



**Annual Report and Financial Statements
of the
Parochial Church Council
For the Year Ended 31st December 2020**



Annual Report for 2020

1. PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL

Registered Charity Number 1165115

The Parochial Church Council (PCC) is elected to cooperate with the Vicar in promoting the mission of the Church in this parish, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical, i.e. all aspects of parish life and it is responsible for adopting and implementing policies approved by the General Synod and the Diocese. It conducts the financial affairs of the Church, including setting the annual budget and raising funds. The PCC is also responsible for the care and maintenance of the Church fabric and its contents, it has a voice in adopting and



modifying the Forms of Service used in Church within established forms of worship and can make representations to the Bishop regarding the welfare of the Parish. In all of this we try to represent the views of parishioners. The PCC (Powers) Measure 1956 highlights the Vicar promoting the 'mission', the Treasurer handling the finances, the Churchwardens the 'fabric and contents' of the Church and the PCC as a body is responsible for all matters in the management and running of the Parish. The PCC has appointed a number of committees and groups to exercise detailed functions in prescribed areas and to make recommendations to the PCC on matters of major significance.

The PCC is a registered charity of which all the members are Trustees. Members of the PCC are either ex officio or elected by the Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM) in accordance with the Church Representation Rules. The Vicar is the ex officio Chair of the PCC and a lay member is elected as Vice-Chair.

The Churchwardens, also ex officio PCC members, are elected at the Annual Meeting of Parishioners. Our Churchwardens from January until July were Martin Harris and Lyndon Palmer. Sadly, Martin died in July after an illness bravely borne. Martin contributed in very many ways to the life of All Saints' and he is greatly missed by everyone.

The Annual Meeting of Parishioners on 27 September re-elected Lyndon Palmer and elected Anne Oke as a Churchwarden in succession to Martin. The PCC re-appointed Nik Bennett and Ann Palmer as Assistant Churchwardens and re-elected Nik Bennett as lay Vice-Chair.

Fran Bennett and Shirley Ford were elected to the Diocesan Synod to serve for three years until 2023.

Following the 2020 elections, the following served as members of the PCC:-

<u>Member</u>	<u>Representative</u>	<u>Complete Office</u>
Miriam Mugan	Vicar	Ex officio
Anne Oke	Churchwarden	Annual
Lyndon Palmer	Churchwarden	Annual
Fran Bennett	Deanery Synod Rep	2023
Shirley Ford	Deanery Synod Rep	2023
Jane Bates		2021
Sam Beard		2023

Nik Bennett		2023
also Vice-Chair and Asst Churchwarden		Annual
Chris Fagan	(Secretary)	2022
John Galloway		2022
Sam Jones		2021
Janet Martin	(Planned Giving Officer)	2022
Andrew Nobbs	(Treasurer)	2021
Ann Palmer		2023
	also (Asst Churchwarden)	Annual

Sides People

The following people served as Sides People at the APCM or thereafter: from April 2019 until 31 September 2020:

Michael Adam	Rae Bowyer	Alick Burge	Pat Foster
John Galloway	Sarah Gardner	Martin Harris	Ben Guest
Val Hunt	Sue McKeague	Janet Martin	Andrew Nobbs
Margaret Paddick	Ann Palmer	Francesca Sams	Wendy Shafe
Derek Wakefield			

From 1 October a team comprising Jane Bates, Fran Bennett, Nik Bennett, Sue McKeague, Andrew Nobbs and Ann Palmer took over this role, to implement church rules for social distancing at services involving public worship.

The PCC held eight ordinary meetings in 2020, with an average attendance of 91%. The Finance and Standing Committee, consisting of the Vicar, the Churchwardens and Assistant Churchwardens, the Treasurer, the Planned Giving Officer, the Secretary and an appointed lay member, held four meetings which considered business arising from PCC meetings and planning of items for future PCC agendas. To comply with Government regulations restricting face to face meetings four PCC meetings and a large number of Committee meetings were online using Zoom.

Review of the year

From March 2020 onwards the life and work of the parish was severely affected by the COVID-19 pandemic and restrictions introduced to control its spread. From 17 March the church was closed for public worship; resuming with a single 9.45 service on Sunday 19 July with socially-distanced seating and wearing of face masks. A second closure took place from 5 November until 6 December, when services resumed for Advent and Christmas, again subject to restrictions. A further surge of infections led to the PCC seeking authorisation from the Bishop for further closure in January 2021. These measures also resulted in the closure of the hall for public use and the cessation of many social and fundraising activities, notably the weekly dinner bell lunches, pop-up cafés, afternoon teas and the Christmas Market.

Meeting the Challenges of Covid-19

How All Saints' responded to Covid-19 is set out in the reports of the committees, teams and activities contained in this Report. The financial effects of the pandemic are referred to in the report of the Treasurer and in full detail in the Accounts.

The PCC received reports and recommendations from each of its committees and teams. Some key decisions taken are listed here

The PCC approved recommendations from the Pastoral and Evangelism Committee concerning arrangements for Sunday communion and family services, Forest Church and morning prayers during the restrictions. Sunday morning services and morning and evening prayer on three days of the week were live-streamed either from the church or the Vicarage. The effect was to increase considerably the overall numbers who accessed them. The church reaped the benefit of previous investment in improved audio-visual technology and equipment.

Clergy and Church members maintained regular contact with less mobile congregation members and gave help where needed.

New study and prayer courses were run using WhatsApp and Zoom.

The refurbishment of the church was continued. The north-west corner was opened up by the relocation of two safes to the sacristy area, Plans for improved wheelchair access via a ramp between the two naves were approved for discussion with the Diocese, including the extension of the balustrade between the naves; repairs to external stonework were made and new secure garden gates were installed. The PCC considered refurbishment and improvement of the hall, a popular and income-producing asset and following a competitive tendering process, a contract to supply replacement double-glazed windows was agreed. The work is planned to take place in Spring 2021.



One of the new Altar Frontals

New altar frontals and hangings were commissioned, commemorating the lives and interests of former parishioners David Williams, Doris Cann and Lorna Mellor. They were funded by donations and bequests, with a chasuble and stole in memory of Daphne Sharp.

Following the departure of Chris Ashley, Sarah Guest was appointed as Choir Director and a new Music Monitoring and Development Committee was formed to take forward the performance of music in our services.

The reduction in income from the loss of hall lettings and cancellation of other fundraising events resulted in a large deficit, which the PCC resolved would be met from reserves. The Parish Share commitment for 2020 was met in full, but the budget approved for 2021 included a substantial reduction in provision for the Parish Share payment, to protect the parish's financial viability.

The PCC complied with the duty under section 5 of the Safeguarding and Clergy Discipline Measure (duty to have regard to House of Bishops' guidance on safeguarding children and vulnerable adults) by reviewing and amending its Safeguarding Policy in accordance with a template produced by the Church of England and incorporating the House of Bishops' document 'Promoting a Safer Church. Training requirements and opportunities were also identified and the parish achieved the completion of the Level 1 Safeguarding Action Plan. The PCC also reviewed and re-adopted the Parish's Domestic Abuse Policy and Statement.

Contracts of employment including an optional pension provision were agreed for two part-time paid staff, the Parish Administrator and the Cleaner.

Chris Fagan
PCC Secretary

2. ELECTORAL ROLL 2020

All Saints', like all other Anglican parishes, maintains an Electoral Roll, which is revised annually. Inclusion on the Electoral Roll is voluntary, but inclusion is a sign of commitment and entitles those on the Roll to vote in elections of lay members to the Parochial Church Council (PCC) and the Deanery Synod and to stand for election to these bodies and to the Diocesan Synod. Every six years a full review of the Roll is carried out and this was last done in 2019. Everyone who wished to join or remain on the Parish Electoral Roll was required to apply for enrolment. To qualify for inclusion you must be:

- aged 16 or over
- a member of the Church of England and a resident of All Saints' Parish, or
- a non-resident of the Parish who has habitually attended worship at All Saints' during the last six months, or
- a member in good standing of another church which believes in the Holy Trinity who declares her/himself a member of the Church of England and who has habitually attended worship at All Saints' during the last six months before enrolment.

Due to the postponement of the Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM) the 2020 revision was not completed until September and reported to the APCM on 27 September. Following the revision there were 85 members on the electoral roll, of whom 35 (41%) were non-resident in the Parish. Eight names were deleted from the Roll: Joan Dee, Martin Harris, Brenda Mayes, Susan Rodger and Peter Shafe died, Cristina Bucur and Kathryn Wakefield moved away from All Saints' and Chris Ashley our Director of Music following his appointment to a demanding full-time post in a new career development.



Six new applicants were enrolled; we welcomed to membership Kelly Buckle, Simon Galloway, Sarah Guest, Sam Jones, Cameron Selleck and Sarah Selleck.

Those on the Electoral Roll can ordinarily be expected to attend services and participate in activities of the church, including giving financial support to defray its costs of operation. Numbers on the Electoral Roll are used as one factor in determining the amount of the annual Parish Share which the parish is expected to contribute towards the expenses of the Diocese. In special circumstances such as sustained ill health an individual may not be able to continue to attend services or contribute financially and these circumstances will be taken into account when the Roll is revised.

An annual review of the Roll will be carried out in 2021 and the names of qualifying applicants will be added to the Roll. I would ask anyone who qualifies to seriously consider enrolment on the Electoral Roll. Please speak to me or to Rev Miriam if you wish to obtain further information or an application form.

Chris Fagan
Electoral Roll Officer

3. CHURCHWARDENS' REPORT ON THE FABRIC OF THE CHURCH AND BUILDINGS

Sadly in July Churchwarden Martin Harris passed away and he will be greatly missed by all at All Saints'.

At the rescheduled APCM meeting in September, Anne Oke was elected as Churchwarden and we all welcome her to this post.

Church Fabric

We had our Quinquennial Inspection in September 2017 which did not identify any major works requiring urgent attention. It did highlight items to be completed within the Quinquennial time frame of 5 years with varying priorities. The Buildings Committee continues to look at the items from the inspection and prioritise any work that is required to be carried out.

No major work has been carried out during the year but the Buildings Committee has been examining the possibilities of installing a wheelchair ramp and extending the balustrade at the back of the church between the North and South naves.

Routine maintenance has continued to be carried out inside and outside of the church during 2020 which includes the roof gutters / valleys and the heating system.

Church Inventory

Added to the Inventory has been a new high altar frontal, falls for the pulpit, lectern, legilium and the small altar; and also a celebrant's chasuble and stole. These have been produced to commemorate the late David Williams. Removed from the Inventory, 5 embroidered kneelers which have been given back to Mr Richard Killick at his request.

Faculties

There have been no faculties applied for in 2020 but three faculties have been signed off as completed.

- i) Upgrade work to the CTIL telecoms installation.
- ii) Upgrade to church CCTV system. Replace cameras and additional camera to cover choir vestry door.
- iii) Church Re-ordering. Replacement of church heating system, repainting church interior, removal of pews and replacement foldable / stacking chairs in North nave, floor sanding, construction of wood and glass balustrade between North and South nave.

Statutory Compliance

The safety checks for fire extinguishers, electrical/gas appliances, fire alarm system and the lightning conductor were carried out during 2020.

Thanks

A big thank you to all who help to keep All Saints' Church in such good condition be it inside or outside especially this year with the virus lockdowns and church closures. There are so many different jobs such as church cleaning, flower arranging, gardening and any kind of maintenance. These are undertaken by a small group of dedicated volunteers.

On behalf of everyone at All Saints', we would like to record our thanks to the excellent and very dedicated Ministerial Team we have at All Saints' – Miriam & Anne.

Lyndon Palmer and Anne Oke
Churchwardens

4. ARCHDEACON'S ANNUAL INSPECTION

Due to coronavirus restrictions the Archdeacon's annual inspection for 2020 was cancelled.

Lyndon Palmer and Anne Oke
Churchwardens

5. TREASURER'S REPORT

2020 started out well for our church finances. The jumble sale in February brought in £1,163 and by the end of March hall booking income stood at £9,287. Little did we know what lay ahead. The budget for 2020 was always going to be challenging with a forecast loss for the year of £13,796. Our hopes for clawing back any potential loss soon disappeared. In the end total income for the year, into the general fund, was £93,048 whilst expenditure was £106,323. At the end of a turbulent year our losses on the general fund amounted to £13,275.

This loss is only sustainable because of the reserves held by the church.

The result, although disappointing, is an improvement on the various forecasts that looked at different scenarios throughout the course of 2020. For a period in 2020 our only regular sources of income were from the giving income via the Parish Giving Scheme/standing orders and the rent generated by the phone mast in the bell turret.

Income

Income from the pledged giving envelopes and Parish Giving Scheme was more or less on budget. Not surprisingly cash collections were down and with the school carol services etc. cancelled and reduced numbers able to attend our Christmas Services, collection income from special services was also down. Donations however (excluding donations to specific projects), were £6,047 ahead of budget, for which we have to thank the generosity of our congregation in these exceptional times.

The area hardest hit was hall booking income where income was down £14,196. This figure would have been much worse were it not for the income generated in the first three months of 2020.

Fundraising opportunities were also badly affected. The imaginative sponsored pilgrimage and virtual balloon raise were well supported and together generated £3,914. This, added to the income from the February jumble sale, meant that fundraising ended the year £3,024 behind budget. The cancellation of the Christmas Market meant the loss of £6,000 in anticipated income and the cancellation of weddings saw fees from weddings and funerals fall behind budget.

There were two employees on the payroll at the end of 2020. A workplace pension scheme is available to our employees via NEST. Statutory pension contributions were paid into the scheme in 2020 for one employee.

Expenditure

Canon Miriam has always run a tight ship and so there was little scope to reduce expenditure in 2020. The bills for the fixed running costs of the church still had to be paid. The departure of the organist at the end of January did however result in a cost saving against music as we were able to employ locum musicians only as required. This accounts for much of the savings against music costs of £3,761.

The closure of the hall and church resulted in a saving of £3,457 against heating and lighting costs.

Exceptional Expenditure

Once the situation with the pandemic became clear the PCC took the decision that during 2020 non-essential expenditure should only be sanctioned where funding was in place. The re-pointing of the stone and brickwork to the south wall of the church and vestry was approved and scheduled prior to the COVID situation. Unfortunately, the final cost came in £1,124 over budget at £3,247. Due to changes to the initial specification the garden gates were also well over budget, but fortunately they were funded by the generosity of a parishioner and the All Saints' Parent and Toddler Group.

Variations against budget

The main variations against budget can be summarised as follows:

£6,047	Additional donation- income general
£3,761	Savings against music/organist costs
£3,550	Additional donations to projects
£3,457	Savings on heating/lighting
£2,765	Other general cost savings- church
£780	Other general cost savings - hall
£302	Savings against repairs and maintenance
(£14,196)	Reduced hall booking income
(£3,024)	Reduced fundraising income
(£1,124)	Overspend on re-pointing stonework
(£1,060)	Overspend on gates for church garden
(£605)	Wedding/funeral fee income down

Restricted and Designated Funds

The church holds a number of designated and restricted funds where money has either been given for a specific purpose, or money has been set aside by the church for a particular project.

In 2020 a most generous bequest of £15,000 was received by All Saints' in memory of the late Margaret Lumsden. The decision was taken to use a large part of this to cover the costs for the new balustrade (freeing up part of the David Williams legacy for other purposes).

New purple frontals were purchased in memory of the late David Williams, in appreciation of his service to All Saints' and in gratitude for his legacy that funded so much of the recent church refurbishment. A purple chasuble was acquired using the legacy previously received from the late Daphne Sharp.

Towards the end of 2020 a deposit was paid towards the cost of replacement windows for the hall. This was paid from the Hall Restoration Fund into which money has been set aside by the PCC in recent years.

Reserves

The loss of £13,275 against day to day running costs means that we have had to draw on our reserves in 2020.

At the start of 2020 our reserves stood at £39,705 and as a consequence of the need to cover the loss we finished the year with a balance of £26,430. It is thanks to the generosity of so many people in 2020 that the loss is not as bad as it might otherwise have been. With the ongoing COVID situation it is evident that 2021 will also be a difficult year for our church finances and it is vital that we have the balance of our reserves to fall back on, if need be.

The PCC continues to seek to maintain best practice by holding sufficient cash to cover approximately three months general expenditure to protect against unexpected loss of income or urgent one off un-budgeted expense.

2020 has highlighted certain issues with our financial model. All Saints' is dependent on hall booking income and fundraising to cover our day to day expenditure costs. Churches within our Deanery where planned giving covers the day to day running costs have fared much better in the past year. With income likely to continue to fall short of expenditure in the coming years, the proposed review of planned giving that was postponed in 2020 needs to be revisited as soon as circumstances allow.

My thanks and appreciation go to Dot Reynolds for her continued work as Independent Examiner of our accounts. I would also like to thank Janet Martin, our Planned Giving Officer, for her meticulous work in maintaining the records for the weekly offertory collections that make my work so much easier. I should also like to thank the team of Pat Foster, Chris Oke and Judith Man who meet weekly to count and bank the offertory.

Andrew Nobbs
Treasurer

6. SAFEGUARDING REPORT

Safeguarding those around us continues to be paramount in all that we do at All Saints' Church. This commitment is clearly displayed on our church and hall noticeboards, and on the website, with links to direct contacts for support within the church, from the Diocese of St Albans and from other organisations and charities.

To enable us to be fully informed and up to date, we are now signed up to the Safeguarding Dashboard. This provides a Roadmap of actions, policies and procedures that are required to be in place by the Church of England at the end of 2020, I am pleased to report that we completed Level 1 - Safer Foundations.



Picnic in the Orchard

DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) checks have been undertaken for new members of our church PCC and those holding roles of responsibility, and several people have commenced or renewed their safeguarding training online or via Zoom.

As always, please report any safeguarding anxiety or concern you may have to me or the Vicar. Contact with the Safeguarding Team can be made in person, by telephone or via this secure email address - safeguarding@croxleygreenallsaints.org.

Anne Oke (01923 220782)
Parish Safeguarding Officer

7. DINNER BELL

We managed about two and a half months of Dinner Bell before we had to sadly close in March. This time was as busy as ever, with lots of regular customers returning after the Christmas break.

We continued to serve freshly cooked hot food to a wide range of ages and, as always, it was lovely to watch people chatting and socialising over their meals. It was always great to hear the positive comments from our customers about the quality of the food, how much Dinner Bell meant to them and how much they enjoyed the whole Friday lunchtime experience, as well as hearing what was going on in their lives.

Thank you as ever to our group of loyal helpers: Chris Oke, Chris Fagan, Martin Harris, Vicky Vandy, Janet Gibbard and members of Rickmansworth Sixth Form who assisted us in making Dinner Bell possible. It raised valuable funds for the Church and made a big difference to a lot of people.

Janet Martin and Wendy Shafe

8. MONDAY TODDLER GROUP

The Monday Toddler group last met in March and members have missed the care and companionship of the group. Most of the members are on the Church data website which has made making contact simple and has also updated them with children's activities at church particularly at Christmas which could be booked.

We had hoped to reopen in the Autumn term. A visit to St Andrews Toddler group was helpful, observing organising with restricted numbers and the risk assessment. Increased Covid numbers postponed opening but when we do, it will be with the same careful, safe, previous planning.

Forty activity packs with crafts were delivered to each child before Christmas and doorstep contact on delivery was very well received. A new set of packs was delivered in January and planning is going forward to provide Easter packs.

We need to keep all members in our prayers, this is a very hard time and hope that the support we are giving is helping in a small way.

Jane Bates

9. FLOWER REPORT



Harvest Flowers

Being in the peacefulness of church and arranging flowers is a real privilege and one of my favourite times to be there. The calm atmosphere and using nature's harvest is a great combination to encourage creativity and still the busyness of the day.

So although our opportunities for flower arranging in church were limited last year, the times we arranged displays were very special. In September we were able to be in church for our Harvest Service which Wendy and I decorated with our gardens in our mind. We used dahlias from my allotment put in wellington boots and trugs of seeds with vegetables and gardening gloves and tools and greenery from our own as well as the church gardens.

In October we had a lovely time arranging flowers for the wedding of Rachel and Lawrence. They chose the most wonderful autumnal colours. The vibrant red, yellows, oranges and greens of the displays around the church and the bouquets and buttonholes really lit up the church, although the bride in her beautiful dress was by far the main focus.

We decorated the church for Christmas in red and silver to compliment the lovely Christmas tree next to the altar and in readiness to welcome people to the great variety of services that were held during

Advent. People, flowers, Christmas carols, choir singing and prayers, all worked together to make this time so meaningful.

Fran Bennett

10. CHOIR REVIEW

2020 was always going to be a year of changes and challenges for our choir when Chris Ashley left us as full-time organist and choir master in January and along with the COVID Pandemic it has been an interesting year which I think we have coped and adapted as a choir very well.

From mid-January to March before lock down hit everyone we adapted to having a rota of step-in organists to accompanying us for services and it was lovely to meet fellow musicians and see a variety of styles and ways to play and to start building relationship with them for returning visits.

Sarah Guest took control of the choir from February and has helped us as a choir to bring in new fresh ideas, enthusiasm and to start introducing a range of new and modern music. Grace also joined us as an accompanist on the piano playing for our services and practices and is a very welcomed addition for our choir. With Sarah running the choir and Grace being an excellent accompanist this is enabling us to continue to develop as a choir and learn new music.



Farewell to Chris

In September after some adaption to enable social distancing we managed to start again as a choir. We moved from singing in the choir stalls to the other side of the church which I think has improved our sound for the congregation. Although we had to reduce some of the music content (mainly the sung settings) we have found a new upbeat Gloria to bring vibrancy into the service. We have continued to sing traditional music and starting to bring in more modern music to create variety and balance. Among the new and inspiring music sung this year has been Restless is the Heart by Bernadette Farrell, We Will Remember them by Ogden and the Advent Hymn by Wesley/ Nockels.

The choir this year has continued to develop, and confidence has grown within the children and it has been amazing to see them grow and use their voices to sing beautiful solos on a regular basis and particular in the Remembrance Service and Christmas services.

Overall, we have been grateful that we have even been able to sing as a choir for services given restrictions and issues arising in the year and to be able to add to the depth and texture of the services each week. Thank you to all the members, organists and accompanists for their talents and time given this year.

Samantha Beard: (Choir member)

(Please note I volunteered to do this review this year given Sarah's work pressures at Watford Hospital.)

11. BUILDINGS AND HALL COMMITTEES

To start by looking back to recent years, 2018 and 2019 saw the biggest restoration and re-ordering programme the church had enjoyed since repair of the WWII bomb damage 70 years earlier: hanging of the memorial doors in 2018 and during 2019, retiling the roof of the south nave, and re-ordering the church interior; re-ordering that included a new heating system, repainting the walls, removal of the pews from the north nave followed by sanding and sealing the floor; a glass-panelled balustrade constructed between the two naves. The Sacristy was moved from the west to the east end of the

church. The overall effect has been to open up, lighten and brighten the church, and make its use more flexible and appealing as both a sacred and a secular space.

The church has already gained a great deal from the opening up of the space, very noticeable during the first year of the Covid19 pandemic.

The choir could be moved to the north nave where social distancing is readily possible and this much loved feature of our worship maintained. And then, without pews the church can admit a greater number of our congregation safely as they are easily able to sit 2m apart. Even at our busiest time at Christmas we managed to accommodate all families who wished to attend services, something that would have been well - nigh impossible without the changes.

During 2020 plans were drawn up to complete the re-ordering by creating an access ramp between the north and south naves for wheel-chair users and continuing the balustrade to the west wall. It is intended that the work should be completed during 2021 in time for the All Saints' 150th birthday in 2022.



Garden Gates

A new project completed during the year was the putting in of garden gates, intended to improve child safety when the garden is being used for parties, barbecues and, as at last Christmas, Christingle and Forest Church's hybrid 'Foringle'. There is also not much doubt that the gates have greatly enhanced the garden's look – now much more finished and cared for. The work of repointing the north wall of the church and repairing mullions in the west windows flagged up in the 1917 Quinquennial Inspection was largely finished; damaged tiles were replaced on the porch roof. Thought started to be given to restoring the three faces of the church's turret clock, now showing increasing signs of their age.

At the beginning of 2020 the Committee's attention turned to the church hall. Several years had passed since the last major works were carried out – the new kitchen, restoration of the hall floor, new boilers and improved radiators, improved insulation. The committee room had been refurbished with a newly sanded and sealed floor, improved lighting and new cupboards. But years had passed and with it new needs had made themselves felt. The time had come to take a fresh look at the hall and to think again about its future.

Joint meetings between the Buildings and Hall Committees began to be held. A major survey of the hall building was carried out, showing reassuringly that that building was structurally sound, and dry. Small-scale repairs to the roof were made, the front doors restored and a gravel path built on the east side. The chance was taken to improve ventilation on that side by uncovering the air-bricks and damp course. As in earlier years, as for the church building, the guttering and down piping were cleared.

More ambitiously, the two committees advised that major work was needed and should begin with the increasingly dilapidated hall windows. Distorted frames have for years prevented several of them from closing completely, resulting in draughts coming in and heat going out. They have also made the hall appear rather neglected, not a good look for a building relying on being heavily used by the village and further afield. After much advice, and as much discussion, it was decided to replace the original 90 year-old Crittall windows by double glazed aluminium framed ones, the work to be done in early 2021. And although retaining their separateness the two committees are looking forward to working closely together in 2021 and beyond then as we engage increasingly with bringing the hall further into the future.

All Saints' and its church hall were built to be the centre of Croxley's local spiritual, ceremonial, collective and community life. The buildings are a historical record of, and a testament to, the history of the village, those who have lived in it and for it, not to say sometimes died for it. History of course

never ends. The work of the Buildings and Hall Committees over this last year is the strongest affirmation of faith in the future history of All Saints' as the social and spiritual heart of the parish and the village.

This report can't be allowed to end without paying a fitting tribute to all those whose experience and expertise we drew on during the year, in other words those who advised us and actually did the work, the results of which are now part of the visible enduring physical record of the church buildings and grounds: Our warmest thanks to Tony Booth, Kay Thomas, Ernest Bradley and Sean, Duncan Oliver, Peter O'Brien, Mark Glendinning, Graham and Zoe Martin and Tony Rita.

*John Galloway: Secretary Buildings Committee
Sam Jones: Chair Hall Committee.*

12. CHURCHES TOGETHER IN CROXLEY GREEN

All Saints' has continued to actively participate in all of the Ecumenical events for 2020 albeit that these were somewhat reduced during the year due to COVID restrictions. We attended the AGM and Committee meetings as were practical, the Clergy have also met via Zoom in order to liaise and plan for joint adventures. This also offered them a valuable forum during these unusual times. We were able to undertake the "Culture of Invitation" via Zoom and also the Bach Cello Concert took place to raise funds for the Parish Nurse. We were also able to continue to distribute "It's Your Move" books to local schools.

The Croxley Green Foodbank has continued to provide a continuous and valuable resource for the people of Croxley Green throughout the epidemic. We have been there for those in need during this unusual time and acted as a focal collection point for the generous donations from the local community. More information can be found at <https://rickmansworth.foodbank.org.uk> where the wider involvement in the area can be seen.

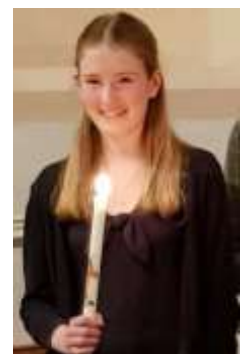
The Parish Nurse project in Croxley Green has gone from strength to strength during the year. An additional appointment has been made with the recruitment of Ruth Owusu Anfah as a Mental Health Nurse, only the second such parish worker in the country. Finances are on a sound basis with valuable support coming from the Parish Council and Three Rivers and Watford Trust, amongst others, appreciating the work of the faith-based group during the COVID crisis. More information can be found at <https://www.croxleyparishnurse.org>

Nik Bennett

MEETING THE CHALLENGES OF COVID-19

13. CONFIRMATION

It was an absolute joy that, almost on the eve of the first lockdown in March, many were able to join with Abbie Guest at her confirmation service held in St Peter's Church Mill End on 8th March 2020. It was a wonderful service led by Bishop Alan. It was great to have so many people from our own congregation in attendance and I know that this meant a lot to Abbie. As the lockdown was announced two days later on the 10th March it was to be another three months plus before Abbie was able to receive communion at All Saints' albeit in one kind only and in line with restrictions in place at the time. To share in such a special



service prior to lockdown provided all who attended with a sense of hope as we faced the challenges ahead and Abbie's obvious joy at being confirmed lifted us all.

Miriam

14. SUNDAY WORSHIP

It was early in 2020 that someone suggested to me that it would be good to record our weekly sermons and put them on our church website. I have to say that I wasn't keen! However, it seems those words were prophetic as with the ferocity of the Pandemic looming the decision was made by the powers that be at the Church of England, that churches should close to ensure the safety of worshippers for an unspecified length of time. This led to an intensive few days of IT self-education supported via the telephone by our very own techno-wiz Lyndon Palmer to get me up to speed so that we could broadcast our main Sunday morning services live through Facebook (which were then loaded onto our web page each week for those not on Facebook to view) from the comfort of the vicarage dining room!



Live Streaming

After reflecting on the sort of livestream worship that people might find helpful we decided to follow an informal service of the word and incorporate an Agape sharing of bread (or biscuit or chocolate depending on whatever people had available). It was very surreal facing a computer screen and looking at myself as I led the services of worship but what an encouragement it was when people hit the 'like' button or shared a friendly comment on the Facebook page during the service. Whilst this style of worship was not ideal there was a great sense of 'dispersed togetherness' as we came together each Sunday. For those who were not able to access services online a weekly order of service was delivered to their homes along with a reflection based on the Gospel reading.

As time went on so our IT skills flourished and with Lyndon's support I was able to progress to using a system called Online Broadcasting Streaming (OBS) which meant that we could include recordings of other people leading the reading, intercessions and singing which provided a much needed variety of faces (not to mention deepening our worship experiences!). Thank you to everyone who sent in recordings of themselves, reading, praying or singing, your involvement really helped us to move our worship into a deeper and more engaging experience.

It was a real delight to find that along with many of our regular church attenders, our 'on line' congregation each week included people who had once been regular members of our church but had moved away as well as people who were new to us and that the majority of these have continued to follow our services on line even when we returned in to church in the summer.

In addition to Facebook livestreaming our Sunday worship we also ventured into the world of zooming services. This enabled people to see each other on screen which was lovely, however the technical issues that often arose with poor connections, people forgetting to mute (or unmute) their microphones, the distractions of looking at what was behind people (very interesting!!) etc meant that we decided to favour using Facebook live.

By mid-June, with a reduction in the numbers of Covid cases across the country, restrictions were relaxed and the churches were once more allowed to open for public worship. However, there were stringent precautions that had to be put in place via risk assessments (led by Ann Palmer) which included maintaining social distancing, wearing facemasks, using copious amounts of hand gel as we entered and left the church, communion in one kind only which we received in our seats and sadly no congregational singing! Despite all of this it was wonderful to be back in church worshipping together. We decided that as we had a Facebook following, Lyndon would continue to livestream our worship.

After a month or so, we were advised that choirs could once more sing in church again provided there was a comprehensive Risk Assessment completed and even more precautions were put in place for the safety of choir members and the congregation. To meet these requirements the choir moved from their usual place in the choir stalls to sit in the north side of the church. It was so wonderful to have live music again and a range of musical styles led by Sarah Guest with accompaniment on the piano by Grace.

Towards the end of 2020 we had even re-introduced a monthly 8am service using the Book of Common Prayer, although another lockdown towards the end of December meant that these had to be stopped again.

Whilst the Covid pandemic has had (and continues to have) a significant impact on our ability to worship together it has by no means dampened our enthusiasm or commitment to worshipping God together and growing as a community. Some of the enforced changes that have been thrust on us in the course of the year have reaped some interesting outcomes and will provide interesting insights into our worship styles and how we might grow our church community post pandemic.

Miriam

15. COURSES

February 2020: As normal, Miriam invited people to join a Lent course and about 20 people started to meet weekly in the church for 'The Prayer Course'. Through online videos, Pete Greig woke us up to think differently about prayer. It was so good, that when Lockdown arrived, a number of the group morphed into a WhatsApp group so that we could continue the course together.

The conversations arising from The Prayer Course gave the group enthusiasm to search for more ways to deepen our understanding of our faith and the early summer period of lockdown gave us the opportunity. So we morphed once again, this time into a Zoom group to explore another online series called 'Lyfe' run by The Bible Society. Over the summer, we dipped into various themes from justice to the Holy Spirit and found great support from each other in sharing this time to enrich our faith.

Anne Oke

16. PALM SUNDAY, HOLY WEEK TO EASTER DAY

Was it different from usual? Yes! But what an amazing difference!

With the help of a Holy Week booklet prepared by Miriam, and with Miriam leading us in daily livestream morning and evening prayer, Holy Week took on a special time in the quiet of our own homes. It felt as if we personally journeyed with Jesus as we listened or read and reflected on the bible passage of each event in that most dramatic of weeks, and then, by making or finding a simple object



Easter Garden

symbolic of that day, we created a scene: a Holy Week Space. It was, for many who participated in this week, a time when we felt closer to Our Lord than ever before. Good Friday was such a special time when via livestream Miriam took us to six of the Stations of the Cross on our church wall, stopping at each for a thought-provoking reflection with a beautiful Passiontide hymn. And in this way, we could relive Jesus's great sacrifice for us all on the cross.

On Holy Saturday, technology enabled us to watch as Miriam lit the Paschal candle in the vicarage garden on Easter Evening. Then the All Saints' congregation - and those further field - were able to celebrate in the great joy of Jesus Christ's resurrection in their own homes, by reading the copies of the service (delivered through our doors or via email) or by coming together in virtual fellowship for the online Easter Sunday Service. Wherever we were, we could all say, 'Alleluia, Christ is risen. He is risen indeed. Alleluia!'.

Anne Oke

17. FAMILY SERVICE



Family Service in Church Garden

What an exciting year this has been for the Family Service! Who would have thought that we would have held services in the church, in the church garden for Harvest, in the hall (October) and livestream on Facebook (and then available on the website) when we couldn't meet in person!

The Family Service Team has delivered the livestream services in surprising and innovative ways, bringing God's love into our everyday situations.

Videos were made to retell bible stories - either by creating mini 'sets' with puppets or play figures, or by some of us standing in the River Gade with fishing nets recalling Jesus with the disciples, or talking outside the local Dentists' on the theme of 'Waiting'. We've

had families send in their photos and video clips to share online. Our prayer moments have been innovative too – using feathers, bubbles and glitter shakers to focus our thoughts. And, thanks to our guitar players, we've always had time to sing God's praises!

In thanks for all the support our church families had made, we decided to help them with the theme of 'Waiting' for Christmas (under lockdown) by delivering each family with an Advent parcel with 24 layers! Within each layer was a Christmas themed activity to make as they counted down the days to Christmas. We were very happy that the children enjoyed them so much.

Anne Oke

18. MORNING PRAYER

The live-streaming of Morning Prayer has been such an enjoyable and enlightening way to begin the day and has given new opportunities to enrich our relationship with God in many ways. Knowing that others are there at the same time has provided much comfort and focus to our days.

For each person taking part the service will have different meanings but for me personally I've loved the variety of hymns and music and visual images of different parts of the church really showing us that each day is different and new and I have really enjoyed reading parts of the Bible that I hadn't looked at before.

Miriam's lovely thoughtful reflections have inspired me to write down each day a sentence from the reflection that struck a chord with me and I now have a great selection of these that I can refer to at any time of happiness or sadness, or quietness. There are two that I keep with me at all times:

Today, God, is your gift to me, may I use it well.
Find Joy, however small, in all you do and see.

Fran Bennett

19. ADVENT AND CHRISTMAS SERVICES

Christmas was going to happen wherever we were with Government restrictions and the congregation of All Saints' made sure that the people of Croxley Green would have a spiritual meaningful Advent and celebration of the birth of Jesus Christ.

The Christmas trees went up outside and inside the church and were decorated beautifully by the children and adults. There was much hard work and working together with many people involved to make sure that the services reached as many people as possible with safely distanced services inside the church and live-streamed on Facebook.

We began our preparations for a time of 'Waiting' for the Birth of Jesus with such a thoughtful, meaningful candlelit Advent service. This peaceful calm atmosphere gave us quiet time and space to meditate. The music from the choir and beautiful violin pieces played by Vicky and Katherine made this service very special.

As we journeyed towards Christmas Day we enjoyed more occasions to take part in and reflect upon. From The Advent Reflection where the church was open during the day time and evening for us to have a silent time at prayer stations, where there were pictures and readings to help focus our thoughts, to the lively Crib Services where the Youth Group so ably entertained us with their upbeat modern version of the Christmas story. Not forgetting the opportunities to listen to the readings and the carols, and hum along, at the Carol Services.



Christmas Crib

Many of us braved the wintry weather to make our Christingles and food for Santa's reindeer at our Foringle Services, socially distanced in the garden under gazebos. The garden looked magical with its Christmas lights threaded through the trees. It was lovely to share this fun time with so many families and to be able to join with the choir as they entertained us with their carol singing.

This all took us to Midnight Mass and Christmas Day when we could join in with the services and share the joyful celebration of the birth of Jesus Christ with those in church and watching the services at home. The wonderful music and choir singing, when we couldn't, gave us time to reflect upon all the words being sung and said and to think about how fortunate we were to be able to celebrate this time in all the different ways we had.

Fran Bennett

20. SOCIAL AND FUNDRAISING COMMITTEE

2020 has certainly been a different year for us all, including the Social and Fundraising Committee. We started the year with a calendar packed with proposed events, sadly most of which never happened. However, we did manage to put some plans into place.

The year started very successfully in February, with a record breaking Jumble Sale and was followed by our Puzzlemania afternoon in March. This was the first time we had held this event and what a lovely afternoon it was, with friends and families poring over jigsaws and word puzzles, determined to complete them.



On the Pilgrimage

There then followed a bit of a hiatus in activities until Janet Martin and Sam Jones proposed the Sponsored Pilgrimage in June. Over the course of one weekend, about 40 people took part with the aim to walk, run or cycle the combined distance of approximately 300km (or the distance from Croxley Green to Canterbury); this was just about completed on day 1! The participants had a WhatsApp group where they posted updates, photos and maps to inspire each other which worked amazingly well and, despite a fair amount of rain, over 704km was completed. Although we were not able to join together to do this, there was a real sense of connection and team spirit, as well as competition!

We carried on searching for alternative events and we came up with holding a Virtual Balloon Race from the 27th September to 4th October. This date was chosen to mark the 150th Anniversary of the laying of the Church's foundation stone and we aimed for a target of 150 balloons. In the end, we had over 230 balloons flying around our virtual island. It was great fun following our balloon's progress (or lack of it in my case!) and many families had mini-competitions amongst themselves. It was lovely that it was something people were able to participate in all around the world, including Australia, Tasmania and Canada.

To round the year off, we held a mini Christmas Market in the Church Hall at the beginning of December, where handmade cards, Christmas lanterns and other goods were sold. Finally, we supplied and served mulled wine and other refreshments at the three Foringle services in the Church garden on 13th December.

So, looking back at 2020 it may not have been the year we had planned, but we still managed to raise much-needed funds for the Church and had some fun along the way!

Ann Palmer
Chair, Social and Fundraising Committee

21. COMMUNICATIONS TEAM

The Communications Team continues to oversee the All Saints' social media platforms such as the Website, Facebook and Twitter and other forms of communication within and outside the church.

For 2020 our focus of attention was the church website. In January it was decided that a redesign to modernise its appearance and user friendliness was required.

We looked at various different companies that provide easy to edit church websites and after looking at the options picked ChurchInsight as our preferred option. Then after months of design work by the Comms Team the new website went live in October. We hope that you like our new website and find it easy to navigate around. This choice gave us the option to change the church administration software and provide a saving on yearly costs to the church.



New Website

The Team also chose to have a focus on Facebook as our main means of communicating with and beyond our congregation and community. In the last 18 months we have more than doubled our Facebook following to now 358 people. This has been an important way to reach out to and be able to livestream to the congregation through various lockdowns.

We have continued since March to livestream our Sunday services through Facebook and to also offer Morning Prayer three mornings a week. The live streaming of Morning Prayer has allowed us to regularly reach 8-12 people live and many others at their leisure. This is hugely significant for us as we were previously only averaging 1 or 2 people at most.

The use of social media has also helped us to continue to function as a church even though we have been dispersed. Applications such as Zoom and WhatsApp allowed us to continue to offer the end of the prayer course we were mid-way through before we went into lockdown and then the follow-up Lyfe courses.

The use of Zoom was also beneficial to our PCC and sub committees who were able over the year to continue to meet virtually when face to face meetings were not permitted. To say that many of us hadn't heard of Zoom 12 months ago is an understatement but we all rose to the challenge to learn how to use new technology and find new ways to meet and communicate.

The new website and admin software was utilised in setting up a booking system for Christmas services due to coronavirus restrictions.

You can follow what is happening at All Saints' via our Website, Facebook page and Twitter site using the links below:-

Website - <http://www.croxleygreenallsaints.org/>

Facebook - <http://www.facebook.com/croxleyallsaintschurch>

Twitter - @CroxleyAllSaint

Lyndon Palmer

22. CHURCH MAGAZINE

The Magazine Team is made up of four members: Fran Bennett, Shelagh Booth, Janet Martin and Wendy Shafe. In the middle of producing the March magazine for 2020, the announcement of Lockdown threw us off course a little and we had to change how we worked. As a result, the March magazine had less in it than usual, but we were soon back to gathering articles and information and into a new production system.

Unfortunately, there were fewer Church events to advertise and report on, but we did report on Church life as it happened as well as how the changes due to COVID were affecting us. Thank you to the many people who put pen to paper and wrote articles and poems for us all to enjoy and keep us in touch with one another.

The Magazine distribution has also had to change. Very few copies are printed, and most readers now access it through our website. The added bonus to this is that the photos are viewed in colour.

2020 has presented us with challenges but thanks to everyone who has worked on producing and distributing the Magazine and to Tony Booth, our proof-reader, we have managed to produce a Magazine every month in spite of everything.

Wendy Shafe

23. MOTHERS' UNION: A LITTLE SUPPORT FOR OUR NHS

At the beginning of lockdown, Janet Staerck, leader of Mothers' Union at St Oswald's, approached Miriam to ask if any members of All Saints' would be able to help with a new initiative to help the NHS: making headbands to ease the rub caused by the constant wearing of facemasks. Some of our congregation provided fabric, and a small band of MU members 'plus' volunteered to help either by machining the headbands, or by sewing on the 2 buttons for each headband. After several weeks this small team had made over 100 headbands which were delivered to the staff at Watford Hospital and two local care homes, Croxley House and Meresworth.



As you can see, although we don't meet as a group anymore, MU members at All Saints' are always ready and willing to help where we can, and we were proud to do just a little to help our sterling NHS staff.

Anne Oke

24. ALL SAINTS' CHARITIES

THE REVEREND DAVID KENNETH WILLIAMS TRUST **Registered Charity No. 803706**

The Reverend David Kenneth Williams Trust was established in 1989 in accordance with the wishes of Reverend David Kenneth Williams as expressed in his will dated 4 February 1989. The income from the sale of his house at 36 Winton Crescent, Croxley Green provided the capital, which was invested. The objects of the charity are such Christian religious and charitable purposes whether parochial or outside the Parish of All Saints Croxley Green as in all respects the Trustees shall from time to time consider proper.

The focus of the Trust has been to use its assets to support the mission and outreach of All Saints'

In past years the capital assets of the Trust were used to purchase equipment for church services and youth work, employment of youth workers, support for the church choir, construction of the Parish Office and Youth Room, installation of CCTV and part-funding of an administrative post, now the Parish Administrator. More recently the Trust financed the initial and operating costs of a new computer software system to hold relevant data and enable members of the congregation and others with links to All Saints' to be contacted with information about church services and other activities. In addition to other benefits, this has facilitated the computerisation of Church Hall bookings and fee collection, which has increased church income. The arrangement was changed to part-funding of the costs, with the balance paid for from the parish accounts, but the Trust's contributions ceased in June 2018.

This spending substantially reduced the capital of the Trust and its income, which consisted of interest on a bank account. Following the recession of 2008 and subsequent years the amount of bank interest paid annually shrank to very little and eventually the Trust was not able to make any financial contribution to parish income. To seek to increase the capital of the Trust, in 2017 the Trustees invested most of the remaining capital in Accumulation shares of the Church of England Central Board of Finance (CBF) Investment Fund, with the aim of growing the capital over time. This investment has been maintained and will continue in 2021. As the Trust's financial year runs from April to April, the year-end accounts for 2020/21 will be prepared in April 2021.

The Vicar and Churchwardens of the Parish of All Saints, Croxley Green, Rickmansworth, Herts. are the ex officio Trustees and have the right to nominate and appoint all new Trustees of the Trust. They appoint the Clerk to the Trustees, who is also a Trustee of this Charity. During 2020 the Churchwardens were Martin Harris, who sadly died on 14 July, and Lyndon Palmer. Anne Oke was elected as a Churchwarden at the Annual Meeting on 23 September in succession to Martin. The current Clerk to the Trustees is Christopher Fagan of 75 Windmill Drive, Croxley Green, Rickmansworth, Herts WD3 3FB.

Chris Fagan
Clerk to the Trustees

All Saints' Parish Charities

THE GEORGE GURNEY CHARITY FOR THE SICK POOR, Registered Charity No. 212964
(previously registered as The George Gurney Bequest)

THE CROXLEY GREEN ANNUITY FUND, Registered Charity No.212965
(previously registered as The Cameron Bequest Annuity Fund)

ALL SAINTS CROXLEY GREEN CHARITIES ACCOUNTS (current and deposit bank accounts

Year Ending 31 December 2020

The George Gurney Charity for the Sick Poor was established in 1923, using a bequest following the sale of "The Hawthorns", in order to provide a qualified trained nurse for the benefit of the poor inhabitants of Croxley Green. Following the establishment in 1948 of the National Health Service the Charity Commission approved a change of object to relieving individual cases of hardship resulting from illness and providing amenities such as invalid chairs to elderly and poor people in All Saints' and St Oswald's Parishes, with Christmas gifts for elderly and sick people.

The Croxley Green Annuity Fund was established in 1920 by the Misses Cameron following the sale of Berean Cottages, where the Church Hall now stands, to provide pensions to three poor and aged residents of Croxley Green or Rickmansworth Parishes. This fund was established in memory of the late Thomas Woods of Durrants. All Saints' Croxley Green Charities Bank Account was established in 1990 using later legacies and donations. There are now two accounts, a current account and a deposit (interest earning) account.

The two registered Charities operate in conjunction with the All Saints Croxley Green Charities Account to provide additional financial support to less affluent parishioners on a one-off or regular basis, and to provide a financial supplement at Christmas. In 2018 the Trustees agreed to make three annual contributions of £1,000 in successive years to support the post of the Parish Nurse for Croxley Green. The final instalment of these instalment of these contributions was paid in 2020.

The George Gurney Charity's capital is invested in income shares of the Charities Official Investment Fund and that of the Croxley Green Annuity Fund is invested in income shares of the CBF Investment Fund. Income accruing from both registered charities' investments is transferred into the two bank accounts and disbursed to beneficiaries. Total income received during 2020 was £1,698.68 and expenditure was £2,000.

Trustees of the Charities ex officio are the Vicar and Churchwardens of: All Saints' Church, The current Churchwardens 2019 are Lyndon Palmer and Anne Oke. The Charities are administered on behalf of the Trustees by Christopher Fagan, Clerk to the Trustees, 75 Windmill Drive, Croxley Green, Rickmansworth, Herts. WD3 3FB.

Chris Fagan: Clerk to the Trustees

25. VICAR'S REPORT

What a year it has been! Who would have thought in January 2020 that by March we would be held in the grips of a global pandemic, with life changing impacts in all aspects of our daily living. To say that the world was unprepared is an understatement. Did we ever think that there would be a time when the Government would close all places of worship for an unspecified period of time?

As the familiar structures to our worship, fellowship and Christian witness crashed around us we had to think fast, work fast and learn fast to ensure that we could continue to be the church in the community, for the community, serving the community, bringing the presence of God into a confused and frightened world.

Once the initial shock had subsided we quickly looked at alternative ways of 'doing and being church'. I have been truly amazed and delighted by the adaptability of people in our congregation. There were fantastic ideas for fundraising and the commitment to reach out and support one another.



#First Sunday in January before Covid-19

At the start of the lockdown I started a weekly letter for every member of the congregation to encourage and inform people about what was happening. This has continued and I understand is valued by those who read it. It goes out onto our website and into the email in boxes of our congregation members. For those who do not have e mail or access to IT a hard copy of the letter and any other information, service sheets, magazines etc are delivered. One of the huge benefits of this is that those who have become unable to physically attend church even before the lockdown are now kept up to date and informed weekly of what we are doing and what we are planning, enabling them to feel very much a part still of our church community.

We had already begun our Lent Course of Prayer prior to the lockdown and, because the videos and material were on line we were able to continue with this with people watching the video's at home and then engaging with a discussion via WhatsApp. It wasn't long before we mastered Zoom which enabled us to meet as groups online and continue with our bible study courses as well as key meetings such as PCC and the associated committee meetings. Initially clergy were not allowed to enter into the church and all worship had to be led from home. I went through a significantly steep IT learning curve as I gained the necessary skills to enable me to live stream worship on our Facebook page. It was a strange experience looking at myself on screen as I led worship. As the weeks went on, and with the huge support of Lyndon, we were able to become more adventurous in the IT packages we used alongside Facebook live, and the introduction of an Online Broadcasting System meant that I could include pre-recorded videos of people doing the readings and our young people leading us with singing. In addition to the Sunday service we also livestreamed morning prayer three mornings a week and night prayer three evenings a week so that there was a livestreamed service every day. It has been amazing how we have now built up a virtual congregation who tune in regularly to our on line services.

We breathed a sigh of relief when we were able to resume public worship in church on 19th July. However there were strict guidelines that we had to follow, including hand sanitising, social distancing, no singing and everyone had to wear a mask. Services had to be short to reduce the amount of time people were in the building together and communion was in one kind only i.e. we were not allowed to use the chalice. Risk assessments became a necessity and I am grateful to Ann Palmer who took on responsibility for putting together the risk assessments and updating them on a regular basis whenever Government of Church of England guidance was updated. It was wonderful to be worshipping back in church again with one another. We decided to continue livestreaming the

services on Facebook and Lyndon took on the role of producer ensuring that the IT systems worked, putting together the necessary slides for hymns etc and a myriad of other things that have to be done to ensure the smooth production of livestreamed worship. I am hugely grateful to Lyndon for the enormous amount of work that he has done and continues to do every week to enable us to livestream our worship, it takes hours and hours of his time each week.



Return to Church in July

It was wonderful when restrictions were eased further and we were able to have a choir again. In order to enable social distancing the choir used the north side of the church. We were very blessed to have a young and brilliant accompanist called Grace and under the leadership of Sarah Guest the choir provided beautiful music that really enhanced our worship using a range of musical genres. Thank you so much to Sarah for taking on the leadership and organisation of the choir and to all of our choir members.

Due to the restriction on the number of people we were able to accommodate in church we decided that we would livestream our annual Service of Remembrance for the Departed. It was a joy that so many people tuned into this service from all over the country and were really moved by it. It was wonderful that the choir

were able to sing at this service adding to its beauty and peacefulness. Zoe Martin and Abbie Guest sang Pie Jesu by Andrew Lloyd Webber which was absolutely beautiful. Afterwards the church was open for people to come in and light a candle for their loved ones which many people responded to.

As we moved into the winter months the numbers of people with Covid rose quite sharply and once again we had to close our doors for public worship from 6th November. Sadly this meant that we were unable to hold our annual Remembrance Sunday service. We had hoped that there would be a short outdoor service on The Green but this was also cancelled by the Parish Council amid concerns of managing the numbers of those that might attend and being able to maintain social distancing. Instead we had a short service of Remembrance at the memorial in church and we were delighted that William Vandy was able to play his trumpet for the Last Post and Reveille.

We were unable to hold our Advent evening service in person but with some beautiful live music played by Katherine Vandy and Vicky Vandy and pre-recorded music from the choir we were able to enjoy a moving service of readings and music to start our Advent season.

We were able to re-open our church for public worship again on 6th December following previous guidelines and risk assessments. As always Christmas is a busy time and it was a challenge to work out how we might be able to accommodate those who would want to attend our services. We decided that we would have to do repeat services for Foringle, Carol Service and Crib Service and you will have already read earlier in this report how brilliantly these went. We had to develop a booking system which Sam Jones and Lyndon devised and which Lyndon managed. It was a huge undertaking alongside the work Lyndon was already doing for our Sunday morning worship and he spent hours and hours each day on his computer, but with his eye to details and ability to re-juggle chairs numerous times we were able to hold these services with maximum capacity in a safe way. Thank you again to Lyndon!!

Whilst we were able to have all of our Christmas Services in church with people present, a rapid increase in the numbers of people infected and the worry of a far more infectious mutation of the virus meant that we had to close the church again for public worship from the end of December.

Alongside our Sunday morning services we have also managed to continue with our Family Services and moved them online as well apart from a couple of live services that we had last summer when the

church was open. To enable this to happen there has been a lot of 'thinking outside of the box' to develop interesting and innovative ways of presenting the service on line that would be interesting and appealing to children and their families.

Thank you so much to Jane Bates, Fran Bennett and Anne Oke who have taken on new challenges (such as being filmed fishing in the river or on the street) so willingly, and to those who have supported us with music. Once again thank you to Lyndon who has taken lots of clips of our filming and you tube films and other clips and formed them together to enable a smooth flow throughout the service between video and live.

The closure of the church and hall has had a huge impact on our income and our ability to manage our necessary expenditure on things like gas etc. Whilst our usual fundraising opportunities were not feasible under the lockdown some innovating thinking enabled us to hold a virtual Pilgrimage, a virtual Balloon Race and a mini Christmas Market. Thank you so much to Sam Jones, Janet Martin and Ann Palmer for your hard work and input to these events as well as to everyone who took part and enabled us to raise some significant funds for our church.



Service of Remembrance for the Departed

Thank you also to everyone who has maintained their commitment to their weekly giving to the church either online, through giving envelopes or cheques/cash. It is so appreciated and really demonstrates the love and commitment that we all have to our church and to God. Thank you to Andrew Nobbs, our Treasurer who always leads us in matters financial with such calm and detail which enables us to make sound financial decisions. Also thank you to Janet Martin our Planned Giving Officer.

Alongside the challenges of Covid we have faced the sadness of death. Joan Dee, Brenda Mayes, Isobel Sanders and Margaret Hobbs,(who had celebrated her 100th birthday in the summer) all of whom had been regular and committed members of our church community all died over the course of the year. We were also saddened by the death of our Churchwarden Martin Harris, whose cheerful smile, lively personality, deep faith and huge commitment to our church always brought a sense of joy and expectation to our services and social events. The memory of Martin that will always stick in my mind is when, during a last, very lively hymn at a service he broke into dance with Rae Bowyer; like King David, he loved to dance before the Lord (*2 Samuel 6 v14*). May they all rest in peace, and rise in glory.

As I read through the various reports in this document I am left feeling amazed and overwhelmed at how God has lifted us and carried us through this difficult time and is continuing to do so. I am also overwhelmed by the generosity and commitment of you all for everything that you have done in your own big or small way to keep us moving forward and staying positive. Everything from your prayers, your support and acceptance of the changes in the way we worship, visiting, maintaining phone contact and fundraising has drawn us so much closer together as a Christian community. Thank you for your commitment to keeping in touch and encouraging one another by telephone, small acts of kindness and practical help, I know this has been valued by everyone.

Thank you to Wendy Shafe and her team for continuing to put together and publish our Parish Magazine every month with interesting and informative articles mostly provided by congregation members.

Thank you to Alick Burge for quietly but diligently keeping the church clock wound up and working every week and cutting the grass in the garden and to all who help in any way to keep our gardens looking so lovely.

Thank you also to the PCC for all they have done over the year, for the difficult decisions they have had to make regarding public safety and for their commitment to keep moving forward everything that needs to move forward.

Thank you to John Galloway and the Buildings Committee for pressing forward with projects such as the hall windows, garden gates and planning for the future.

Thank you to Revd Dr Anne Shaw and Revd. Ron Hibbert for their unfailing support and encouragement and the wonderful gifts that they shared with us including their preaching that so richly enhances our worship and spiritual growth.

A big thank you to our churchwardens, Lyndon Palmer and Anne Oke for everything that you do to oversee the ongoing work and mission of our church and for the support and encouragement you afford to me personally.

As we look ahead into 2021 there is a lot of learning and experiences for us to take forward and develop. It is widely recognised that church post Covid will be different although what it might look like is not yet clear and I suppose will be dependent on how each church responds to what they have experienced and learnt. In 2021, we will need to explore what our mission and outreach looks like, what and who God is calling us to be and how we can effectively bring the presence, hope and love of Jesus to a post Covid society. I think we are moving towards exciting times in the growth and development of the church and Christian faith locally and nationally.

I know with the level of commitment, creativity and faith that we as a congregation have shown during this last year that there are even better times ahead for our church and I look forward to exploring with you all and in the presence of the Holy Spirit what the coming years will bring.

I leave you with the words from Jeremiah 29 v 11 that we have taken to heart and that have guided us over the years in all that we have done over the years that I have been privileged to be your vicar:

“For I know the plans I have for you,” says the LORD. “They are plans for good and not for disaster, to give you a future and a hope.”

God bless you all.

Miriam