

ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2021
THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF
ST JOHN'S CHURCH, STANSTED MOUNTFITCHET

Aims, purposes and objectives of the PCC

St John's Parochial Church Council (PCC) has the responsibility of co-operating with the incumbent in promoting in the ecclesiastical parish the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical. The PCC is also responsible for the maintenance of the church building and grounds and the church hall.

On 4th February 2021, the PCC voted in favour of the suspension of the benefice of Stansted, Birchanger and Farnham. From the 13th April 2021 Colin Fairweather became Priest-in-Charge of Stansted, Birchanger, Farnham and Takeley with Little Canfield (known as the Five Churches).

St John's is entitled to three representatives to vote at Deanery Synod. This provides the PCC with an important link between the parish and the wider structures of the church.

St John's has strong links with St Mary's Church of England School. Rev'd Helen Flack has now been appointed to the post of Diocesan Governor at St Mary's School.

The PCC is committed to enabling as many people as possible to worship at our church and to become part of our parish community at St John's. The PCC maintains an overview of worship throughout the parish and makes suggestions on how our services can involve the many groups that live within our parish. Our services and worship aim to put faith into practice through prayer and scripture, music and sacrament.

Report on PCC activities during 2021

At the start of the year we were still in interregnum as Rector Rev'd Paul Wilkin had left at the end of November 2020.

Covid 19 Restrictions

Although the Covid19 restrictions appeared to be gradually lifting at the end of 2020, 2021 began with another lockdown and the first Sunday service of 2021 was on Zoom with only Rev'd Helen in the church. On some Sundays visiting clergy officiated either in the church or from their homes. On 28th March (Palm Sunday) the church was re-opened for public worship once again. The following Sunday on Easter Day there were 40 socially distanced and face-masked members of the congregation. Choir numbers were restricted. At the Rev'd Dr. Colin Fairweather's licensing by the Bishop of Colchester on Tuesday 13th April, numbers were strictly limited.

Prayer/Worship/Pastoral Care

St John's 9.30 service is a sung Eucharist with choir. The service is also available on line through the Zoom platform. The PCC is grateful to the team of sidesmen who are on hand to guide and welcome our congregation each week. Members of the congregation lead intercessions and read the first lesson.

All are welcome to attend our regular services. At present there are 90 names on the Church Electoral Roll. Four people died and ten new names have been added.

Rev'd Colin and Rev'd Helen hold monthly "Exploring Baptism" meetings for those asking for children to be baptised. They are very ably assisted at these meetings by Margaret Hill who plays a very important role in liaising with families, preparing cards and carrying out all the necessary paperwork. Six baptisms were held in St John's in 2021, either during the 9.30 a.m. service or at 3 p.m. on the third Sunday of the month.

Around six people regularly attend Morning Prayer on Zoom five days a week.

As our Priest-in-Charge has responsibility for five churches, it has been necessary to introduce a new pattern of services. Licensed Lay Ministers Hugh Mascetti and Jo Pratt are now part of our ministry team and are included in the services rota together with our ordained clergy. On the first Sunday of each month, both Rev'd Colin and Rev'd Helen are in attendance at St John's 9.30 "Family" communion service. When there are five Sundays in the month, a "Five Churches" service is held on the last Sunday - rotating the venue each time.

It has been decided not to reintroduce the 8 a.m. Holy Communion Service on Sundays or the Wednesday 10 a.m. Holy Communion Service.

The Tots service on Tuesday mornings resumed after Lockdown, and it was good that while the church building was not used during that time, Tots children and parents were able to meet on the Recreation Ground if weather permitted.

Kathryn West, Pastoral Assistant, liaises with the clergy to visit members of our parish who are unable to attend church due to sickness or age. The clergy are available to visit church members who have requested it, to celebrate communion with them either at their homes or in hospital. The ministry team take monthly services at local Care Homes Hargrave House and Mountfitchet House.

In November our regular All Souls Service was held to which recently bereaved villagers were invited.

Also in November, Colin led his first Remembrance Sunday service at the War Memorial which was very well attended.

Stella Skingle continues to organise the purchase of Bible Reading Fellowship notes which are used in private worship by members of our congregation. Thanks to Stella for this.

Church Administration

Barbora our excellent Church Administrator left at the end of May 2021 to move with her family to her home country of Slovakia. She was replaced by Sarah (who left in early 2022).

A new website for the Five Churches was proposed and is in the process of being finalised.

Church Building/Grounds

After Colin's appointment, he held a "Sacred Space" meeting in St John's to declutter and reorganise the space.

There is still concern about the enormous cost of heating the church and every effort is being made to reduce the cost, whilst keeping the church warm.

The PCC is pleased that the church building is once again open for use as a concert venue which attracts a cross-section of people from the local area,. We are particularly pleased that music@stansted, are once again able to hold their very well supported concerts.

A gardening group was formed to implement new planting and keep the weeds down.

The installation of a servery in St John's was approved in principle at the end of 2021.

PCC were concerned about the condition of the surface of the car park, although the cost of totally reorganising the space has proved prohibitive.

Several unauthorised cars were causing a problem in the church carpark. After discussion, it was agreed that a "no parking" sign be ordered to be placed at the entrance to the carpark. (This has now been installed)

The PCC paid for the resurfacing of part of the road leading to St Mary's church; this road still remaining the PCC's responsibility.

Mission/Outreach/Fundraising

Rev'd Helen has been instrumental in organising and facilitating the "Living in Love and Faith" course for members of the congregation. At the end of 2021 she launched a pilot

"Being With" course to begin in 2022 aimed at those new to the Christian faith. This latter course was designed by St Martin in the Fields.

Coffee Pot did not take place in St John's during Covid restrictions, and it has been decided not to restart it. The main reason for this is that the "Touchpoint" hub are now operating on Thursdays in the Day Centre, offering tea/coffee/lunches and support to the community. It was felt that by reopening Coffee Pot there would be a duplication of effort. We now have a "Coffee Pot" table at the Touchpoint centre where we continue to support church members and other members of our community.

It was decided in 2021 that we would no longer collect goods and clothing for Whitechapel Mission. Rev'd Helen has established a close connection with St Martin in the Fields in London and it is hoped that we can support their activities.

The village community were very supportive of the Christmas Market which resumed after a year's absence due to the pandemic. A record amount (£3,400) was raised for church funds

PCC are grateful to Jean Newson for running the 300 Club and also for keeping us supplied with fair trade goods through the Traidcraft stall she sets up in church most weeks.

PCC are grateful to the Craft Ladies and Sue Bone (Candles) for their excellent fund raising for the church.

Thanks also to members of our congregation who take Children's Society collecting boxes, and to coordinator Katy Dockerill.

And of course, we continue to be thankful to members of our "giving" scheme for their generous financial support at a time of rising prices.

St John's Organisations

The PCC would like to thank all volunteers who work so hard to make our church the lively and vibrant community it is.

The St John's choir continues to play a key role in our worship, thanks to the dedication of choir members under Anne Brooks' leadership.

We are so fortunate to have an excellent team of skilled flower arrangers led by Jean Robinson who transform the church through various seasons of the year. Thanks also go to those members of our congregation who meet several times a year to give the church a good clean.

Ecumenical Relationships

The church is a member of Churches Together in Stansted (CTS) and representatives attend the Forum meetings which are held three times a year. The PCC is proud of the achievements of the CTS under whose auspices the following are run: Messy Church, World Day of Prayer, Lent Groups, CTS Harvest Supper, support for Teams4u Christmas shoebox appeal and the Celebration of Christmas Service, which in 2021 was held outside in the Memorial Gardens in the grounds of St Johns. Music was supplied by the Bishop's Stortford Town Band

St John's Church Hall

The Church Hall Committee continues to liaise with the PCC through Katy Dockerill. Hall Manager Jean Newson deals with the day to day running of the hall.

Disabled toilet facilities, with a baby changing area, were installed in the church hall and the kitchen area was refurbished. After the difficulties of letting during the Covid 19 Pandemic, organisations hiring the church hall began to resume their activities without restriction in 2021.

PCC Structure, governance and management

The PCC met four times in 2021 - on 15th March (by Zoom), 8th April (by Zoom), 14th June (by Zoom) and 13th September (in church) with an average level of attendance of 80%.

The method of appointment of PCC members is set out in the Church Representation Rules. St John's is currently entitled to nine elected members. At St John's the membership of the PCC consists of the incumbent (our Priest-in-Charge), churchwardens and those elected by members of the congregation who are on the electoral roll of the church. All those who attend our services are encouraged to register on the electoral roll and stand for election to the PCC.

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.

PCC members are required to seek re-election every three years and stand down for a period of at least one year after six years' service.

Kathryn West

Secretary to St John's PCC

ST JOHN'S PARISH CHURCH, STANSTED MOUNTFITCHET
Independent Examiner's Report to the members of the Parochial
Church Council

I report on my examination of the accounts for the ended 31st December 2021.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As members of the PCC you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 (the Act).

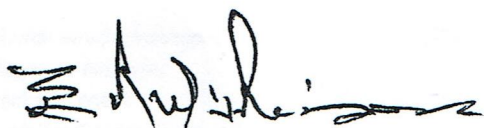
I report in respect of my examination of the accounts carried out under section 145 of the Act and in carrying out my examination I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

Independent Examiner's Statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

1. accounting records were not kept as required by section 130 of the Act;
or
2. the accounts do not accord with those records.

I have no concerns and have come across no matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.



Edmund R Wilkinson ACIB

24, Brewery Lane, Stansted Mountfitchet

25th April 2022.