church more flexibly, are included within services, email communication and the weekly pew leaflet.

All Saints' Church: offers a wide variety of volunteer roles that allow the members of the congregation to help with the running of the Church and to deepen their faith. In particular, the work of the Local Ministry Development Team (LMDT) has been integral to the spiritual development of the Church in this lockdown year. The LMDT was responsible for the organisation of the remote-only worship sessions via Zoom and the mixed-mode services. As a means of encouraging further engagement with the online Zoom services, there has been an increased focus on asking the whole of the Church congregation - including children - to take part in readings and prayers in the services themselves.

St. Mary's Church has a wide variety of volunteer roles such as sidesperson, chalice attendant, intercessor, reader, technology, organ playing, flower arranging, cleaning, providing coffee, gardening, maintenance and publicity, etc. There is much volunteer input. New members joined the DCC and a new warden was elected.

***Supporting these objectives and church activities by maintaining the fabric of our three churches and their halls.***

St Nicholas Church: The programme of work to maintain the Church has continued, although many projects and areas of expenditure have been put on hold this year in view of the impact of the pandemic on our income as a parish. We have taken advantage of the lockdown periods to clear around the Church and surrounding areas, improving the drainage and enabling the stones to stay as dry as possible. Work has been undertaken to clear the hall roof, and the large lime trees in the school playground have been reduced from over 50 feet to 20 feet to help keep the hall roof and gutters clear. Volunteers patrolled the Church grounds and reported any issues to ensure the Church and hall remained safe and in good order during lockdown.

All Saints' Church: During 2020, the following major projects were completed: replacement of the doors and main windows in the Hall; replacement of the sky lights on the flat roof of the Church; the upgrading of the Church's Internet Server to improve transmission of the mixed-mode services; the grounds of the rear car park of the Church were scraped out, increasing the available parking area; all lights in the Church were switched to LED energy saving units; the Quinquennial Survey was conducted and a full electrical inspection (EICR) was carried out - the recommended works were then implemented by the end of the year.

St. Mary's Church: In 2020, the kitchen was refurbished, the hall roof was repaired; the tarmac at the front of Church was repaired; lighting was replaced with energy-efficient bulbs; and general maintenance carried out. A planning application was submitted to improve the carpark surface, whilst current potholes were filled in. The Church garden has been refurbished and a slate stone inscribed to commemorate those who have worshipped at the Church over the years

## **Financial review**

Total receipts on unrestricted funds were £466,988 of which £287,945 was unrestricted voluntary donations, and a further £64,285 was from Gift Aid. Restricted donations of £26,001 were also received. Planned Giving, through the Parish Giving Scheme and envelopes remained constant, despite the pandemic, in part helped by a special appeal in Summer 2020. Non-planned giving reduced significantly as fewer in-person services were held. We were grateful for the legacies of £41,000 received during the year, two of which were substantial amounts for the benefit of St Nicholas Church. Income from the use of our church halls has been adversely affected by the pandemic as many of our users have not been permitted to meet in person.

£498,021 was spent from unrestricted funds to provide our Christian ministry from our three churches, including the net contribution of £270,103 to the diocesan parish share that provides the stipends, housing and training for clergy both pre and post ordination. The sum that each parish in the diocese is asked to find is calculated on a formula that is based mainly on a head count of the congregations. Expenditure on our church buildings, halls and clergy houses increased during 2020, partly due to the deferral of expenditure from prior years. £17,860 of this expenditure was funded from restricted funds.

Each year we support a number of international and local charities and in 2020 £44,679 was given. This figure is made up of £12,000 donated by the PCC, plus donations from the profits of Cornelia's coffee shop plus service collections and various fundraising events held across our three churches.

The net result for the year was an excess of payments over receipts £44,679 on unrestricted funds. Adding bank and deposit balances brought forward at the beginning of the year, the balances carried forward as at 31st December on free unrestricted funds totalled £45,640.

## **Reserves policy**

It is the policy of the PCC to hold in unrestricted reserves the equivalent of three months general running costs and salary costs. The trustees believe this amount to be £60,000. £45,640 is held in free unrestricted reserves and the balance in designated funds. It is also the policy of the PCC to hold an amount in designated funds for likely building works at the next quinquennial inspection and to meet unexpected maintenance and repair costs in our three District churches and the clergy houses.

Included within unrestricted funds is freehold property of £945,280, representing the cost of land and buildings owned by the PCC. These freehold property funds can only be realised by disposal of the properties.

In addition, the PCC holds restricted funds of £176,055. Of this £18,100 is the St Nicholas Sound and Light fund, set up with a view to providing an improved sound, lighting and video/livestreaming and lighting system in St Nicholas Church. A further £23,276 is the St Mary's car park fund, set up to improve the car park at that church. The remaining restricted funds are mainly for benevolent purposes in accordance with donor wishes, and the majority will be utilised in the next couple of years, for example to fund improvements and significant repairs to our church buildings and the memorial garden at St Nicholas. These funds are held in cash within the funds of the parish.

### **Plans for future periods**

For 2021 our focus is on managing the post-pandemic period for our parish and each of our three churches, so that we re-connect with the whole community through a variety of worship services, programmes, social events and activities for all ages as and when restrictions permit. We will also continue to make available the use of our facilities and resources to the community.

As a Parish we intend to review and update our mission, to clarify our strategic priorities. This will include enabling the mission priority of All Saints, enhancing our ministry to families and young people, and engaging with the diocesan priority of making new disciples in our parish.

To support this, and all our objectives and church activities, we will continue to maintain the fabric of our three churches and their halls. We will also seek opportunities to reduce our ongoing financial deficit.

### **Risk management**

The PCC, as trustees, have assessed the risks the charity faces through identifying the major risks by area of activity, the nature of those risks, the likelihood of the risks happening, and the measures taken to manage them. The trustees review these risk areas regularly at their meetings and at meetings of the Standing Committee and Finance Committee. The trustees are satisfied that systems are in place, or arrangements are in hand, to manage the risks that have been identified.

In particular, insurance cover is in place, and the finances of the PCC are kept under review. The PCC has approved and adopted the Promoting a Safer Church Policy Statement of the Church of England. The Parish follows Safer Recruitment guidance for recruitment of volunteers (including carrying out DBS checks for relevant roles), has in place relevant risk assessments and Best Practice Guidelines for working with Young People and Vulnerable Adults provided by the Diocese. The Parish has committed to respond appropriately and proportionately, in accordance with the Policy Statement and guidance, to any safeguarding allegations and to work closely with the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser and/or relevant statutory agencies when necessary.

### **Structure, governance and management**

The PCC is a corporate body established by the Church of England. The PCC operates under the Parochial Church Council Powers Measure. The PCC is a registered charity [Charity Number 1130793]. The appointment of PCC members is governed by and set out in the Church Representation Rules. In the Parish of Harpenden, the membership consists of the incumbent (the Reverend Canon Dr Dennis Stamps), the associate vicars (Reverend Sally Goodson and Reverend James Brown), churchwardens, readers, and members elected by those members of the congregation who are on the electoral roll of the church.

The PCC appoints a secretary and a minutes secretary, who attend PCC meetings as observers. All those who attend our services are encouraged to register on the Electoral Roll and stand for election to the PCC. The PCC members are responsible for making decisions on all matters of general concern and importance to the Parish, including deciding on how the funds of the PCC are to be spent. The PCC works with the Rector and the associate vicars to promote the vision of the Church.

The full PCC met six times during the year, with an average level of attendance of 65%. Given its wide responsibilities, the PCC has a number of committees - each dealing with a particular aspect of Parish life (Finance Committee; Giving Committee; Pay Committee). The remit of each committee is set by the PCC and it receives regular reports from each, which are discussed as necessary. The Finance Committee

oversees the management of the PCC budgets; the Giving Committee oversees fund raising; and the Pay Committee oversees the pay and remuneration of the PCC's employees (with delegated powers to set salaries). The PCC Treasurer provides regular finance reports, which are discussed as necessary by the PCC. A standing committee oversees the agenda and arrangements for the PCC meetings.

Each of the three churches in the Parish (St. Nicholas; All Saints'; and St. Mary's) have their own district church councils (DCC) and they each report to the PCC, with their reports also being discussed as necessary. The members of each DCC are elected by those on the electoral roll in each Church district.

The PCC is responsible for the maintenance of all the district churches and halls. It is also responsible for the maintenance of two clergy houses that it owns (86 Tuffnells Way; 10 Cross Way), as well as a further property (37 St. James' Road) owned by the Church Commissioners and used as a clergy house; a rental property on Church Green; and, the Parish contributes to the maintenance of the Rectory.

### **Statement of trustees' responsibilities**

The trustees are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Annual Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

Law applicable to charities in England and Wales requires the trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of charity and of the incoming resources and application of resources of the charity for that year. In preparing these financial statements the trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable UK Accounting Standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements; and
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in operation.

The trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Charities Act 2011 and the Charity (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008.

They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

On behalf of the Trustees

### **WHEATHAMPSTEAD DEANERY SYNOD 2020**

Our Rural Dean, the Revd Richard Banham, stood down during the year, after 5 years' service, for which we give thanks. His successor, the Revd Thomas Sander, had no sooner taken up his post when he was appointed Rector of St Giles-in-the-Fields, London in October, so left the diocese at the end of the year. Consequently, Wheathampstead Deanery Synod met just once in the year on 18<sup>th</sup> November by Zoom. This took the form of a round-the-deanery sharing of experiences during the lockdowns. After a period of consultation, the Bishop announced that Richard Banham is to be our temporary Rural Dean for up to 18 months. We welcome Richard back!

Jim May, Acting Lay Chairman

## PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL MEETINGS 2020

### PARISH DEPARTURES AND APPOINTMENTS

Reverend James Brown – appointed Associate Vicar at All Saints

### FAMILIES AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Due to the coronavirus pandemic and resulting loss of income, PCC put on hold recruiting for a Children and Family Co-ordinator to support families within the parish.

### PCC OFFICERS

Michelle McCulloch and Tony Gilbert stood down as Parish Wardens

Kevin Featherstone and Tim Linacre were elected Parish Wardens

Kevin Featherstone was elected Vice Chair

Peter Timms stood down as Parish Treasurer

Jackie Agg was elected to PCC and appointed Parish Treasurer

Michelle McCulloch was co-opted as Parish Safeguarding Officer

Sara Longden was co-opted again as PCC Secretary

### APPOINTMENT OF PCC GOVERNORS AT ST NICHOLAS CE VA PRIMARY SCHOOL

Simon Counce from St John's Church – experienced in IT and management

Hilary Doherty stood again

### CORONAVIRUS

- We set up a Pastoral Contact Scheme identifying the elderly and vulnerable within the parish, created lists of over 60 volunteers, and introduced a buddy system to help those isolating/shielding with their shopping, prescriptions and post etc;
- Sunday Services moved online via Zoom and Facebook. By September one service in each church was in person thereby complying with Canon Law;
- Holy Week services were online only;
- Baptisms and weddings were initially put on hold and later resumed with numbers restricted by the government/ Church of England- Baptisms 15 people, weddings 15 people and funerals 30 people;
- Funerals were held at the crematorium or by the graveside and later resumed in church with restricted numbers;
- Annual meetings were postponed from April to October ;
- Foodbank drop off point moved to Lucy Parr's house;
- Bell ringing at St Nicholas ceased;

- Cornelia’s café closed;
- The parish office closed with staff working remotely.

**FACULTIES**

PCC approved the application for a faculty at St Nicholas Church to install live streaming equipment.

**WEBSITE**

A group formed, led by Kelvin Goodson, to modernise and improve the website.

**MISSION ACTION PLANNING**

Proposals were taken forward for each church to develop its own Mission Action Plan (MAP), focussing on mission and ministry, as opposed to an action plan for the whole of the parish.

<b>MEETING DATES – 2021/22</b>
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Standing Committee	PCC meetings
21 June 2021	5 July 2021 St Mary’s
13 September 2021	27 September 2021 St Nicholas
15 November 2021	29 November 2021 All Saints
10 January 2022	24 January 2022 St Mary’s
7 March 2022	21 March 2022 St Nicholas
11 April 2022	25 April 2022
<b>APCM:</b>	23 May 2022 – All Saints

Sara Longden, PCC Secretary



## **REPORT OF THE FABRIC, GOODS AND ORNAMENTS OF THE CHURCHES OF THE PARISH.**

(under Section 5 of the Care of Churches and Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction Measure 1991)

### **All Saints' Church**

- The Hall doors were replaced, following wind damage.
- The skylights on the flat roof of the Church were replaced.
- In September of 2020, the Church's Internet Server was upgraded to improve transmission of the mixed-mode services.
- The grounds of the rear car park of the Church were scraped out with a digger, increasing the available parking area.
- In October of 2020, the Quinquennial Survey was conducted, and a full electrical inspection (EICR) was carried out. Any recommended works of the latter were then implemented by the end of the year. Recommendations of the QQS were minor and ongoing according to the set urgency.
- All light bulbs in the Church were replaced with LED energy saving units.

### **St Mary's Church**

- At the beginning of the year, the tarmac at the front of the church was repaired.
- The project of improving the carpark, by installing matting under the surface, remains ongoing. A full planning application was prepared. Potholes were filled in.
- The kitchen refurbishment, started in October 2019, has now been completed.
- An issue with dampness has returned: the district wardens are in contact with the QI architect and are following advice.
- Lighting in the Church and Hall was replaced with energy-efficient bulbs.
- In November, on All Saints Sunday, a memorial stone plaque in remembrance of all those who have worshipped at St Mary's was installed in the front garden. The garden itself had been refurbished.
- Equipment e.g. a camera was purchased and the router upgraded to enable live streaming from the church.

### **St Nicholas' Church**

- Following the work, undertaken in the previous year, to cutback or clear certain trees in the churchyard, the hall roof was cleared, with work completed to reduce height of lime trees to maintain condition of the roof.
- The bell tower plaster was removed.
- Planning was undertaken, with the architect, to repair the garden of remembrance; similarly, a review was made of the repairs needed to the guttering and the downpipes.
- Planning progressed for the installation of a video desk and cameras to facilitate live streaming.

Kevin Featherstone and Tim Linacre, Church Wardens

## ELECTORAL ROLL

Our total for 2021 is 593, up by 4 from 589 in 2020 (16 additions and 12 who have come off the roll since the last revision in October 2020). Given the roll was last revised in October 2020 this represents a significant amount of activity.

The details are as follows:

	St.Nics	St.Mary's	All Saints	Total
<b>Total 2021</b>	399 (+6)	117 (no change)	77 (-2)	<b>593</b>

A special thank you this year to Sara and Pauline in the Parish Office who sent out many emails encouraging people to join the Electoral Roll. I would also like to thank my fellow ER Officers, Liz Keen and Sue Whetherly for their calm efficiency.

Below represents an account for the last 9 years.

Church	Apr 2021	Oct 2020	Apr 2019	Apr 2018	Apr 2017	Apr 2016	Apr 2015	Apr 2014	Apr 2013
All Saints'	77	79	77	88	91	86	90	90	90
St Mary's	117	117	118	130	130	124	122	109	105
St Nicholas'	399	393	389	445	446	441	435	436	398
<b>Total</b>	<b>593</b>	<b>589</b>	<b>584</b>	<b>663</b>	<b>667</b>	<b>651</b>	<b>647</b>	<b>635</b>	<b>593</b>

Full copies of the roll are available for viewing, on request, please contact your ER representative or the Parish Office if you need to access a copy.

I would ask the APCM to approve the revised Electoral Roll for 2021.

Ro Marriott, Parish Electoral Roll Officer

## SAFEGUARDING

The parish has over 300 volunteers working in various roles across the parish (including in children and youth groups, pastoral and bereavement teams), all of whom provide valuable support and service in the busy life of the parish.

The PCC has approved and adopted the Promoting a Safer Church Policy Statement of the Church of England. The Policy Statement promotes a safer safeguarding environment and culture. The parish pays due regard to the House of Bishops guidance in relation to safeguarding.

In practice, the parish follows Safer Recruitment guidance for recruitment of volunteers (including carrying out DBS checks for relevant roles), has in place relevant risk assessments and Best Practice Guidelines for

working with Young People and Vulnerable Adults provided by the Diocese. The parish has committed to respond appropriately and proportionately, in accordance with the Policy Statement and guidance, to any safeguarding allegations and to work closely with the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser and / or relevant statutory agencies when necessary.

The Policy Statement is reviewed annually at PCC and promoted in our churches (look for the blue posters and guidelines which provide relevant contact details. Please take time to read them).

The parish has the benefit of resources provided by the Diocese including the services of the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser and the services of Thirty One: Eight (previously known as CCPAS).

The Diocese runs a Safeguarding training programme for all parishes in the Diocese. Training is online for most of our volunteers. Safeguarding officers undertake additional training.

Training is compulsory for relevant volunteers. Our volunteers at church have been asked to complete training where they are obliged to do so. This includes PCC members. The parish safeguarding team asks all relevant volunteers to complete training as soon as possible when asked to do so.

Thank you to all our volunteers who offer their time and skills in support of our parish community and help us in our Diocesan and parish commitment to safeguard all God's people.

Michelle McCulloch, Parish Safeguarding Officer

### **LINK PARISH MAGAZINE**

In 2020 only four issues of Link were produced, before the first COVID-19 lockdown started in late March. These issues had been edited by Perry and Sujata Coverley, including a Clergy letter, articles written by members of the congregations, photographs from Parish events and some articles from the Diocesan Newsletter. Lucinda Elston had advertisers in place, whose support had enabled us to maintain the Link annual subscription at £7.50. In 2020 income from subscriptions was nearly £2000. Unfortunately it was not feasible to continue the production after the April 2020 issue and that final, April, issue was distributed electronically only by the Parish Office, since the Parish Office was closed from that point.

Printed copies, valiantly produced in the Parish Office by Jean Macintosh, were always delivered to subscribers in many parts of the Parish by a large number of dedicated people most of whom also collected subscriptions from their round. That had, of course, happened in the first three months of the year and about 220 people had paid an annual subscription with others collecting and paying for single copies from the three churches. We had not expected that no further issues would be possible during the subscription year and further discussion will be needed if and when Link production is possible once again.

Agneta Burton, Subscriptions & Distribution

## DISTRICT WARDEN REPORTS

### ST NICHOLAS

St Nicholas' started 2020 with Vicky Platt as the sole District Warden and ended 2020 with a team of three District Wardens, with Vicky continuing in the role and Rachael Threlfall and Sarah John sharing the second District Warden position (Rachael rejoining after a fairly brief respite!). It has been a year full of unexpected challenges, where patience has been required in abundance to cope with the many changes to plans, restrictions and ways of working, and where our admiration for those who keep our churches running and in particular Dennis and the clergy team has never been greater. Dennis has had to almost become a lawyer in order to work out the rules at any given point in time, and a master of online skills to rise to the challenge of online services, morning and night prayers, zoom meetings and online coffee. This is a brief overview of the year, and if we have forgotten to mention an event or an individual that we should have included, please accept our sincere apologies for the oversight.

2020 started with a normality that we now look back at wistfully, with all of our usual services and range of activities running in church. However, from 26 March we entered a new world of online services, and much as we have all missed worshipping together when restrictions have forced us to suspend or limit services in church, we are so grateful to everyone who made it possible for St Nicholas' to offer a wide range of compelling live online worship. The survey we conducted in the autumn showed how much the online services meant to our congregation, as well as giving us a lot of valuable information about people's preferences around worshipping online and in church – thank you to all those who took part and to Barbara Wharton and Mike Butters for their work in inputting the responses.

Many of the events that would usually have formed part of our calendar could not take place, despite the best laid plans (at least we now know how to set up a Christmas Crib event using Eventbrite, even if all the hard work and planning came to naught as we re-entered tighter restrictions). Many took place online instead and united us in worship in a way that was all the more poignant because of our physical isolation – Easter services, Christingle, Advent Calendars and Reflections, Carols and Lessons, morning prayers to get the day off to a good start, evening prayers to unwind, reflect, and give thanks, theology reading groups, and a brilliant Quarantine Quiz organized by Tony Price. Other events did go ahead in person albeit with changes and restrictions, and were beacons of joy and colour. Fr James Hadley's September Pet Service, with wonderful support from the choir on a sunny day, was much enjoyed by a variety of very special animals and their humans, and while the Christmas Fayre may have been relocated outdoors and scaled down to just the very popular homemade stall and our fantastic choir singing carols, it brought some much-needed Christmas cheer.

Cornelia's has been subject to restrictions but has provided a warm and appropriately socially distanced welcome whenever it has been possible for it to open. It has meant a great deal to its customers to have somewhere to meet in a Covid-safe environment, and we are so very grateful to the volunteers who came along in their own bubbles and paid such diligent attention to all the regulations, enabling Cornelia's to open safely.

We have tried to keep our spending on buildings and repairs as low as possible this year, especially given the impact of lockdown on our income as a church. We have taken advantage of the lockdown periods to clear around the church and surrounding areas, and to clear the hall roof. The large lime trees in the school

playground have been reduced from over 50 feet to 20 feet to help keep the hall roof and gutters clear. We are delighted that after lobbying St Albans District council officers and councillors, the church railings will soon be painted. This year more work is planned including on the Garden of Remembrance; stonemasons' quotes are being sought and since work is expensive our current plan is to put more plaque space on the West wall of the print room and the North wall of the office.

So much was changed in 2020, but the fellowship and shared worship we find at St Nicholas' has never been more valued or needed, and it could not happen without the dedication of so many people working as a team. We would like to take this opportunity to thank the following people:

Giles Croot for giving up so much of his time and technical expertise to make high quality online worship available throughout the pandemic, and for building a community through the St Nicholas' Facebook page. Marie Price, whose enthusiasm, dedication, superb organisation and perseverance have provided incredible music from the choir for the online services, beautifully combined and edited from all the weekly choir submissions by Emily Price.

The team of volunteers who enabled us to open the church for private prayer whenever restrictions permitted, especially Heather Richards for leading by example by signing up without fail to welcome people to prayer, and for all she does to ensure the church and its worship run smoothly.

Neil Hewitt, John Harper and Dave Howells for continuing to give so much of their time and expertise in dealing with many Church and Hall building matters and particularly for investing so much energy in planning around the installation of the live streaming equipment.

Jackie Agg for keeping the church hall garden looking so beautiful, and Henry Loweth and Peter Mellor for all their hard work on the Garden of Remembrance.

All those who have helped to keep the church clean and safe, enabling us to adhere to pandemic requirements.

Lucy Parr for keeping the foodbank collections running during a time when they were so desperately necessary, including relocating the collection to her home driveway when the church had to be closed.

All those who helped with church and churchyard watch to keep the church and hall safe when there was lockdown.

Jenny Malcolm Brown as Sacristan.

Jean McIntosh for liaising with staff and continuing to ensure that the halls are well managed.

Marie Pinnington for all her work as Hall Bookings Secretary.

Amanda Playle, for continually working beyond her remit to keep the halls presentable to the public.

There are so many people whose generous contributions of time, expertise, money and support enable St Nicholas to fulfil its mission and continue to be the warm, supportive community we are fortunate to be

part of. If we haven't been able to thank you individually because of restrictions on space here, please know that we are immensely grateful for all you do.

Finally, we now have a dedicated email address for the District Wardens, which is checked regularly, so if you would like to contact us for any reason please feel free to email [districtwardens@stnicholas.parishofharpenden.org](mailto:districtwardens@stnicholas.parishofharpenden.org).

Vicky Platt, Rachael Threlfall and Sarah John, District Wardens

## **ALL SAINTS'**

At the beginning of 2020, All Saints was still in a period of vacancy, with services continuing in their usual pattern. Interviews for the post of associate vicar, due to be held in March, were postponed because of the spread of Covid-19. With churches closed and Easter approaching, we moved to one Zoom service, alternating between a Communion service and a Worship service. The Local Ministry Development Team was responsible for the organisation of the remote-only worship sessions via Zoom and the mixed-mode services which came later.

Having just one service has meant that the congregations have got to know each other, despite not being together in person, and our feeling of unity has increased. Attendance has been good, and new people have joined our services throughout the year. This pattern continued through until August. Also in July, the church opened for private prayer, on one morning a week.

Once it was possible to return to church, our services evolved into a mixed mode format with some congregation in church and others at home on Zoom. We encouraged those of the congregation who did not attend the Zoom services to attend in person if they felt safe to do so. Some of them were comfortable with this, others preferred to continue as before. Attendance in church, including those who were involved in delivering the service, averaged between 15 and 20. The younger members of the congregation were catered for with activities that they could do during the service and at the end, they were encouraged to share what they had done with the rest of the congregation. Young and old have also helped with reading lessons and prayers.

In July the interviews were able to take place, with social distancing, and in October we welcomed Reverend James Brown as our new associate vicar. His installation service was shown on Zoom, with his family and friends and the LMDT attending in person. There could not be a celebratory tea afterwards but we did arrange for a cake to be delivered to him to mark the occasion.

Our services continued in the mixed mode format with James, until November, when they reverted to Zoom only. Activities were planned for the Christmas period, within permitted guidelines, but these had to be cancelled and virtual events took their place. During December, James organised contributors to an Online Advent Calendar, which was watched around the Parish and then a video, in which the story of the nativity was told collectively by the younger members of All Saints. This was warmly received.

During the lockdown period the Church Pastoral Contact team spent time, regularly calling members of the congregation, to stay in touch, which was greatly appreciated by families and individuals. We had social

events for the congregation via Zoom which mostly took the form of family entertainment. Our ADCM was held in September, also via Zoom, and new members were appointed to the DCC, who had not previously served on the committee.

The wardens have been responsible for preparing the Church to be used safely in the light of Covid 19. This included making changes to the layout of the Church, organising hand sanitiser and writing risk assessments. Initially, the hall was closed entirely but it opened up again in September for those groups who wished to come back. This required risk assessments to be formulated and agreed upon by all parties. The Church also allowed the Harpenden Money Advice Centre (which offers advice to members of the public who are in financial difficulties) to stay open, as it was considered an essential service.

Necessary repairs and planned improvements have been carried out during the year, notably the replacement of the hall doors leading to the car park, replacement of the sky lights on the flat roof of the church which cover the Choir Vestry and the stage in the hall, and replacement of all light bulbs in the Church, with LED energy saving units. In October, the Quinquennial survey was conducted and a full electrical inspection (EICR) was carried out. Any recommended works of the latter were then implemented by the end of the year and the recommendations of the Quinquennial survey are ongoing.

Elizabeth Card, District Warden

## **ST MARY'S**

Sally Goodson has been with St Mary's for four years and is supported by our ministry team. With the help of modern technology, and the time and skills of Sally, Kelvin, Nick, and Jenny, we have been able to provide a mixture of recorded and live services to continue our worship. When the congregation were able to be in church, we have made the church feel as normal as possible albeit socially distanced.

Our children's work continued through our monthly recorded services for families to watch and take part with activities at home. Two services were held in church. These were well attended – reaching our allowed capacity and were much enjoyed.

At the beginning of the year, a new organist, Peter Lipman, joined our team to play once a month and he has managed to play once or twice. Although we have been unable to sing in church, we have enjoyed hearing live music provided by our organists, playing familiar hymns in church and for the recorded services, which have been available each Sunday.

St Mary's social events have been different this year. We have been able to hold two online quizzes, one to raise funds for Christian Aid and one for Jeel-al-Amal. Weekly coffee mornings were held from the comfort of our homes via zoom. The monthly Tuesday Afternoon Group were able to have two meetings at the beginning of 2000, before shutdown. Many of our outreach activities were suspended, however in December a small group sang carols outside Homedell House before the national situation changed. Back in September, members of the congregation walked or cycled for the Bike and Hike. The food banks are continued to be supported by us. Links with Woodend School have also been continued via online with Sally as a governor.

With regard to the building, the kitchen refurbishment is finally finished and looks very good. A damp issue has returned but we have been in contact with the QI architect and are following their advice. The tarmac at the front of church has been repaired, and we are hopeful in the completion of the car park repairs in 2021. In November, on All Saints Sunday, the front garden refurbishment was completed by the

installation of a slate stone bearing the inscription 'Remember before God all those who have worshipped here and give thanks for their witness'.

Our publicity group are currently working to revamp our St Mary's page of the new parish website. The annual Christmas card was also produced and delivered around the district. However, all planned events were unable to take place due to the 'rules' changing.

After five years as District Warden, we said thank you to Maureen Lamburn who stood down from her role. I was elected to fulfil the post to work alongside Ro Marriott.

Thank you to everyone who helps to maintain all that we do at St Mary's.

Helen Champion, District Warden