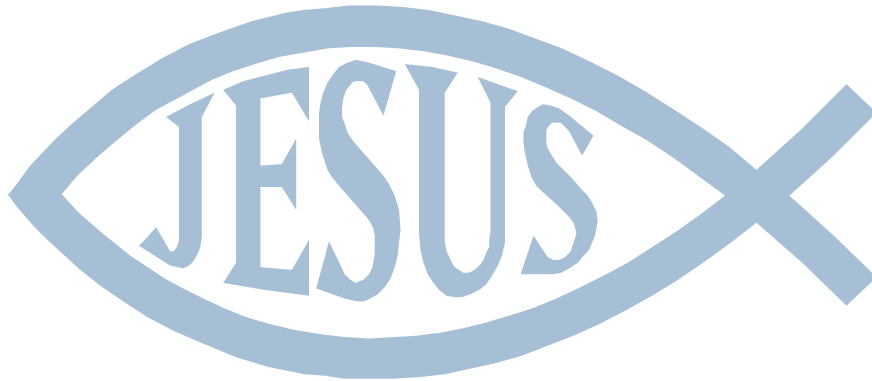


PARISH OF THE UPPER SKERNE
PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL



ANNUAL REPORT

2021

At
St Edmund's Church, Sedgefield
And via Zoom
Sunday 23rd May
Commencing at
7 pm

Agenda

1. Prayers
2. Apologies for Absence

Annual Parochial church meeting

1. Minutes of last meeting
2. Matters Arising
3. Election of Churchwardens
- 4 Election of PCC Members
- 5 Election of Deanery Synod Representatives
- 6 Electoral Roll Report
- 7 Secretary's Report
- 8 Report on the proceedings at the Deanery Synod
- 9 Presentation of Accounts
- 10 Church Wardens Report
- 11 Auditor/Independent Examiner for Accounts
- 12 Safeguarding Report
- 13 Report by Team Vicar
- 14 Report from SACT
- 15 Any Other Business

Closing Prayers

Parish of the Upper Skerne

Minutes of APCM, 12 October at 7 pm , Via Zoom and in person at St Edmund's Church, Sedgfield

1. Prayers were led by The Revd. Elizabeth Bland, who welcomed those attending in person & those attending via Zoom
She welcomed The Revd. Peter Robson to the Parish.

2.a Present:

In person –

The Revd. Elizabeth Bland, The Revd. Peter Robson, Brian Mutch, Bill Armstrong, Michele Maccallam, Linda Clements, John Burrows, John Burton, Phillipa Cooper, Steve Bland,

Via Zoom -

The Revd. Martin King, Alison King Rachel Stephenson, Brenda Moore, Robert Cooper, Suzanne Hopper, Julie Latheron, David Latheron, Michael King, Chris Rowsby, Julia Rowsby, Anne Gray.

2.b Apologies

Anita Howarth, Janet Deane, Phillip Deane, Lesley Tate, Judith King, Carole Mason, Sylvia Rutter, Malcolm Rutter.

Meeting for the Election of Churchwardens

1.Election of Church Wardens:

Written nominations were received for William Armstrong & John Burrows these nomination forms were signed and seconded. Both nominees were accepted, and The Revd. Elizabeth Bland declared them elected, and thanked them for their service during the difficult last eighteenth months.

Annual Parochial Church Meeting

1. Minutes of the 2019 APCM

The minutes were approved as a true record, proposed by John Burton & seconded by Brian Mutch, and passed unanimously.

2 Matters Arising

None.

3.Election of PCC members

It was requested that if any changes are made by the DCC's that they inform Rachel Stephenson.

Readers and Clergy are ex-officio members

PCC members: DCC's have proposed representatives as follows:

St Alban's: Malcolm Rutter

Sylvia Rutter

St Catherine's: Phillipa Cooper

Carol Mason
St Edmund's: Brian Mutch
Anne Gray
St Mary Magdalene's: Lesley Tate
John Burton
St Michael's: Michele Maccallam
Linda Clements

These people were accepted by the APCM,
The Revd. Elizabeth Bland thanked all those who have stood down from the PCC for all their work & welcomed the new members, she thanked PCC members and all the DCC members from each Church for all their hard work.

4. Election of Deanery Synod Representatives

Brian Mutch (proposed by John Burton & seconded by Michele MacCallam) & John Burton (proposed by Phillipa Cooper & seconded by Linda Clements) were elected unanimously to represent the Parish at Deanery Synod, there is 1 unfilled role , the elections are for a 3 year period. Thanks were expressed to Brian & John for taking on this role once again and to Su Jordan who stepped down.

5. Electoral Roll Report.

RS reported this was an update of the Roll this year, not a full revision, she thanked those in each church who helped with this. The number on the roll has fallen to 195. Revd Bland thanked RS for her work on the electoral roll.

6. Secretary's Report

No comments were made about the report.
The acceptance of RS report was proposed by BM and seconded by CRo & passed unanimously. Revd Bland thanked RS for her work on the report & all her work as secretary, as she is stepping down from her post.

7. Report on the Proceedings of the Deanery Synod

BM agreed to write a report on the previous year & RS will circulate this via e mail.

8. Presentation of Accounts

Copies of the accounts and summary of the year were distributed before the meeting via e mail. BA explained the printed accounts; they are for the period March 2019 to April 2020, he stated that the deficit is due to the St Edmund's Church roof repair. St Catherine's is the only church with a surplus; all others have small surpluses, except St Edmund's, which is larger. Planned giving is slightly up, but collections were down. He stated that this year's accounts are bound to be affected by the Covid 19 pandemic; however, it is not clear as yet, by how much.

Acceptance of this report was proposed by JB seconded by MK & passed unanimously.

PC proposed a vote of thanks to district treasurers & BA for all they do

9. Church Wardens Report

Church Wardens report in booklet. There were no questions. Acceptance of this report was proposed by LC & seconded by JB & passed unanimously. EB thanked JB & BA for all their work in what has been an exceptionally challenging period.

10 Appointment of Auditor

BA proposed the appointment of SKS Bailey Group as Parish auditors for 2019-2020. This was seconded by MK & passed unanimously. It was agreed, however, that if the cost of the work has increased significantly then this will be discussed at the next APCM.

11. Safeguarding Report

Safeguarding report in booklet EB thanked Christine Mutch, who is stepping down from her role, for all her work in the past 18 months and to RS for her help. She thanked all who had taken part in training. Acceptance of the report was proposed by JB & seconded by PC.

12. SACT Report

Report to be circulated via e mail.

13. Team Vicar's Report

This report is in the booklet, there were no questions. MK thanked EB, on behalf of the Parish, for all she has done in the last 18 months, this was supported by all in attendance.

14. A.O.B

14.1 Zoom Church Tap Twinning

EB reported that £630 was raised, which is a fabulous amount, she distributed tap twinning certificates to all the churches as well as the Vicarage & Rectory. She thanked all who supported this effort and to Katherine Cooper-Young and all the children of Zoom Church, who raised so much.

Meeting closed with the Grace at 7.30 pm

Secretary Report of the PCC

Aims and Purposes

The PCC of the Parish of the Upper Skerne has the responsibility of co-operating with the incumbent, once appointed, in promoting in the ecclesiastical parish the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical. It also has maintenance responsibilities for the Churches in the Parish.

Objectives and Activities

In December 2020 The Revd. Geoff Short OBE retired from his role as Team Rector of the Parish of the Upper Skerne. The Rev Elizabeth Bland continues part time as Team Vicar with the temporary help of associate priest Rev Peter Robson.

The PCC is committed to enabling as many people as possible to worship at our churches and to become part of our parish community in the Parish of the Upper Skerne. 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 put faith into practice through prayer and scripture, music and sacrament.

When planning our activities for the year, we have considered the Commission's guidance on public benefit and, in particular, the supplementary guidance on charities for the advancement of religion. In particular, we try to enable ordinary people to live out their faith as part of our parish community through:

- Worship and prayer; learning about the gospel; and developing their knowledge and trust in Jesus.
- Provision of pastoral care for people living in the parish.
- Missionary and outreach work.

To facilitate this work it is important that we maintain the fabric our Churches.

The Covid pandemic has had a big impact on our worship with churches being closed for services for the best part of a year. During this time, services have been held via Zoom and contact has been kept with parishioners through regular phone calls from both clergy and laity. The weekly parish notice sheets have been delivered both in person and also by email. Many thanks to all those who hand deliver the notice sheets. This has been very much appreciated for all those who are shielding.

Achievements and Performance

This is the Fifteenth full year of meetings of the PCC of the Parish of the Upper Skerne. The PCC met on the following dates in 2020 – February, September, October and November. Most of these meetings were conducted on Zoom because of restrictions on meeting in person.

There was one meeting of the PCC Standing Committee in January.

Because of church closures due to the Coronavirus pandemic, there has been no opportunity to build on the themes chosen for last year and so they will remain the same for this year.

1. Diocesan Priorities – Growth, Families & Young People, Poverty
2. Finances
3. Safeguarding Training
4. Spiritual Growth
5. New service Patterns

A Parish Recovery Group was set up at the start of the pandemic in order to look at alternative ways of worshipping as well as leading the parish through some very difficult times. The group, consisting of Rev Elizabeth Bland, John Burrows, Bill Armstrong, Michael King, Brian Mutch and Rachel Stephenson, met weekly via zoom.

New ways of worship have been explored with a family service via zoom which has been very successful and can be accessed on Youtube.

Communication: email continues to be the preferred method of sending and receiving information. We have a Facebook page & a new website, which is proving popular. We have also set up a Twitter page to keep people updated. The “A Church Near You” website continues to be a successful new way of people being able to contact the Parish.

PCC Minutes are issued to members via email. DCC minutes are received following DCC meetings in each of the churches.

Julie Robson PCC Secretary

Church Attendance – Electoral Roll

Electoral Roll 2019/2020	195
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Deductions	8
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Additions	5
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Electoral Roll 2020/2021	192
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Distribution

St Alban	21
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St Catherine	15
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St Edmund	93
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St Mary Magdalene	29
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St Michael	33
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Financial Review

See Attached Treasurer report

Administrative Information

The Parish of the Upper Skerne covers an area including St Michael's Church, Bishop Middleham, St Catherine's Church, Fishburn, St Edmund's Church, Sedgfield, St Mary Magdalene's Church, Trimdon Village & St Alban's Church, Trimdon Grange. It is part of the Diocese of Durham, within the Church of England.

The church office moved to St Alban's Church, Trimdon Grange in January 2021

The address for correspondence is : St Alban's Church, Northside Terrace, Trimdon Grange TS29 6HB

The Parochial Church Council (PCC) is a charity registered with the Charity Commissioners. Registered Charity Number: 1132664.

<i>Incumbent</i>	In Vacancy
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<i>Team Vicar</i>	The Revd. Elizabeth Bland
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<i>Associate Priest</i>	The Reverend Peter Robson
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<i>Readers</i>	Mr Bill Armstrong	Parish Treasurer
	Mr Michael King	

<i>Wardens</i>	Mr Bill Armstrong
	Mr John Burrows

<i>Deanery Synod</i>	Mr Brian Mutch	PCC Lay Chair
	Mr John Burton	

PCC members who were elected from April 2020 until the date this report was approved are:

St Edmund's : Mr Brian Mutch
Mrs Anne Gray

St Michael's : Mrs Michele Maccallam
Mrs Linda Clements

St Alban's Mrs Sylvia Rutter
Mr Malcolm Rutter

St Catherine's: Mrs Phillipa Cooper
Mrs Carol Mason

St Mary Mrs Lesley Tate
Magdalene's Mr John Burton

PCC Secretary Mrs Julie Robson

Structure, governance and management

The Parochial Church Council is a corporate body established by the Church of England. The PCC operates under the Parochial Church Council Powers Measure. The PCC is a Registered Charity The method of appointment of PCC members is set out in the Church Representation Rules. All Church attendees are encouraged to register on the Electoral Roll and stand for election to the PCC.

Attendance at PCC Meetings January – December 2020

Name of PCC Member	No of meetings Attended	% attendance
The Revd. Elizabeth Bland	4	100%
John Burrows	2	50%
Michael King	4	100%
Rachel Stephenson	3	75%
Bill Armstrong	4	100%
John Burton	3	75%
Brian Mutch	4	100%
Sylvia Rutter	2	50%
Malcolm Rutter	2	50%
Carol Mason (from Oct 2020)	0	0%
Anne Gray (from Oct 2020)	2	100%
Lesley Tate(from Apr 2020)	1	25%
Phillipa Cooper	4	100%
Linda Clement	4	100%
Michele MacCallam	3	75%

Church Wardens' Report

Parish of the Upper Skerne

Churchwardens' Report to APCM 23 May 2021

The two Churchwardens attended a Swearing in Service on line and have attended various training events during the short year since October 2020.

One or both of the wardens have attended every DCC and PCC meeting along with Ministerial Team meetings and the almost weekly meetings of the Parish Recovery Group which has planned and successfully implemented the re-opening of all five churches in the Parish, even with the sometimes daily revisions of Government and Church of England Guidance or Regulations. The ever changing arrangements for Funerals, Weddings and Baptisms have been kept constantly under review.

Work on bringing in the revised Insurance arrangements has overlapped into the re-opening of the churches in respect of producing and updating Health and Safety Policies for each church and related Risk Assessments. Assessments of numbers permitted into each church have been carried out and have worked well under the circumstances.

Repairs have been arranged and completed to St Alban's roof, the re-lighting and paving renewal at St Mary Magdalene and tree removal and replanting have been arranged at St Michael's. Arrangements for the transfer of the Parish Office to St Alban's finally came to fruition and seem to be working well.

The Wardens have continued to work closely with Elizabeth and more recently with Peter seeking to ensure that Elizabeth has our full support.

Bill Armstrong

John Burrows

Team Vicar's Report.

Team Vicar's Report

There was a television advert recently which said something like 'Maybe 2020 will be the year when we start to see things more - clearly...': it was having a bit of word play, of course, around the fact that perfect vision is called 20:20 vision. It was certainly a year when we had more time to reflect, to gaze inwards at ourselves; there was less going on in the outside world; we were at home much more; there was space to think – perhaps, sometimes, too much time to think. Has the past year enabled us to see more clearly what is important? Well, time will tell.

The imposition of the first lockdown fell somewhere around the middle of Lent. It took me until the second half of Holy Week to feel confident enough to advertise and host a Zoom service. The first Zoom Eucharist was, I think, on Maundy Thursday – and very strange it felt too. The Easter Day Zoom was quite well-attended, and there was positive feedback: someone said that it felt like a real parish service and that, although only I was receiving the bread and wine, it felt as if everyone was included. Zoom services continued on a weekly basis during the remainder of the year. Numbers fluctuated, depending on whether or not we were permitted to open churches, and how many services were happening in church buildings, but over the course of the year

there was a steady increase in those attending. Robert Cooper enabled us to join with wonderful choirs in singing hymns on our Zoom services: knowing we were muted meant we could really 'let rip' in the privacy of our homes! Thanks to the Cooper family we were secure in the knowledge that we were operating legally under copyright law. The email circulation list grew during 2020: the 'Friday Round-up' email was plainly valued so much that people wanted their friends and relations to be able to receive it as well. The decision was taken to increase the spiritual content in the notice sheet, both in the paper copies which were being delivered to those unable to access the internet, and in the electronic version. The weekly reflection and prayers were appreciated, as were the orders of service (paper versions and on the website) for prayers at home.

The Churchwardens, Bill Armstrong and John Burrows, worked with people across the parish in ensuring Risk Assessments were conducted to establish how many people were safely able to attend funerals and other services in church. For many months, the self-designated 'Parish Recovery Group' met weekly on Zoom to discuss how best to deal with the unprecedented situation. That we recommenced worship in our buildings as early as we did is in no small part due to the clear desire amongst so many of our regular worshippers that we should do so, and to the willingness and commitment of the people in each church who donned masks, slathered on hand sanitizer and enabled it to happen. We owe a debt of gratitude to them, to our churchwardens, clergy and Readers, and to all who served on the Parish Recovery Group and PCC.

The project which was begun by the Team Rector, Revd Geoff Short, to create a set of seasonal Orders of Service for use across the parish, continued during 2020. The new service booklets, with covers in seasonal colours, have been an excellent innovation and have brought clarity and consistency in worship across the parish. Bill Armstrong's commitment to continuing that work, and his facility with the mysteries of Visual Liturgy, have enabled that task to be completed.

We saw some significant staff changes during the year. Having unfortunately been on sick leave throughout 2020, Revd Geoff Short formally took early retirement on health grounds at the end of December. We wish him and Paula good health and happiness in their new home in Northumberland. In October, it was a pleasure to welcome Revd Peter Robson on to the team as Associate Priest (House for Duty). We do not know exactly how long he will be working with us but he and Julie are valuable additions to our leadership team. At the end of the year, Rachel Stephenson stepped down as Parish Administrator after 14 years of faithful and profoundly Christian service to the parish as a whole. We miss her; but happily Julie Robson was on hand to take over and has settled into the role, and the new Parish Office at St Alban's, extremely well.

Looking ahead, nobody can be in any doubt that there we will be facing challenges. In common with most charities, the church has been hit hard financially by the pandemic. We need to have some honest conversations about giving, both with our regular worshippers; and in the wider community, who value our church buildings as places to mark significant moments in their lives, with baptisms, weddings and funerals.

There is room for some creative thinking about the shape of our future worship pattern. Our use of technology increased enormously during 2020: with Zoom; the live streaming of the Christmas Day service; the Zoom Church acts of worship for children which have been posted on YouTube by Katherine Cooper-Young; and Twitter - but there is scope for so much more.

How we use our buildings is something else to consider. Whilst many people were pleased to return to them to worship, one thing we discovered during the year was that we don't need church buildings to sustain a vibrant worshipping Christian community. As one newcomer to our parish said after joining our Sunday morning Zoom worship during the first lockdown, "It's so good to find a church which feels like a real community worshipping on line." Our buildings occupy key places in our communities: are we using them as effectively as we could to tell people the good news of how much God loves them?

2020 was undoubtedly a very difficult year. But one thing we have discovered is that, with God's presence and inspiration, we are stronger than we realised. Secure in that knowledge, we go forth in hope and joy, knowing that we have a faithful God who will hold us and guide us through whatever the future holds. Thanks to us all, from us all, for what we have contributed to our life as a community of Christians in the past year. And above all, thanks be to God.

Elizabeth Bland

Sedgefield Area Churches Together Annual Report for the DCC 2020-2021

'God moves in a mysterious way, his wonders to perform' – so wrote William Cowper in a hymn. How true!

SACT has facilitated communication, worship and activities between the various denominations in the Sedgefield area for many years now. I am proud of what it has done in the past, though perhaps it could have been accused of being in 'a bit of a rut', as for the most part it has led the same annual activities for many years: – Carols on the Green, the Good Friday Procession, a lent group and coffee mornings being perhaps the most notable, though in the last few years Food Bank, a stall at the Farmers' market and film shows have been added to the list.

Initially when the pandemic struck, our meetings were postponed but, like many others, we eventually opted for the 'Zoom route'. At our first Zoom meeting we discussed whether we should put everything on hold until the virus was history (having little understanding of just how long the epidemic, which then turned into a pandemic, would go on for), or whether we should be more proactive. The latter was agreed. What a game changer.

Last year saw: an Advent YouTube service (195 views); a drive-in carol service (100 car sell-out); a Lent Zoom Course, and an Easter YouTube service (134 views). All of

these were the product of huge collaborative effort from the various churches and the local community. Who knows what the next year will bring, God does indeed move in mysterious ways.

If you would like to join the team please contact me.

Judith King,
Moderator SACT

Safeguarding Report

Safeguarding Issues:

Over the past year there have been no safeguarding issues.

Safeguarding in the Parish of the Upper Skerne:

Legally, the Parish has a number of requirements and responsibilities. The PCC were provided with all documents necessary to comply with their obligations. A file of information including guidance notes, checklists, policies and procedures were distributed to all five churches. Together with posters which must be displayed in each church.

Safeguarding Training

A named contact for each church agreed to help with Safeguarding within their church and helped considerably with sorting out training requirements that some parishioners would need to undertake to comply with Diocesan policy.

As Safeguarding Officer for the parish, Julie Robson will undertake a review of training requirements and updates.

At the moment all training is done via zoom over 2 sessions of 2 hours each.

There are several levels of training in operation.

C0 – Basic on-line training, this course is recommended for servers, welcomers, refreshment helpers, sides-persons, PCC and DCC members, choir/ music groups and bell ringers.

C1 Foundation course is also now available on line. Recommended for choir, music group, bell ringing, home visiting, lunch clubs and befriending schemes).

C2 Leadership for people who **lead** activities for children and young people and/or adults who may be vulnerable.

C3 Foundation/Leadership for ministers – for clergy, authorised lay ministers and Readers

Thank you to everyone who has undertaken the training which will help make our churches safer and thank you Christine Mutch and Rachel Stephenson for all their hard work in setting up an excellent data base and safeguarding file.

Julie Robson
Parish Safeguarding Officer.

Parish of the Upper Skerne

Parish Accounts 2020

1. Consolidated Account

	RECEIPTS	TOTAL		2019	
	Voluntary receipts				
1	Tax efficient planned giving	£49,402.76		£50,006.21	-£603.45
2	Other planned giving	£1,779.03		£3,547.16	-£1,768.13
3	Collections at services	£6,846.71		£21,220.87	-£14,374.16
	All other giving and voluntary receipts, including Special Appeals (recurring and one-off)	£7,001.43		£15,615.40	-£8,613.97
6	Gift Aid recovered	£0.00		£18,720.88	-£18,720.88
7	Legacies received (capital value)	£0.00		£0.00	
8	Grants (include recurring and one-off)	£0.00		£6,469.11	-£6,469.11
	TOTAL Voluntary receipts:	£65,029.93		£115,579.63	-£50,549.70
	Activities for generating funds				
9	Gross receipts from fundraising activities	£3,482.88		£9,348.27	-£5,865.39
	Investment income				
	Dividends, interest, receipts from property etc.	£342.93		£539.63	-£196.70
	Church activities				
11	Statutory fees retained by the PCC (weddings, funerals etc.)	£10,714.00		£22,816.90	-£12,102.90
12	Gross receipts from trading (e.g. hall lettings, magazine, bookstall) NOT fundraising.	£2,868.00		£3,010.60	-£142.60
	Other receipts				
13	Other receipts not already listed	£1,129.07		£1,501.02	-£371.95
	TOTAL RECEIPTS (FROM FINANCIAL STATEMENTS)	£83,566.81		£152,796.05	-£69,229.24
	EXPENDITURE				
	Costs of generating funds				
17	Fundraising activities (costs and payments)	£412.00		£277.25	£134.75
	Church activities				
18	Mission giving and donations	£3,045.50		£9,783.92	-£6,738.42
19	Diocesan parish share contribution	£60,650.00		£78,105.00	-£17,455.00
20	Salaries, wages and honoraria	£8,277.30		£10,362.70	-£2,085.40
21	Clergy and staff expenses	£5,357.90		£7,761.37	-£2,403.47
	Church expenses				
22	Church expenses: Mission and evangelism costs	£0.00		£0.00	
23	Church running expenses (including Governance)	£20,455.18		£31,080.12	-£10,624.94
24	Church utility bills	£11,838.65		£13,016.30	-£1,177.65
25	Cost of trading	£339.99		£84.99	£255.00
	Major capital expenditure				
27	Major repairs to the church building	£7,426.00		£39,984.32	-£32,558.32
28	Major repairs to church hall or other PCC property, including redecoration	£2,356.80		£0.00	£2,356.80
29	New building work to the church, church hall, clergy housing or other PCC property	£0.00		£0.00	
	SUB-TOTAL of all expenditure payments above:	£120,159.32		£190,455.97	
99	Other payments not already listed	£3,659.78		£3,016.83	£642.95
	TOTAL PAYMENTS (FROM FINANCIAL STATEMENTS)	£123,819.10		£193,472.80	-£69,653.70
C					
D	COMBINED TOTAL	-£40,252.29		-£40,676.75	

2. Statement of Parish and Church Balances at 31st December 2020

	Parish	St A	St C	St E	St MM	St M	
CCLA		£13,306.08		£3,450.56	£9,456.15	£12,106.53	£38,319.32
DBF			£70,582.86	£108.70	£1,209.29	£7,856.25	£79,757.10
Business			£4,451.93	£3,070.31	£2,866.83	£1,810.64	£30,048.49
			£17,848.78				
Current	£9,772.07	£4,147.65	£2,423.38	£2,023.74	£14,269.38	£1,345.00	£43,017.29
TOTALS	£9,772.07	£17,453.73	£95,306.95	£8,653.31	£27,801.65	£23,118.42	£182,106.13
Restricted Funds			£70,582.86	£108.70	£1,209.29	£7,856.25	£79,757.10
Designated Funds	£954.73			£26,640.87	£2,866.83		£30,462.43

3. Restricted and Designated Funds

St Catherine's Building Fund (restricted)

Opening Balance	£70,284.42
Interest	£298.44
End of year balance	£70,582.86

St Edmund's – Canon Eden Account (restricted)

Opening Balance	£108.24
Interest	£0.46
End of year balance	£108.70

St Mary Magdalene's – Tithe Act (restricted)

Opening Balance	£1,617.29
Interest	£6.41
Replacement of chancel lights	£414.41
End of year balance	£1,209.29

St Michael's – various Trust Funds (restricted)

Opening Balance	£7,618.73
Interest	£237.52
End of year balance	£7,856.25

Parish Account – Ron Eyley collection (restricted)

Income	£165.00
Expenditure	£165.00
Account closed	

Parish Account – Revd Geoff Short collection (restricted)

Income	£341.20
End of year balance	£341.20

St Edmund's – various designated funds

Opening Balance	£4,421.51
No activity	

Parish Account – youth work (designated)

Opening Balance	£954.73
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No activity

4. PCC Treasurer's Report

This year's accounts reflect the difficulties caused by the response to the coronavirus pandemic. Church buildings were closed for worship between mid-March and early July. Weddings could not be held, and funeral services could not be held in church. This had a serious effect on income from fees and from cash collections at regular services, as well as baptisms, weddings and funerals. Even with a reduction in parish share payments of £17,450, the year saw an overall deficit of £40,250. This was similar to the deficit in 2019 but that was almost entirely covered by the roof repairs at St Edmund's.

Only one of our churches saw a surplus in 2019: St Mary Magdalene's (£4,120.38). This was due to the arrival of a generous new giver and the withdrawal of £8,000 from the investment account, which more than offset the fall in cash collections and fees income. St Alban's was particularly hard-hit by the fall in cash collections and reported a deficit of £4,319. St Catherine's also reported a large deficit of £5,600 and St Edmund's reported a deficit of £4,526. St Michael's showed a relatively small deficit of £284.

Overall income fell by £69,000. This was partly due to the fact that the Gift Aid repayment (which should have brought in £17,450) did not arrive within the financial year. In addition, there was a drop in fees for weddings and funerals of £12,100. Collections at weddings, funerals and baptisms fell by £14,370. The lack of fund-raising activities caused a further shortfall of £5,865. Overall expenditure was also reduced by £69,650. This can be explained by the decision to reduce parish share payments; the lack of any major repair work; and by other reductions in spending which resulted from the closure of churches during lockdown.

Planned giving was quite steady showing only a slight fall of £1.2%. This represents an encouraging feature in such a difficult year. It still means, however, that we continue to struggle financially at a time of rising costs across the board (parish share, utility bills, insurance). The impact of coronavirus could well have a continuing adverse effect on giving in 2021. 2020 saw a major fall in other collections. This is explained by the impact of the pandemic on baptisms, weddings and funerals. This further emphasises the point that such collections are largely beyond our control and so cannot be relied on as a source of income.

The decision to reduce Parish Share payments was taken only after much discussion. It was followed by a decision to reduce further the amount pledged for 2021. The diocese has made the point that it too is facing financial difficulties as a result of the pandemic. All parishes are being asked to consider whether they can increase their payments during this year. While it is too early to do this at the moment, it is something we will need to discuss later in the year. It should be noted, however, that the balance in investment accounts has been reduced by over £27,000 as a result of churches withdrawing funds in order to keep current accounts in credit.

Bill Armstrong

May 2021



CHARITY COMMISSION
FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

Independent examiner's
report on the accounts

Section A

Independent Examiner's Report

Report to the trustees/
members of

Charity Name

The PCC of the Ecclesiastical Parish of the Upper Skerne

On accounts for the year
ended

31st December 2020

Charity no
(if any)

1132664

Set out on pages

(remember to include the page numbers of additional sheets)

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ("the Trust") for the year ended 31st December 2020.

Responsibilities and
basis of report

As the charity trustees of the Trust, 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 Trust's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination, I have followed 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 (other than that disclosed below *) in connection with the examination which gives me cause to believe that in, any material respect:

- accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Act or
- the accounts do not accord with the accounting records

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

* Please delete the words in the brackets if they do not apply.

Signed:

Whoweny

Date:

30/4/21

Name:

ELIZABETH LOUISE LAVERY

Relevant professional
qualification(s) or body
(if any):

ACCA

Address:

FRANKLIN HOUSE, STOCKTON ROAD,
SEAGEFIELD, STOCKTON ON TEES,
TS21 2AG

Only complete if the examiner needs to highlight matters of concern (see CC32, Independent examination of charity accounts: directions and guidance for examiners).

Give here brief details of any items that the examiner wishes to disclose.