

**PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2020**  
**May 2021**

**Administrative Information**

The Church of the Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin Mary was built in 1870 and is situated in the busy High Street in Chislehurst. It is part of the Diocese of Rochester within the Church of England. The correspondence address is The Church of the Annunciation, High Street, Chislehurst, BR7 5AQ. The Parochial Church Council of the Ecclesiastical Parish of the Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin Mary Chislehurst is a charity registered with the Charity Commission in accordance with the Charities Act 2006 (Charity Number 1132138).

**Objectives**

We rejoice in our long history and heritage of the Catholic tradition of the Church of England, and a celebration of the Mass is offered most days and the Blessed Sacrament perpetually reserved. The Resolution under the Women Bishop's legislation has been passed, and the Church is under the pastoral care of the Bishop of Richborough. The incumbent is the Reverend Paul Farthing. We have an Honorary Assistant priest, Canon David Herbert and one Reader Emeritus, Miss Jennifer Smith.

The PCC also has maintenance responsibilities for the church building, the vicarage and the former curate's house at 47 Holmdale Road Chislehurst.

**PCC Membership**

Members of the PCC are either ex-officio or elected by the Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM) in accordance with the Church Representation Rules. During the year, the following served as members of the PCC:

Incumbent	The Reverend Paul Farthing	
Churchwardens	Miss Carole Poll Mr John Symes	
Deanery Synod Representatives	Mr J Michael Owen Mrs Sally Thorn	
Elected Members	Andrew Allen Sylvia Broadbridge Paula Howard Pauline Mayes Shirley Nott Michael Watson	PCC Secretary

The PCC operates through the Standing Committee which meets as and when the need arises. This is the only committee required by law. It has power to transact the business of the PCC between meetings, subject to any directions given by the Council.

## **Achievements and Performance**

### **Church Attendance**

There are 77 parishioners on the Church Electoral Roll, of whom 41 reside outside the parish.

### **Review of the Year**

The Corona Virus pandemic has had a serious impact on many aspects of church life, particularly on attendance and income. At the beginning of the crisis, the Vicar and Churchwardens undertook a complete risk assessment and implemented all the safeguards that were thought necessary. Alternate rows of pews were taped off so that they could not be used, and spacing signs placed at regular intervals. Allowing for the number of people who were self-isolating, these measures enabled the remainder to be comfortably and safely accommodated.

Sanitising dispensers and paper towels were provided inside the two entrances with explanatory signs on display. Stewards on duty were instructed to ensure that any visitors put their details on the register at the main entrance. All members of the congregation were required to wear masks while in church (a box of new masks being available for anyone who had forgotten their own) and the officiating priest put on a mask when giving communion. All singing ceased, until some limited singing, by the choir only, was permitted.

The provision of refreshments has also stopped, and the congregation instructed to leave the church immediately after the conclusion of services, without the customary socialising. Regular cleaning and sanitising has taken place throughout. We are fortunate in having three locations where weekday services, when numbers are small, may be held, and by changing the venue each day the need for further cleaning has been reduced.

Although during the first lockdown the church was legally obliged to close, the Annunciation was the first local church to open when this was permitted, and we have remained open ever since, and continue to offer weekday and Sunday services, albeit sometimes restricted in various ways. Many services have been recorded or live-streamed for the benefit of those unable to attend. Regrettably we have not been able to have our usual Saturday morning opening.

The full PCC met 5 times during the year. However, the PCC has not been able to meet in person since the October 2020 meeting due to virus restrictions, and business has been carried out by the standing committee meeting online in the interim.

We continue to provide a Parish website at <http://annunciationchislehurst.org>. Canon Herbert has continued as editor of our monthly parish magazine which is produced in addition to the weekly pew-sheets. No charge is made for this, and the magazine continues to be well received and covers a wide range of topics.

The church has continued to give generously to charitable organisations both locally and overseas.

The work of the Church and all its achievements are dependent upon the time and talents its members bring to support all its activities, and the PCC take this opportunity to thank all who have contributed during the year in any way to support our Church of The Annunciation. Working parties have undertaken church and churchyard cleaning, usually once a month, and the vicar and churchwardens are most grateful for the efforts of a small but dedicated number of parishioners.

### **Financial Review**

A Summary of the Parish Accounts is attached to this report.

### **Future Plans and Concerns**

As always we have to report the loss, though death, of members of our congregation. This year we said farewell to several faithful and long-standing members: Sylvia Broadbridge, John Handley and Jeanette Pearmine. In addition, Clifford and Pauline Mayes have moved away to be near their family.

When things return to normal we will undertake some of the tasks that have had to be deferred, namely repairs to the stonework, and the long-planned reorganisation of the back of the church. We also look forward to being able to belatedly celebrate our 150th anniversary.

### **Reserves and Investment Policy**

It is the policy of the charity to maintain unrestricted funds, which are the free reserves of the charity, at a level that equates to approximately six months expenditure. This provides sufficient funds to cover management and administration and support costs and to respond to emergency applications for grants which arise from time to time. Unrestricted funds were maintained at this level throughout the year. It is our strategy to invest our funds balances with the CBF Church of England Deposit Fund.

### **Risk and Safeguarding Policy**

A child protection policy is in place, and in compliance with the Criminal Records Bureau requirements for those working with young children and vulnerable adults CRB clearance has been obtained. The PCC are committed to ensuring that our church and hall are safe places for all who use them. For more detailed information and guidance see the Parish Safeguarding Handbook, <https://www.rochester.anglican.org> and click on safeguarding.

Arrangements are in place for dealing with cash i.e. all money to be banked is placed in a wall safe and the money deposited in the bank each week. The church building complies with the Disability Discrimination Act. With reference to fire regulations, the extinguishers are regularly serviced and a Fire Risk Assessment has been completed.