

PARISH OF ST JAMES, CHRISTLETON



ANNUAL REPORT & FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

of the

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL

For the Parish of Christleton

for the year ended 31 December 2020

Rector: The Reverend Dr Stefan Collier



Church: St James

Parish Office: St James, Pepper Street, Christleton, CH3 7AG
Bankers: Santander **Charity Registration Number: 1133992**

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Roles and Membership of the Parochial Church Council

The role and membership of the Parochial Church Council

St James Parochial Church Council (PCC) has the responsibility of working with the Rector in promoting in the parish the whole mission of the Church: pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical. It also has maintenance responsibilities for St James.

Members of the PCC are either ex-officio, elected by the Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM) or co-opted, in accordance with the Church Representation Rules. Since the APCM of April 2020 the following have served as members of the PCC.

Rector	Revd Dr Stefan Collier
Curate	Revd Rob Croft
Churchwardens	Tina Lightfoot Mike Lightfoot
Treasurer	Dr Elizabeth McClure
Secretary	Jocelyn Platel
Deanery Synod Members	Bettie Gilliatt, Jocelyn Platel
Elected members	Christine Abrams, Sheena Cumiskey, Bettie Gilliatt, Charlotte Griffin, Paul Forrest, Brian Inall, Chris Platel, Keith Smalls, Martin Thompson, Ann White

Other Parish Appointments

Volunteer Parish Administrator	Marj Keech
Director of Music	
Pastoral Visit Coordinator	Ann White
Pastoral Assistants	
Verger	John Milton

Minutes of the Annual Meeting held on 18th October 2020

35 people attended the virtual meeting

Apologies received from: John and June Pearson, John & Sue Eccles

Opening Prayer: Prayers were led by Stefan.

MEETING OF THE PARISHIONERS (Vestry Meeting)

Nominations had been received for Tina Lightfoot (Proposed by Bettie Gilliatt and seconded by Jocelyn Platel, and Mike Lightfoot (Proposed by Janet Milton and seconded by Bettie Gilliatt). No other nominations had been received and therefore these two Churchwardens were elected unanimously without the need for a vote. Stefan thanked both Bettie and Tina for their tremendous work during the past year and also to Paul for his excellent contribution in the maintenance of the church. The meeting closed.

ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING (APCM)

Stefan advised that Information Packs had been available containing the agenda, previous minutes, reports etc.

1: Minutes of the Annual Meetings held on 24 March 2019. These were approved & signed by Stefan.

2: Matters Arising: Nil

3: Reports: Detailed reports had been printed in the Information Pack distributed prior to the APCM and brief resumé of those followed:

Electoral Roll – Chris Platel said there was still some work to be done on this but it was important to let him know of any changes to individual circumstances. 168 names were on the current Roll.

Finance – Liz said how much she had missed Brian Lewis as her wonderful fall back help and advised that the Stewardship Campaign had received £1,500 when launched but had fallen flat since lockdown. She said there had been a major drop in income initially after lockdown but since church re-opened there had been considerable contributions via the card machine, and several SO's had been set up. We now have no employees and the Parish Hall income was down to £977, again due to lockdown. The magazine made a profit of £30 and the refurbishment of the bells was almost complete and paid for. The comfortable stability is as a result of reducing the Parish Share contribution and she thanked the parishioners for their continued support. Stefan added his thanks to Liz saying he was very grateful for her constant oversight in managing the accounts especially during the pandemic. He also thanked Nigel Seddon & John Norbury for their expertise.

Fabric – Bettie thanked the local Parish Councils & Councillor Stuart Parker for their donations towards work done in the churchyard and lychgate, and Stefan thanked David Cummings for the Statement of Significance which he had prepared. Stefan acknowledged the work which

John had done as Verger and said the community is very grateful for his work at the Pastoral Offices as well as in St James and he was glad he would be continuing in a voluntary capacity as Verger.

Deanery Synod – Bettie gave a brief report as per the Information Pack.

PCC – Janet gave a brief report as per the Information Pack.

Churchwardens – Tina had nothing to add to the report in the Information Pack but said that they would keep everyone posted on any Covid-19 changes affecting services etc. She also suggested that a letter should be sent to the Payback team thanking them for their contribution to the churchyard & Janet was requested to send this letter.

Rector's Report – I looked back at last year's report, and it started with noting my overriding feeling of joy.

Well.... No, it hasn't dissipated you'll be pleased to hear. But I do notice two other overriding feelings as I sit down to write this report. Feelings of hope and thanksgiving.

Hope. For despite the challenges that we continue to face as a church around finance and making disciples today in what is a profoundly different context to those of our ancestors, I - and I don't think I am alone - sense that God is with us where we are.

Reflecting on what we have done (that has built on previous and current successes such as the Luncheon club, Churchyard working party, and multiple successful fundraising events) this last year, we might find that among other things we recall (and give thanks) for the following.

- Another health audit, Nov 2019, which quantified we are moving in a direction of health and growth (Nov 2019).
- Delivered a new Sunday service pattern and provision of services (June 2019).
- Developed a church development brief and commissioned a feasibility study for the development of the church (c. July 2019).
- Employed a Director of Music (Sept. 2019), Hannah, who is making a huge difference to our community.
- Undertook valuable work on our vision, values, and mission (Nov 2019).
- Made significant upgrades to the Parish Hall (2019).
- Celebrated past Parish Administrator, Janet, and gratefully received a new one, Marjorie, (Oct 2019)
- Under the passionate and skilful leadership of Brian, re-energised the Parish Magazine (2019)
- Delivered a temporary Parish Office in the Church (Sept 2019).
- Established a regular relationship with Christleton Primary School which includes multiple shared church services through the year (2019).
- Re-developed old and new missional teams to share leadership in the parish (2019)

- Continued to undergird everything we do in prayer through our daily weekday pattern of prayer for the community (2019).
- Undertaken 2 units of teaching through 2019, at Lent and in Autumn.

We could point to many other things (and should, let's celebrate them), some mundane, others not - all essential, and also cause for further hope (and thanksgiving) in our community.

Given these signs among us how could it be that we do not remain hopeful and confident that God is with us and desiring to bless his communities here in this place.

This then leads me to notice the other feeling I mentioned that of thanksgiving.

Thanksgiving for you, the people of this place. Your faith, service, humanity and witness is often staggering to encounter, and something you will further glimpse in the reports that follow. I have always thought it unwise to offer a list naming people, for you are bound to miss people off this list. But with this caveat in mind, asking for your forgiveness as I start it, and in no particular order. It seems remiss not to note, the relentless dedication, multifaceted, and complementary skills of Tina and Bettie your churchwardens without whom this parish would be in a very different place, the PCC members corporate [Tina, Bettie, Ann, Brian, Chris, Joce, Christine, Liz, John, Keith, Linda, Mike, Paul, Janet, and Sheena], all of have offered skilful service and indispensable leadership, the PCC's calm and efficient secretary Janet, Hannah our comparatively recent Director of Music who is revitalising our musical tradition, Elizabeth [Liz] our passionate treasurer, the faithful and much appreciated ministry team of Elizabeth and Gill, Marjorie our new Parish administrator who is wonderfully organising us, and the steadfast and diligent service of John as Verger. These people, the various members of other teams who comprise our common life - be it our wonderful and thriving choir, our Messy Church team led by Lesley, Jan and Beryl, the church development group, flower team, Janet and Olive who faithfully enable the midweek communion with John, our incredible bellringers led by Nikki, our wonderful safeguarding lead Ann, relentlessly efficient and passionate Brian of the Magazine, the hidden service of Paul, Jonathan, and Mike around caring for our wonderful church building, website, and churchyard, Chris and Mike who regularly deliver food gathered to our local foodbank - and so many other hidden saints in our community make our parish community what it is, not least those who distribute the parish magazine, act as sides-people and welcomers on a Sunday morning, clean our church and serve coffee and teas on a Sunday. A blessed community of saints which serve as majestic lighting conductors for Christ's love in this place.

For this, I thank you, and give thanks to God for you. The seeds of hope and faith you are sowing, the love you are embodying, and the sacrifice you are making as you follow along the Way of faith in our Lord and saviour Jesus Christ is a powerful testimony that the world is not as it might seem, rather it is becoming a new creation as God's kingdom here on earth.

For us, this is in part captured in our new priorities for 2020, which are:

1. To develop the building of St James as a place of worship and regular use by our local communities.

2. To orient the life of our church community towards transforming lives in our local communities through working in partnership with them.
3. To undertake a review of our 2019 service pattern and provision changes.
4. To develop St James as a place of prayer in our communities.

May Christ continue in his steadfast love towards us as we make our pilgrimage of faith in this place, and seek to be part of his new creation. Amen.

Keith spoke on behalf of everyone and said how grateful we all are to Stefan for his energy and drive and leadership within St James.

4: Elections and Appointments: There were 3 vacancies on the PCC & the following nominations papers had been received correctly completed :

Bettie Gilliatt, Martin Thompson, Charlotte Griffin and these were duly elected.

Chris Platel was happy to continue for another 3 years.

The appointment of Secretary and Treasurer would be dealt with at a short PCC Meeting electronically during the next 7 days and Liz had already indicated her willingness to continue as treasurer. Appointment of Sides people would take place at this meeting also.

Appointment of 2 Members to Deanery Synod: Bettie and Joce were re-elected.

Appointment of Auditor: It was unanimously agreed that Meacher-Jones should continue as our Auditor for 2020 & Liz said she would contact them.

5: Any Other Business: Stefan sent best wishes to Rob for his Deaconing next week from everyone present.

The meeting closed with prayers led by Rob at 1.00 pm

Signed (Rector)

Date

Rector's Report 2021

What a year! An unprecedented year, as our community has journeyed through the pandemic of the Coronavirus.

We have been blessed greatly.

Our cornerstone, our worship, has continued almost entirely uninterrupted with services online and in our church building.

Our teaching of the faith has expanded with online courses on the bible and reconciliation, and most recently reading the gospel of Mark together.

Times of fellowship through the week, over coffee and cake or a beer, have been offered.

We put in place a pastoral care network to support our communities through the pandemic, which was thankfully never stressed. At the same time, we sought to keep in touch with our electoral roll through the blessed phone, thereby rediscovering a deep delight.

The people of our communities overwhelmingly and generously supported the church as the pandemic threatened to collapse our finances. Thank you.

Our development of vocations continues to be embedded in the culture of our community. We have had the joy and gift of welcoming Rob Croft as Assistant Curate. Thank you, Rob, for your ministry among us. We have had the joy and gift of Tina Lightfoot being recommended to train for ordination as priest, beginning this autumn. We are so happy for you. We have had the joy and gift of Lesley Morgan exploring a vocation to pastoral ministry. We are so very excited for you Lesley, and all that God has and is doing through you. We have had the joy and gift of numerous other conversations with people, their questions and listening to the divine voice within them. We continue to pray for you, and those that will follow, and for the further embedding of vocational work in our community culture.

We have been blessed greatly, while also being acutely aware of many who have suffered at the hands of the pandemic. Those whose loved ones have died. Those whose mental health has suffered. Those who have struggled to make ends meet; where possible we have sought to walk alongside them through our pastoral ministry, prayers, conversations, and practical support.

Now, a new future beckons. For us, and the communities we serve. Some of this future, we may know; much of it remains necessarily hidden. We have shown ourselves, resting in Christ, to be resilient, agile, and adaptable. All qualities we will need in this new future. Our purpose is clear, as I am reminded by the hymn we have just sung this Sunday morning. 'Lift high the cross, the love of Christ proclaim till all the world adore his sacred name'.

To share in this purpose, this life with you, is a gift and one for which I am very thankful for. Just as I am thankful for you, and God with us in the new future which is unfolding. Lord, I pray for our future life, that Jesus must increase, and we must decrease. Amen.

With my love and prayers, Stefan

Churchwarden's Report

This, like the other reports has been a strange one to write as the year has been so overshadowed by the pandemic. As churchwardens it has been a very strange year indeed, dominated by Covid-19 risk assessments, track and trace requirements and 'Covid cleaning'!

Bettie Gilliatt, who has faithfully served as churchwarden for 6 years was due to retire from her duties at the APCM which should have been held in May. Due to the pandemic, the APCM was postponed until October so Bettie served an extra 6 months, she's been succeeded by Mike Lightfoot but she remains a member of the fabric and maintenance team and is our key person in relation to grant applications (see F&M report for details).

It's hard to find the words to sum up all that Bettie brought to the role of churchwarden but suffice to say she will forever be loved by the community payback team for being a constant source of chocolate brownies! Thanks Bettie.

Exactly a year ago to the day that we write this report, the first lockdown commenced. Our church was shut and plans were made to worship online. Just previous to this the PCC had had an extraordinary meeting to discuss how the church would be able to provide pastoral support to our community during the pandemic and the website-based pastoral support network was formed.

Whilst the church itself was closed, there was little we could do except keep a watchful eye on the building and special thanks must go to Paul Forrest who faithfully inspected it each week.

With the gradual easing of restrictions, risk assessments and necessary adaptations were made which allowed us to open the church initially for individual prayer and then on July 5th we opened for public worship under tight restrictions. Many of our worshipping community who were still high risk continued to worship online at which by then we had become reasonably proficient.

We were able to offer a limited programme of Christmas services at which those wishing to attend were asked to book a seat. The thought of denying anyone the chance to worship at such an important time of year was sheer agony for all of those involved in planning. By the time Christmas arrived, you will know that once again the country was facing another wave of the virus and many, quite advisably stayed home. So it was that we then went into this latest lockdown. The difference with this lockdown was that the government had said that places of worship could remain open and could hold services. Our PCC however took the wise decision that due to the vulnerability of our congregation that we should stay home and stay safe. On the anniversary of the first lockdown many have had at least their first vaccination and the restrictions are due to be eased so it is with great rejoicing that we plan, once more to recommence public worship under tight Covid-19 restrictions from Palm Sunday.

Thank you to everyone for your forbearance and understanding during such a difficult period.

St James' Christleton End of Year Financial Statements Year ending 2020

Introduction

These accounts have been produced on Finance Co-ordinator software on a receipts and payments basis. This is all that is required at our level of income.

They are directly comparable with last year.

Receipts and Payments Account

	Unrestricted	Designated	Restricted	Endowment	Total
Prior year					
total funds	funds	funds	funds	funds	funds
Receipts					
Donations and legacies	—	—	—	—	18,823
Income from charitable activities	110,541	134	15,753	—	124,499
Other trading activities	6,742	—	—	—	15,523
Investments	263	—	—	—	316
Other income	1,082	—	4,287	—	4,721
Total receipts	118,629	134	20,040	—	163,884
Payments					
Raising funds	369	—	—	—	2,004
Expenditure on charitable activities	95,528	134	32,992	—	122,071
Other expenditure	8,268	1,328	—	—	17,488
Total payments	104,167	1,462	32,992	—	141,564
Excess of receipts over payments before transfer	14,462	(1,328)	(12,952)	—	22,320
Transfers					
Gross transfers between funds - in	—	—	—	—	—
Gross transfers between funds - out	—	—	—	—	—
Excess of receipts over payments before other gains / losses	14,462	(1,328)	(12,952)	—	22,320
Net movement in funds	14,462	(1,328)	(12,952)	—	22,320
All assets at 01 January 2020	40,174	9,044	28,602	—	55,501
All assets at 31 December 2020	54,637	7,716	15,649	—	77,821
Represented by					
Unrestricted					
General fund	54,637	—	—	—	40,174
Designated					
car park land trust	—	—	—	—	—
choir	—	581	—	—	581
hymnbooks	—	—	—	—	—
parish hall refurbishment	—	6,316	—	—	7,644
rectory decorating	—	(558)	—	—	(558)
window protection	—	1,377	—	—	1,377
Restricted					
Egerton	—	—	2,882	—	2,882
bellringers	—	—	1,732	—	16,794
car park	—	—	—	—	—
chancel	—	—	3,000	—	3,000
charitable	—	—	96	—	96
churchyard	—	—	(217)	—	(986)
heating/boiler	—	—	—	—	—
parish hall refurbishment	—	—	—	—	—
rector D prof	—	—	—	—	—
restoration	—	—	5,363	—	3,863
Sunday school/messy church	—	—	2,792	—	2,951

Balance sheet

Class and code Last year	Description	This year	
Current assets			
CA1	current account	25,096	32,235
CA2	savings account	—	—
CA3	CBF investment account	51,072	50,808
CA4	petty cash	—	—
	Total Current assets	76,169	83,044
Liabilities			
6699	Agency collections	(1,834)	(1,277)
Z04	Accounts Payable	—	6,500
	Total Liabilities	(1,834)	5,222
	Net Asset surplus(deficit)	78,003	77,821
Reserves			
	Excess / (deficit) to date	181	35,935
Z01	Starting balances	77,821	41,886
	Total Reserves	78,003	77,821
	Represented by funds		
	Unrestricted	54,637	40,174
	Designated	7,716	9,044
	Restricted	15,649	28,602
	Endowment	—	—
	Total	78,003	77,821

Statement of assets and liabilities

Last year		General	Designated	Restricted	Endowment	This year	
Current assets - Cash at bank and in hand							
current account -		16,180	6,998	1,918	—	25,096	32,235
	Totals	16,180	6,998	1,918	—	25,096	32,235
Current assets - Investments							
CBF investment account -		38,456	718	11,897	—	51,072	50,808
	Totals	38,456	718	11,897	—	51,072	50,808
Liabilities - Agency accounts							
Agency collections -		—	—	(1,834)	—	(1,834)	(1,277)
	Totals	—	—	(1,834)	—	(1,834)	(1,277)
Liabilities - Creditors: Amounts falling due in one year							
Accounts Payable -		—	—	—	—	—	6,500
	Totals	—	—	—	—	—	6,500
	Grand total	54,637	7,716	15,649	—	78,003	77,821

Fund movement by type

		Opening	Incoming	Outgoing	Transfers	Gains/losses	
			Closing				
EG - Egerton							
Restricted		2,882	—	—	—	—	2,882
Sub-total for EG		2,882	—	—	—	—	2,882
HB - hymnbooks							
Designated		—	—	—	—	—	—
Sub-total for HB		—	—	—	—	—	—
PHRest - parish hall refurbis							
Designated		7,644	—	1,328	—	—	6,316
Restricted		—	—	—	—	—	—
Sub-total for PHRest		7,644	—	1,328	—	—	6,316
RDProf - rector D prof							
Restricted		—	3,000	3,000	—	—	—
Sub-total for RDProf		—	3,000	3,000	—	—	—
bells - bellringers							
Restricted		16,794	10,662	25,724	—	—	1,732
Sub-total for bells		16,794	10,662	25,724	—	—	1,732
carpark - car park land trust							
Designated		—	—	—	—	—	—
Sub-total for carpark		—	—	—	—	—	—
carparkres - car park							
Restricted		—	—	—	—	—	—
Sub-total for carparkres		—	—	—	—	—	—
chancel - chancel							
Restricted		3,000	—	—	—	—	3,000
Sub-total for chancel		3,000	—	—	—	—	3,000
charit - charitable							
Restricted		96	—	—	—	—	96
Sub-total for charit		96	—	—	—	—	96
choir - choir							
Designated		581	134	134	—	—	581
Sub-total for choir		581	134	134	—	—	581
churchyd - churchyard							
Restricted		(986)	4,308	3,539	—	—	(217)
Sub-total for churchyd		(986)	4,308	3,539	—	—	(217)
heating - heating/boiler							
Restricted		—	—	—	—	—	—
Sub-total for heating		—	—	—	—	—	—
rectdec - rectory decorating							
Designated		(558)	—	—	—	—	(558)
Sub-total for rectdec		(558)	—	—	—	—	(558)
rest - restoration							
Restricted		3,863	2,040	540	—	—	5,363
Sub-total for rest		3,863	2,040	540	—	—	5,363
ssmessy - sunday school/messy							
Restricted		2,951	30	189	—	—	2,792
Sub-total for ssmessy		2,951	30	189	—	—	2,792
windprot - window protection							
Designated		1,377	—	—	—	—	1,377
Sub-total for windprot		1,377	—	—	—	—	1,377
General - General fund							
Unrestricted		40,174	118,629	104,167	—	—	54,637
Sub-total for General		40,174	118,629	104,167	—	—	54,637
Grand total		77,821	138,804	138,622	—	—	78,003

Analysis of receipts and payments

					Total	
	Unrestricted	Designated	Restricted	Endowment	This year	Last year
INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS						
Donations and legacies						
IN10 - legacy	—	—	—	—	—	18,823
IN16 - mistaken entry	—	—	—	—	—	—
Total	—	—	—	—	—	18,823
Income from charitable activities						
IN01 - collections	704	—	—	—	704	7,009
IN02 - envelope scheme	23,563	—	—	—	23,563	19,731
IN03 - gift aid env	1,839	—	—	—	1,839	7,091
IN04 - funerals and weddings	6,544	—	—	—	6,544	22,325
IN06 - parish magazine	408	—	—	—	408	3,381
IN07 - standing orders	30,104	—	24	—	30,128	25,057
IN08 - HMRC	21,954	—	3,375	—	25,329	18,015
IN14 - donations	25,027	134	12,354	—	37,515	21,887
IN17 - clergy fee reimbursement	—	—	—	—	—	—
IN20 - general exp reimbursement	395	—	—	—	395	—
Total	110,541	134	15,753	—	126,428	124,499
Other trading activities						
IN05 - parish hall	6,472	—	—	—	6,472	14,713
IN19 - land rent	270	—	—	—	270	810
Total	6,742	—	—	—	6,742	15,523
Investments						
IN09 - investment acct interest	263	—	—	—	263	316
Total	263	—	—	—	263	316
Other income						
IN11 - fundraising	1,082	—	—	—	1,082	4,710
IN12 - insurance repayment	—	—	—	—	—	—
IN13 - BT way payment	—	—	—	—	—	—
IN15 - rectory expreimb	—	—	—	—	—	4
IN18 - church gas reimb	—	—	—	—	—	7
IN21 - VAT RECLAIM	—	—	4,287	—	4,287	—
Total	1,082	—	4,287	—	5,369	4,721
INCOME TOTAL	118,629	134	20,040	—	138,804	163,884

EXPENDITURE

Raising funds

EX11 - parish magazine	369	—	—	—	369	2,004
Total	369	—	—	—	369	2,004

Expenditure on charitable activities

EX01 - Church gas	2,213	—	—	—	2,213	2,106
EX02 - Church electricity	1,395	—	—	—	1,395	1,218
EX03 - Church salaries	3,105	—	—	—	3,105	5,704
EX04 - church insurance	3,913	—	—	—	3,913	3,845
EX05 - church building maintenance	652	—	26,264	—	26,916	—
EX06 - churchyard maintenance	—	—	3,539	—	3,539	1,444
EX07 - clergy expenses	1,205	—	3,000	—	4,205	1,799
EX08 - weddings/funerals	3,925	—	—	—	3,925	9,947
EX12 - messy church	105	—	189	—	294	2,877
EX14 - parish share	67,624	—	—	—	67,624	78,541
EX15 - rectory expenses	4,306	—	—	—	4,306	4,043
EX19 - church water	57	—	—	—	57	157
EX20 - church gen expenses	7,025	—	—	—	7,025	8,659
EX21 - church fabric maintenance	—	—	—	—	—	—
EX22 - choir expenses	—	134	—	—	134	1,726
Total	95,528	134	32,992	—	128,655	122,071

Other expenditure

EX09 - parish hall salaries	—	—	—	—	—	4,234
EX10 - parish hall maintenance and refurbishmen	91	728	—	—	819	6,367
EX13 - car park maintenance	—	—	—	—	—	—
EX16 - parish hall gas	2,269	—	—	—	2,269	2,308
EX17 - parish hall electricity	691	—	—	—	691	796
EX18 - parish hall water	428	—	—	—	428	1,404
EX23 - parish hall general expenses	4,087	—	—	—	4,087	2,378
EX24 - church development	700	600	—	—	1,300	—
Total	8,268	1,328	—	—	9,597	17,488
EXPENDITURE TOTAL	104,167	1,462	32,992	—	138,622	141,564
GRAND TOTAL	14,462	(1,328)	(12,952)	—	181	22,320

Overview of the Accounts 2020

It is reasonable to say this year has been unprecedented, as everyone else has also remarked! Having had a very positive start to the year launching the new stewardship campaign, using the A41 for the purpose of leaflet drop and publicity, this fell flat due to the lockdown situation in March. Overall, the campaign made a net gain of about £1000, being a mixture of donations and a few new standing orders. March and April were alarming months, as our physical income dropped dramatically and I predicted a very gloomy future ahead from the point of view of certain income, i.e. really only the standing orders.

1. Parish share - our main expense. A decision was made by the PCC that to continue to pay the parish share at a figure of 1.25 was unaffordable, and we arranged only to pay a 0.5 parish share. Thanks to the response of our regular congregation, many agreed to move their giving to standing orders, to bank transfers, or to cheques, some increasing standing orders to incorporate their “as and when” extra giving. By September, a degree of stability had been achieved and we began to pay 0.75 share, still cautious. By the end of the year we felt able to make a one-off payment to average out our payment to 1.05 – sufficient to support our full time member of the clergy and also show willing to support less fortunate parishes.
2. Full Bells Refurbishment. This was funded by a donation of £13,500, a grant of £3000, a loan of £6,500. VAT was reclaimed from the Listed Places of Worship scheme for the full project and the loan repaid. Thanks to the donor and the work of Nikki Dromgoole supervising this project it has been completed. This turned out to be a fairly complex procedure.
3. The Lychgate and some masonry are due for repair and thanks to Bettie Gilliatt’s perseverance, we have established grants of £2500 to help support this work. It is possible we may also be able to make a VAT reclaim on this.
4. The churchyard tree surgery has also been undertaken and the funding for this supported again by grants applied for by Bettie Gilliatt.
5. Our Website online donation has facilitated £1160 income. Our Contactless terminal has facilitated £805 income.
6. The Parish Hall overall has made a loss of £1000. However, the roof repairs £480, toilets £204 and reimbursed rental of £968 contributed to this.
7. The general fund income (donations SO envelopes and relevant HMRC) is £21,108 more than last year. Even taking £5000 out for the extra 3 months HMRC claimed this year to help cash flow, it is evident that we owe an immense debt of gratitude to our congregation for their incredibly generous support in such a difficult year. The bottom-line figure on page 2 of the accounts gives us a surplus of all receipts over payments of £181. At first glance, this appears a knife edge situation. In fact, it is misleading as £13,500 was donated in 2019 and paid out for the bells restoration in 2020, therefore showing 13,500 “extra” in our expenditure, but it was supported by income last year. This was all restricted money, given for the specific purpose of the Bells Restoration. If we look particularly at our general fund monies – our unrestricted money, in other words our working cash flow, we in fact have a surplus of £14,461. This feels extremely comfortable, but it has been achieved by paying a lower parish share as explained above. If we had paid the full 1.25 parish share, our surplus remaining in the general fund would have been £1589. Although this has, in retrospect, turned out to have been feasible, it would have been an even more difficult year to manage the cash flow. Budgets for 2021 are being prepared and may be available by the PCC meeting. Our future income still feels precarious as we endure another lockdown period, but we have a good starting point.

Elizabeth McClure 13.1.21

Independent Examiner's Report

Independent Examiner's Report to the Members / Trustees of the Parochial Council of St James' Parish Church

I report on the accounts of the charity for the year ended 31 December 2020.

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

As trustees of the charity, the members of the PCC are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. They consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 144(2) of the Charities Act 2011 (the 2011 Act) and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to:

- examine the accounts under section 145 of the 2011 Act;
- follow the procedures laid down in the general Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act; and
- state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of independent examiner's report

My examination was carried out in accordance with the general Directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from you as trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a "true and fair view" and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

Independent examiner's statement

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

- 1 which gives me reasonable cause to believe that, in any material respect, the requirements:
 - to keep accounting records in accordance with section 130 of the 2011 Act; and
 - to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the 2011 Acthave not been met; or
- 2 to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.



Meacher-Jones
Chartered Accountants

6 St John's Court
Vicars Lane
Chester
CH1 QE

24 February 2021

Fabric and Maintenance Report

THE CHURCH

Although the Church has been closed for a large part of the past year, maintenance has not taken a back seat. The odd cobweb has appeared, but then spiders have an entitlement as well!

The security alarm, fire safety equipment, electrical inspections, gas boilers and general fabric conditions have all been addressed and serviced where required during last summer.

The roof had its annual inspection in August – this is well-worth the outlay as it pre-empts problems and the gutters and valleys are kept clear of debris. There are two slipped slates (north and south roofs) but currently they do not pose a problem.

Movement in the walls including the tower is monitored regularly. Bird netting in the tower was to have been replaced but is still outstanding but does not appear to have caused undue problems.

One of the Church boilers has had an intermittent fault and new parts have been ordered. One good thing is that with two boilers, at least one can usually be relied upon.

Some masonry repairs are due to be made, hopefully in May. A diocesan Faculty has had to be applied for and obtained so that the work can be done by an accredited stone mason. At the same time urgent repairs on the Grade II listed lychgate will be made. We are very grateful to be awarded grants from Historic Cheshire Churches Trust, Allchurches Trust and a CWAC members budget which will contribute to the cost (currently in the region of £6,000, but in the event may be more!) While the lychgate repairs are under way that entrance to the Church and grounds will not be accessible to the public.

Keeping the Church heated at a constant temperature in accordance with Historic England's guidelines will have kept it in good repair despite fluctuations in outside temperatures. Paul monitors the fuel consumption weekly.

The saddle bars on the clerestory (high) windows still remain to be treated for rust, the problem being access, the pews not being movable.

The AV system is due for an upgrade so that the Church can reach out more effectively to the parish and realise greater potential of the wonderful space. Cables have been laid through the car park, the groundwork having been surveyed using an ancient and "scientific" method by Paul. At the same time we found the source of the Church water supply thanks to the dogged determination of Damian from Severn Trent in weather which was not ideal.

The bells were refurbished during last summer (last done in 1928!). This was mostly due to a most generous donation for which we are most grateful. (Report by Nikki)

THE CHURCHYARD

During the first lockdown, we were unable to have the services of the Community Payback team to look after the grounds – report by Mike Lightfoot.

The west wall which forms the boundary of the public footpath continues to be monitored especially following a very wet winter. Remedial work will need to be done in the near future as the ancient yew trees continue their march outwards.

PARISH HALL

The Parish Hall, which is used by a wide variety of groups as well as the Church, has not been in use since the first lockdown. Consequently, there has been no income from its use although we are responsible for its maintenance.

The boiler which caused many headaches a few years ago is still causing on-going problems. Its main fault is that it is very old and past its working life. Major pipework was replaced several years ago to re-route heating directly from the boiler and now the boiler itself is about to expire. We have managed with the help of Cheshire Boilers, to keep it going but it is fast becoming a situation where replacement has to be considered. The radiators are also old and probably filled with sludge which would require flushing, or in an ideal world, replacement – an unacceptably expensive exercise when funds are as limited as they are. In a “good” year the Hall provides an acceptable return but currently and for the immediate future that looks positively gloomy.

The gents’ toilets are in very poor condition. The urinals should be replaced – one is currently hanging off the wall and the plaster along that wall is flaky and addled. The floor tiles are in poor condition and constantly under water from flooding and leaks. We are awaiting a quotation to address the worst of the problem.

The roof ridge tiles were re-set and repaired during last summer – grass had been growing through the gaps and some were missing altogether. The roof at least should now be watertight.

The Hall has been an essential element of the work of the Church and parish, being the only substantial building able to cope with numbers in the whole area. It is not within our remit to speculate on what could be done or on its future.

GOODS AND ORNAMENTS

All Church property is noted in the Church Property Register and is checked annually – this includes all Church silverware and items listed in and around the Church. Currently everything appears to be in order.

Grateful thanks is extended to all who contribute towards the maintenance and upkeep of the Church and the Churchyard so that all may be passed on to other generations for the benefit of the parish and locality.

Paul Forrest
Bettie Gilliatt

Foodbank

St James' Church has been involved continuously with the West Cheshire Foodbank since 2013.

To share a couple of statistics from our local Foodbank - in the year 2019-2020 there was an increase in need by 20% for adults and 40% for children and in January of this year that increase now stands at 41% for adults and 64% for children. Fortunately, there has also been a heart warming generosity from the public resulting in an increase in both food and monetary contributions.

The amount of food last year donated from St James' was almost a ton of food and there has been an increase in regular cash donations. These are very useful, being used to buy those foods which are needed, at a discounted rate, for bulk purchase. While the church has been closed during lockdown, it hasn't been possible to leave food donations there, but happily this has now resolved with re-opening of the church.

I would like to thank you for your ongoing generosity, on behalf of those who are so much less fortunate and privileged than ourselves, in these very difficult times of hardship for so many of our fellow human beings.

Chris Alderton

Deanery Synod Report

As with everything else Deanery Synod activities have been restricted by the impact of Covid.

There was a meeting on zoom on December 1st 2020 which was hosted by Reverend Chris Blunt and opened by Reverend Hennie Johnston, the Rural Dean, who welcomed the new officers elected to the Deanery Standing Committee for the next 3 years.

The speaker for the evening was Dr Alan Downen, the Deanery lay chairman, who addressed the topic 'What is Deanery Synod and why are we here?' He highlighted that Deanery Synod was the link between PCC and Diocesan Synod to bring together the church communities in our parishes and to promote the mission of the whole of the church. The Setting God's People Free initiative which highlights the concept of Everyday Faith has been delayed by the pandemic but should begin to have more impact. The 5 Marks of Mission are now supplemented here in Chester by the sixth mark-Bishop Mark! Alan Downen exhorted us to build on a foundation of prayer, to learn from and support each other in our successes and failures through better communication, to be prepared to step outside our comfort zones and to be catalysts for change.

The meeting on zoom on February 9th 2021 was mainly to celebrate the ministry of the Right Reverend Keith Sinclair, Bishop of Birkenhead as he retires from that role. Bishop Keith referred to John 15 v 1 which speaks of the vine and the branches and how God prunes us in our lives into the shape He has for us. He spoke of the illuminating humanity of Jesus' love for

us until the end of our lives. Bishop Keith will be working with the Church of England Evangelical Council and will also be an Assistant Bishop in the Manchester Diocese.

Jocelyn Platel and Bettie Gilliatt (Deanery Synod Representatives)

Parochial Church Council (PCC) Report

I took over the role of PCC Secretary after the last delayed (because of Covid) APCM in October 2020 following the retirement of Janet Milton who has very capably held the role for a number of years. So, a hard act to follow, especially in the isolation and limitations imposed by the pandemic in the last few months.

Not surprisingly it has not been easy to launch new initiatives in the last few months. However, the PCC has progressed its plans for an AV installation in the church, and this is anticipated to proceed in late summer of 2021. How fortunate we were that we already had the screens in place in church which could be used to transmit services when use of paper and books was deemed unsafe. One benefit of the impact of Covid is that everyone has become more used to the role of technology in shared worship and some people have even developed an extended repertoire of skills. So we can all see the value and potential which better AV equipment offers to our mission here in reaching out to church members and the wider community.

Sadly, we have lost the services of Hannah, our Director of Music, who decided to pursue Higher Education studies when musical activities were curtailed by the pandemic. Music has been provided electronically to enhance our services in the current situation.

However, on a more positive note, the Friends of St James has finally launched thanks to the dedication of the Stewardship Group and especially John Norbury, its Chair.

Despite the difficulties inherent in the current pandemic, PCC business has managed to continue with reasonable effectiveness through the medium of zoom, though I'm sure, like everyone else, we are all looking forward to meeting up 'normally' at some point.

Jocelyn Platel – PCC Secretary

Luncheon Club

It's hard to write a report about something that hasn't happened. Luncheon Club hasn't happened since our last arranged lunch in March 2020 was cancelled at short notice as the first Covid lockdown took effect. It caused great sadness as Luncheon Club was valued by many - a highlight in the month for tasty food, but mostly for fellowship. Sadly a few of our loyal luncheoners are no longer with us.

The lunches will return! The desire to continue in some form is strong. We just don't know when or how.

The lunches also provided some income to the church as the cost of food was outweighed by the generous donations received. In fact our residual 'coffers' from a year ago was £101.88 held pending resumption of activities, but earlier this year we gave £100 of that to the church PCC leaving just the £1.88 of small change in the cash tin as a noisy reminder of things past!

Brian Inall

22 March 2021

Parish Magazine

The St James' Church Parish Magazine has been going for generations. In fact we believe it started in the 1870s under the then Rector, Revd Lionel Garnett. Many old copies are kept in the County Archives & Local Record Office, and David Cummings and others have hundreds of past copies, and before too long David plans to get them together and catalogue them. Whether they can be digitised is another matter. Future historians will have a great time!

After a bit of an interruption, in February 2018 when this parish went into a vacancy, the magazine was re-launched for March that year in A4 format. I became involved in its production as part of a small team. Linda Rowe was editor, but I took over from her 'temporarily' at the beginning of 2019 as editor and compiler. You know the rest.

The Parish Magazine (mostly in black & white) was printed and delivered to those who subscribed £6 per year. Our circulation was about 300 copies per month plus more sold from the back of the church at 50p a copy. Together with revenue from advertisers the income exceeded costs so a small surplus went into church funds. Only back copies were electronically available for free from the church website.

Then Covid-19 came along and changed everything. The March 2020 edition was the last that was printed and sold. The Parish Magazine still continued every month, but from April 2020 it was only available online - and it was free - and it was in full colour as we had no printing costs.

Quite recently the latest Parish Magazine was also made available on the Christleton village website, and the archive of past magazines there was brought up-to-date.

Undoubtedly some readers who cannot access the internet are now excluded by this, but we have new readers perhaps - although we are unable to determine our current 'circulation'.

The future of the Parish Magazine is uncertain. After a good deal of thought I have decided to stop as editor/compiler at the end of this year, completing a 3-year stint, and between now and then one or more people need to come forward to run the magazine. Otherwise there will be another interruption.

Of course, it is not clear that we should return to a printed magazine although I know that a lot of people would want that. Maybe it should be available electronically as now, or a hybrid mix, or delivered in some other way. Will people pay for a printed copy? What part does Social Media play? Maybe it should not be monthly, but perhaps a different interval? Should it be

replaced with a simpler newsletter? What do people want? These questions need to be answered in the context of an overall 'comms' plan for St James' Church and in the context of available resources and priorities.

I really appreciate the loyal army of excellent contributors and the input from new folk. Please, keep writing articles. Keep reading - and can you help us going forward?

Thank you,

Brian Inall 28 March 2021

Electoral Roll Report

Since the last APCM the overall numbers on the ER have risen by 8. 6 people have died and 15 new names have been added. The figures below highlight the changes. There has been an increase of 41 on the ER since my beginning as ER officer in May 2019. There has been some effort to make the ER as accurate as possible with good lines of communication built in and this will continue.

The current position is as follows:

Number of members – 176 {168 in 2020}

Number of households – 115 {112 in 2020}

Number of residents within the parish – 101{97 in 2020}

Number of non residents – 75{71 in 2020}

Number of resident households –60 {62 in 2020}

Number of non resident households – 55 {50 in 2020}.

Chris Platel

ERO

Youth Work

Unfortunately, all face to face youth work had to be suspended following the first lockdown and we have not, at the time of writing, recommenced Messy Church, Lighthouse and Ark.

All our families were contacted and resources for worship etc were made available on the website using the 'Roots on the web' resources. In addition, we connected with our 2 older children via zoom and have had weekly bible study/ worship and discussion over the course of the year.

This natural break in our youth provision gives us a chance to reimagine how we can move forward in engaging with youth and young families and this work will hopefully commence shortly after Easter.

Tina Lightfoot

Churchyard Working Party

It all started well. The payback team were coming every Saturday, even during the winter months, we managed two working parties and lunch together in the church, some of the lads asked for guided tours, which we did!

As February moved into March the news wasn't good, gradually Covid 19 was on everyone's lips, then came the order, from March 23 we were to stay at home, essential shopping and exercise only.

Church was locked, all services stopped. No payback team and no working parties. Spring arrived, the grass grew, wildflowers came out in abundance, the churchyard became 'windswept and interesting'. Some people loved it, others didn't.

By high summer the grass was very long! We acquired a petrol mower and strimmer from very kind local residents and various people offered to cut the grass, but essentially we were fighting a losing battle.

The payback team returned in August under strict Covid rules. They were magnificent, working flat out the place was looking great again by early September.

The guys worked hard through the autumn and into winter, but by early January we were back in lockdown. At the time of writing (late March) the payback team are back!

The pandemic has helped us to focus carefully on what we actually do with our sacred area. The wildflowers last spring were magnificent. A decision was made to 'wild' part of the churchyard. The payback team would concentrate on the front of the church, this area would be mown, strimmed and weeded. The North side of the churchyard beyond the footpath would receive the same treatment.

The older parts on the west and immediately north of the church we would 'wild' to allow for botanical diversity. The area would still be accessible by regularly mown paths so visitors could walk through to appreciate the beauty surrounding them.

A bug hotel was built with the help of local children. This is situated on the North side of the tower.

Mike Lightfoot

Bereavement Support Group

This has been a difficult year for the Bereavement Support Group, with no personal visits being made due to the incidence of Covid 19. There has also been the complication in some cases of a long delay between a death and the burial of ashes, which has led to question whether or not an anniversary card should be sent.

There were 24 anniversary cards sent out for the year November 2019 to November 2020. The All Souls Service took place in church on Sunday 1st November, after which the BSG list started again for the following year. There have been 9 deaths this year between November 2020 and April 2021. The BSG Cards are always sent out to the families concerned, often with a personal letter if the family is well known. Occasional letters are received in response to the Anniversary Card from people grateful that their loved ones are still remembered at St James'.

In concluding this report, I wish to most warmly acknowledge the invaluable work done by Beryl and David Cummings in the administrative tasks as outlined above. This has been especially demanding during this year of challenge and on behalf of the BSG, I thank them most sincerely for their dedication.

Chris Alderton

Safeguarding

We are closely following the advice and guidelines in the Chester Diocese – Parish Safeguarding Handbook

- Safeguarding Policy Promoting a Safer Church was agreed by the PCC May 2019 – due to be reviewed at the PCC meeting 26.04.21. It is on the church web site (<https://www.stjameschristleton.org.uk>)
- There is a link to 'Safe Spaces' – safespacesenglandandwales.org.uk. This is a website for Supporting Survivors of Church-related Abuse.
- Posters saying 'Promoting a Safer Church' giving information of 'who to contact and how' are displayed on church, parish hall, churchyard and car park noticeboards.
- All members of the PCC have Enhanced DBS Clearance as do other members of the church community who have direct contact with members of the public. (Bereavement Support, Visiting, Youth Activities).
- In the forthcoming year members of the church community are to be encouraged to look at and complete Safeguarding Level One Training.
- Safeguarding will remain a standing item on the agendas of the Stewardship Mission Group and all PCC meetings.

Ann White

Safeguarding Lead and DBS Lead Recruiter

5th April 2021

Bell Ringers' Report

The Bellringer's AGM will take place on April 20th, 2021. This is later than normal because of the COVID restrictions and will be via Zoom. Therefore, the current officers are still in place.

POSITION	PROPOSER	SECONDER	ELECTED
Tower Captain	Tracey Simmons	Jo O'Brien	Nikki Dromgoole
Deputy Tower Captain	Jo O'Brien	Robin Ferris	Ian Braithwaite
Treasurer	Brian Harris	Brian Harris	Pauline Cook
Secretary	Brian Harris	Mike Hoyland	Mary Cowen

Report

Ringling during 2020 has been challenging but service ringing has taken place when possible. The ringers have adapted the band, to comply with COVID regulations, throughout 2020.

Bell restoration project

Taylor's started the renovation work on Monday 13th July 2020. The first stage of the Job, was to dismantle the bell wheels, remove clappers and roller boxes, stays and sliders. Next the bell hangers removed each bell from the Bearing housings and turn them through 180 degrees, to allow full access to the frame for scraping down in preparation for painting. Additionally, the bellhangers vacuumed the bell chamber and removed the 93yrs of accumulated dust and dirt from the bell chamber floor, which was a welcome bonus!

The fittings were shipped to Taylors in Loughborough for extensive renovation work, to restore them to a good condition. Each week a photographic record was taken of the work, to capture a visual record of the progress made. The final stage of the job was to re-hang the bells and fittings. The bell hanger's last day was Thursday 3rd September 2020. They had planned to finish at lunch time but were still going at 6pm, eventually finishing sometime later.

Once the renovation had been completed, a band rang the bells for a wedding on 12th September 2020. We rang six bells and were wearing face coverings to comply with the Covid regulations at the time. A book recording the bell restoration project has been produced and a digital copy is being created.

Clock Service

The ringers are responsible for winding the church clock weekly. During Q3 of 2020 the winding became stiff. There was no record of the annual clock service on the maintenance sheet in the clock room. Therefore, Smiths of Derby were contacted. After some negotiation, Smiths accepted that they had not completed the service in April and subsequently carried this out in September. The tower captain has now taken responsibility for arranging the annual service and will liaise with Mike Lightfoot so that the relevant paperwork is stored within the church maintenance records.

Future:

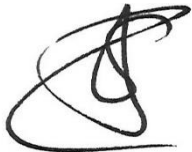
Plans are in place to re-start ringing when possible.

This concludes my report for 2020. However, if any member of the PCC has any questions for the ringers, or would like to visit the tower, please don't hesitate to contact me and you would be most welcome.

Nikki Dromgoole

Christleton Tower Captain.

On behalf of the PCC

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a large, stylized 'S' followed by a smaller, more complex flourish.

**The Revd Dr Stefan Collier
(Chairman)**

**Jocelyn Platel
(Hon Secretary)**

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