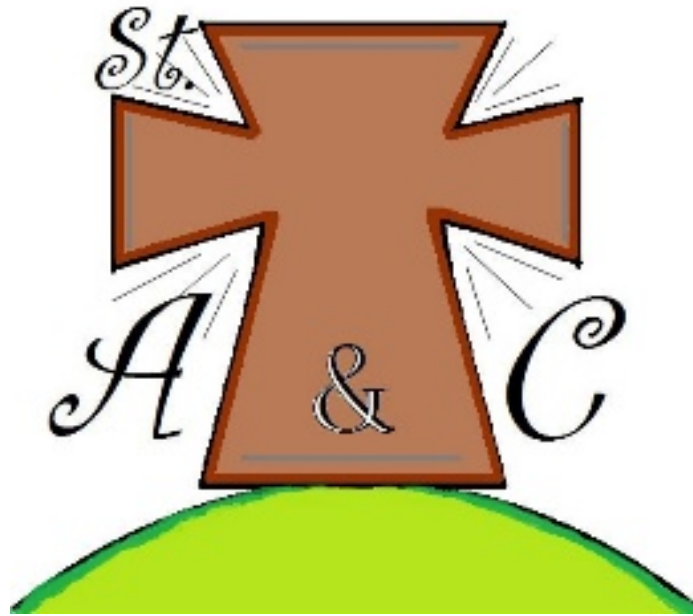


Parish of Luton, St. Anne with St. Christopher



Annual Report 2021

Registered Charity Number: 1134772

**Including accounts for year ending 31 December
2021**

ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE PARISH OF LUTON ST. ANNE WITH ST. CHRISTOPHER 2021

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to our annual report for 2021. This booklet contains all reports that appertain to this parish, including the accounts. Also included are reports from the different organisations who have met in our premises for the last 12 months. These reports are requested because all these groups come under the umbrella of the Parochial Church Council and are ultimately responsible to them apart from the uniformed groups which are directly responsible to their own organisations. This annual report gives an indication of the diversity of this parish.

To comply with the Charities Act, this report contains information that is supplementary to that which is being presented as a Parish Statement to the Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM).

VICAR'S STATEMENT TO ANNUAL MEETINGS 2021

2021 began as a year of uncertainty, we were back in lockdown, but we knew what to do, live streaming was well established and we had a network of people keeping in touch with different members of the congregation. Those unable to access the live streamed services from the parish were encouraged to pick up the phone and dial in for worship (Daily Hope) which the Church of England had created earlier in the Pandemic. In actuality, this was a difficult time. People were feeling worn down by the constant yoyo of, we're in lockdown, oh, no we're not. As we neared the end of 2021 we again held this uncertainty. Lockdown didn't come, which meant that with caution and wearing masks when inside, including for singing we we're able to gather to celebrate Christmas. Everyone who attended in person spoke very positively saying how much they had missed this part of Christmas last year.

As with 2020 we had planned, but we had planned this year with the possibility of not being able to meet as we intended. We used the learning from 2020, meaning we were more easily adaptable. There has been this year an increased ministry and mission through the fences of both churches. By placing decorations and posters on the fences along the pavements we have increased our visibility and our engagement with the localities, especially at Round Green. It was through the fence decoration that we were invited to join in the Stopsley Scarecrow Festival. A good event to be part of.

But before we go any further, I want to offer my huge thanks to the Ministry Team, Ann Moore, Michelle Reeves, both Churchwardens, and Dianne Scott, Lay Reader. Thank you for all the time you have given to the parish, for your expertise and attention to detail. Thank

you too, to Michael Whelan who became our new treasurer this year and has diligently attended to the business of the parish. Thank you too, to Emma Reid the parish safeguarding officer, who this year has enabled us as a parish to make huge progress with the safeguarding dashboard.

Thank you to the PCC members and others who took on the role of keeping in contact with parishioners with regular phone calls. Thank you to those who delivered the regular newsletters and the Christmas cards. 3,000 homes received hand delivered Easter and Christmas cards. Thank you to everyone who helped with the delivery.

Thank you to those of you who have been on a journey of deepening your faith and growing in confidence as you have attended the weekly House Groups, the Lent Course, Advent Course and Start Course. All ways in which you have given God an opportunity to enable you to experience more of God's transforming love.

Thank you to those of you who have cleaned the churches, stood outside the churches collecting food for the Luton Foodbank or stewarded the churches for individual prayer.

Thank you to all who have created and decorated the fences. You have helped with the mission of the parish.

Thank you to those of you who have returned to worship in our church buildings. We have continued to live stream worship on Facebook, to upload it to YouTube and have used Zoom for meetings and House Group.

Thanks also to Jen Drummond, the parish administrator, who worked hard under difficult circumstances, working from home and then working from the Parish Office throughout the Year. Jen tendered her resignation as her own circumstances changed. She left the administration in good order. We are seeking new and creative ways to organise our administrative needs.

GO LOVE PRAY SERVE SHARE



We also said goodbye to Sandra and Brian Riley who moved, to return to live in Garstang, the town from where Sandra originated. We miss them but know that this was the right decision for them and their family.

2021 began with being in lockdown. But that didn't stop the ministry and mission of our parish.

Regular virtual refreshments were held on Zoom, the WhatsApp Parish Chat group gained momentum providing a place for parishioners to chat. The WhatsApp Prayer Group has become a place where people pray for the needs of others, requests come in for people beyond the congregation and all are prayed for. We even launched a new prayer time - 'We Pray Together' on Zoom in February. This now meets in St Anne's Church and has become an in person time of prayer.

We have looked at our depleted finances, holding services themed around Generosity and Gratitude. We have created a PayPal account to enable online giving. We have joined the scheme #easyfundraising where companies have given us money when those signed up to our page have made purchases via their site. These are regularly promoted in monthly newsletters and during services.

It was wonderful to begin to work with the children from Wenlock Church of England Junior School; year 4 spent an afternoon thinking about 'what kind of world Jesus wanted' and then year 6 came to think about 'Creation and science: conflicting or complementary?'. I have continued to be a part of the Open the Book team who share with years 3 and 4 a different Bible story every couple of weeks.

As we have finally come out of lockdown, we have begun to revisit our plans. What do we still want to do, what are we leaving behind? The Mission Planning Group has undertaken

some really important work, looking at how we as a parish are intentionally missional in all we do. An updated Mission Action Plan was developed which the PCC agreed. It was during this process that a new Parish Mission Statement was created.

The planning of events and fundraising now has criteria from the Mission Action Plan, that say all 'Parish Events are fun, engaging, enable faith to grow and seek to raise funds.' Events are prayed for in the planning, before the event and afterwards too. Each event is evaluated to ensure that we learn through the experience and therefore the intention is that we continually refine the events we offer. As the Parish Mission Planning Group began to meet in person, this also became the evening when once again the parish Quiz team, Living in Hope, began to participate in the quiz nights at the Jolly Toppers. Another way in which we are increasing the visibility of Christians in the locality.

Another way in which we reached out to our local community was to place buckets of palm crosses by the main entrances to both churches. Many were taken. Something to repeat in 2022.

We offered to the community a Sunflower Growing competition, and this was won by a lady currently unable to get to church. Entries came from people on the fringe of the church and regular worshippers.

Our planned Harvest Thanksgiving supper to raise money for the Bishops' Harvest Appeal became 'A Stay at Home Harvest Thanksgiving Supper'. We had a simple meal at home, and donated how much we would otherwise have spent to the appeal to bring clean, safe water to communities in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

In September, we introduced a new time of worship, Sunday @ 4. At 4pm each Sunday afternoon at St Christopher's there is a different style of service with the exception that on the third Sunday we celebrate the Holy Eucharist together.

Again we reached out into our community as we held a simple Alternative Hallowe'en , A Festival of Light event outside St Christopher's church, giving away to children goody bags that shared something of God's love for them, for the adults a hot chocolate.

As we planned for Thy Kingdom Come, we were blessed to have a session with **Revd Canon Jean Kerr** from the national Thy Kingdom Come team, to which all PCC members and any members of the congregation interested in sharing the love of God with family, friends and community were invited to attend. This was a good and inspiring evening that enthused those who attended. This year, we distributed Cheeky Panda Prayer Booklets for children, interactive Family Prayer Maps and Prayer Journals. And online we prayed the Novena, Listening on the Way, devised and gifted by the Canterbury Diocese. We also made good use of Luton's offering to Thy Kingdom Come - we played and have continued to use the Thy Kingdom Come anthem - We Seek Your Kingdom. It quickly became a favourite.

Things we have done to help others.

- Collected food for the Luton Foodbank
- Donated bedding for those fleeing domestic violence
- Knitted hats and gloves for the ladies supported by Azalea
- Created Christmas boxes for refugees

We have learnt together. The weekly House Group has covered many diverse subjects including an exploration of Diverse Saints as a way of engaging with Black History Month. We linked to COP 26 as we followed the York course - Caring for Creation. We followed 1 Peter, a Global Commentary supported by online material that had been made available to Bishops who had been going to attend the postponed Lambeth Conference.

It is really good news that one of the regular attendees of the House Group, with the support of the PCC, has undertaken training as a Lay Leader of Worship, Olubukola Olowoye (Bukie). Once all of the requirements of this training have been completed and permission given Bukie will be licensed.

The Leading Your Church into Growth, Start Course was offered three times during the year. This was completed only once.

We have prayed together, including a weekly prayer time in our own homes. We have added new groups of people whom we regularly pray for, those whose anniversaries of death occur during each week and those who receive their Holy Eucharist at home. Once it felt safe, we began to take Holy Communion to those unable to get to church. Both churches have developed ways of opening each week for private/individual prayer. This has developed as changes in the COVID-19 regulations have adjusted. Currently St Anne's is open on a Thursday morning from 9am - 10am, while St Christopher's remains open after the Wednesday morning worship until 4pm.

A quiet day, based at St Christopher's, was held, where we used cameras as a tool to help us pray. A selection of the photographs were used as the backdrop for a hymn during the Harvest Festival at St Anne's which we combined with Climate Change Sunday.

In person events went online as necessary. We made Easter Story Gardens, shared photographs on Facebook and WhatsApp before sharing the completed Garden photos on our fences.

Our Fences also became an Advent Calendar, with a new image being added each day. This was based on an Advent book entitled An Advent Book of Days by Gregory K. Cameron.

It was with great delight that from September onwards we have been able to relaunch groups that had been on hold since March 2020. St Anne's Craft Group is going strong. Pop-in Club is thriving. These and all the other church groups that meet are now prayed for using specially written prayers for each group, before the session begins.

The parish is cautiously moving forward, taking care to avoid spreading COVID-19.

The PCC took the decision during the year that we would develop pray and play spaces in each church. These were to have a very clear Christian theme to them, including a small altar to enable the children to engage more fully with the Holy Eucharist. We were blessed to receive a small grant from the Diocese of St Albans to support the setting up of these. We now have a child's set of chalice, ciborium, paten, candle sticks and hosts that the children can use. All materials in these areas are to enable the children to interact with their responsible adults. There will be themed materials appropriate to the season; each church will have a Christmas and Easter, Advent and Lent set of materials. Other sets such as creation and the story of Noah, will be changed between the churches.

It has been a hard year, but as you can see, it has had many, many rewards. CoVID-19 has not stopped us, our Ministry and Mission have adapted, continued and developed. We have met and ministered to existing people in the congregations, we have met and begun to build relationships with new people and others who have returned. We have encountered people who are searching, who are seeking something more in their lives. People whom we are called as God's children to love and bless, to draw into the fellowship of faith.

So once again, thank you. For all you have contributed to the life of the church. Let's make 2022 a great year.

Every Blessing

Revd Anne

Aims and Purposes

The Parochial Church Council (PCC) of the Parish of Luton, St Anne with St Christopher, has the responsibility of cooperating with the incumbent, the Reverend Anne Crosby, in promoting in the ecclesiastical parish the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical. The PCC is also responsible for the maintenance of the two parish churches, St Anne's and St Christopher's, in Luton.

Objectives and Activities

The PCC is committed to enabling as many people as possible to worship in our churches and to become part of the parish community.

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

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

To facilitate this work, it is important that we maintain the fabric of the two churches and their halls.

Achievement and Performance

The PCC is keen to offer a range of services across the parish during the week and over the year that our community find both beneficial and spiritually fulfilling. At the start of the year,

the pandemic continued to impact our ability to hold in-person services. Where possible, the PCC ensured that correctly risk assessed, and stewarded services took place, and to be as inclusive as possible, services were live streamed to Facebook and later uploaded to YouTube. Following the relaxation of restrictions, with the exception of Compline (offered weekly via *Zoom* and livestreamed to Facebook), all services are currently held in-person, and most are also live-streamed. This includes times of weekday *Common Worship* Morning, Evening and Prayer during the Day. In addition both churches are open for a period each week providing the opportunity for quiet individual prayer.

Current patterns of worship comprise: a Sunday morning service at St. Anne's Church (Holy Eucharist except for the third Sunday which is a more informal *All Together* service); a varied programme of worship entitled *Sunday@4* at St. Christopher's (the third Sunday being a Holy Eucharist); a mid-week service at St. Christopher's (Holy Eucharist except for the first Wednesday which is *Morning Worship*); *Common Worship* Morning Prayer (Tuesday), Prayer during the Day (Tuesday) and Evening Prayer (Monday) and Compline (Thursday) are each offered once per week.

Patronal festivals and other special days continued to be celebrated with evening services of Holy Eucharist.

Fellowship time was restricted to online 'refreshments' at the start of the year but later came to be restored to in-person gatherings after the Sunday and Wednesday services with people bringing their own drinks.

The 'Talking Elephants' group that had been run until the first lockdown (2020) in partnership with Nevilles, funeral Directors and Keech Hospice offering a safe space for the bereaved to meet re-started in the Autumn.

A successful Coffee-Morning was held during the October half-term, and it is anticipated that other opportunities for people within both the church and the wider community will re-start in due course.

Holy Baptism takes place at mutually convenient services. During 2021, in total there were 2 baptisms in the parish.

Funeral ministry is undertaken by clergy and the lay reader. In 2021, a total of 16 were taken on behalf of the parish.

Weddings potentially take place at both St Anne's and St Christopher's. In 2021, however, no weddings took place.

The Church Electoral Roll in 2021 totals 97 individuals, of whom 64 are residents and 33 are non-residents.

The parish is part of the Inclusive Church Network.

Deanery Synod

Two members sit on the Deanery Synod, along with the Vicar. There is also one vacancy. These members are part of our PCC.

The Churches

Various maintenance tasks have been completed in both churches, details of which are in the accompanying Churchwardens' reports.

Both churches' halls are regularly hired out to local community groups, including uniformed youth groups, non-Anglican Christian worship groups, dancing classes, and martial arts groups to name but a few. At St Christopher's this includes the Round Green Pre-School.

Both churches have gardens to keep in order. At St Christopher's, a member of the local community volunteers his services, cutting the grass and keeping the borders in order. This has been supplemented by volunteers from the Church community and the Community Pay Back Scheme. St Anne's and St Christopher's both receive working parties from the Community Pay Back Scheme. These groups of people undertake gardening and maintenance work in the church and the grounds under supervision from their supervisor. The Garden of Remembrance in St Christopher's grounds is significant for the community and is a place where parishioners may have the ashes of their loved ones interred.

Pastoral Care

Some members of the parish are unable to attend church due to sickness or age. The vicar and lay reader visit and take Holy Communion as appropriate. Those receiving Holy Communion at home are regularly prayed for by the wider church community. Parishioners are also visited in hospital where appropriate and possible.

In September, the Parish Pop-In Club, for toddlers and their carers, re-started and is thriving. The young people attend Luton Unite, an ecumenical town wide gathering of Christian young people meeting at Youthscape.

These groups all have a Christian foundation, including appropriate worship and valuable fellowship.

Mission and Evangelism

A parish committee recommended to the PCC which charities would be supported locally, nationally and internationally. In total £230 was given to missions and charities.

A newsletter from Revd Anne is distributed monthly (by email where possible) and also available publicly via the *A Church Near You* website. This includes some spiritual guidance from the vicar together with a list of services each month, a calendar of events and some tips for prayer.

Across the whole parish, much appreciated Christmas and Easter cards were delivered to 3,000 homes.

The Church's Life, Ministry and Mission is always on the agendas of the Church Councils as a set item, so that we are reminded of our need for mission and evangelism within the everyday life of the churches.

The parish Mission Planning Group, has worked to develop a new Mission Action Plan so that all we do seeks to look out into our community, seeking to transform the lives of our neighbours, as we grow in faith and enable others to come to know Jesus.

Ecumenical Relationships

Our two churches are the only two church buildings within the parish. Revd Anne meets regularly with other local clergy in the east of Luton. Revd Anne serves on the Luton Churches Together executive committee and together with the lay reader also attends monthly prayer meetings with church leaders of all denominations from across the town.

Financial Review The parish has one bank account and set of accounts for the general funds, and alongside this is a bank account for each church which holds the building and fabric funds. The PCC has responsibility for the parish's finances, supported by the Standing and Finance Committee of the PCC.

The parish as a whole had an income in 2021 of £44,908.85 and payments of £65,029.99. The overall bank balance as at 31st December 2021 was £111,689.42. The full details and financial report are included in the Parish Annual report which is available to all those on the Electoral Roll before the Annual Church Meeting.

Risk Management

All regular worshippers in the parish have been, and continue to be, encouraged to give generously. Since the pandemic we have developed new ways to enable people to give. Both churches now have a contactless payment machine. The parish Facebook page and A Church Near You have options to enable people to financially support the parish and an Easy Fundraising account has been established. Everyone is encouraged to be part of the stewardship scheme, and if they are taxpayers, to gift-aid their giving.

St Christopher's is considerably dependent on rental income to meet most of its essential expenses. Most of the regular congregation at the church are not full-time wage-earners, the majority being aged 60 and above. There seems no easy way of managing these risks at present.

General Policies

The PCC has now agreed a total of seventeen parish policies which will be reviewed annually, namely:

- Safeguarding – best practice as per the Church of England
- Safeguarding adults when they are vulnerable
- Safeguarding Children
- Church and Hall Evacuation
- Conflict of Interest

- Domestic Abuse
- Health, Safety and Welfare
- Lone Working
- Race Equality
- Reserves
- Risk Management
- Youth and Children's Work
- Coach trips
- Displaying of hirers banners
- Supporting persons in need
- Noticeboards
- Garden of Remembrance
- Advertisers in parish publicity

Volunteers

There are a number of volunteers who give of their time and effort and work so hard to keep the parish a lively and vibrant community. We follow the diocesan guidelines regarding child protection and DBS checking. We are grateful to our two churchwardens, Ann Moore and Michelle Reeves, the parish treasurer Michael Whelan, and safeguarding officer Emma Reid, who have wonderfully fulfilled their duties and responsibilities.

Structure and Governance

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.

During 2021 the PCC met eight times, of which one was in person and seven were via Zoom.

Administrative Information

The Parish of Luton, St Anne with St Christopher, is situated in the Deanery of Luton. It is part of the St Albans Diocese in the Church of England. The Registered Charity number is 1134772.

Until the Autumn of 2021 the parish appointed a part time Parish Administrator, working nine hours per week.

The Parish Office is located at: Parish Office, St. Christopher's Church Hall, Felix Avenue, Luton, LU2 7LE. Further details in the reports from groups and other financial details can be requested from this address.

SAFEGUARDING OF CHILDREN AND VULNERABLE ADULTS

Emma Reid (Parish Safeguarding Officer)

The House of Bishops' Safeguarding Policy states that the church will train and equip church officers to have the confidence and skills they need to care and support children, young people and vulnerable adults and recognise and respond to abuse.

In line with the above statement, we also follow the diocese 'Safeguarding dashboard' where we have reached the final level of 'Safer Practices'. In doing so our PCC members ensure their training is up to date having the basic awareness and foundation pathway. In line with the new guidelines for January our PCC members undertook further training on Domestic abuse. DBSs are carried out for our PCC members and those who volunteer for specific activities which are renewed every three years and as the Safeguarding officer it is my duty to inform those to update their training and DBS in accordance.

Safeguarding continues to have a monthly update on the PCC agenda to ensure we are working together to meet the needs of our congregation and the wider community.

MEMBERSHIP OF THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL as at 31st December 2021

Churchwardens:

Ann Moore (Deanery Synod Rep)
Michelle Reeves

Vicar and chairperson:

Revd Anne Crosby

Elected Members:

Verma Denny
Carol Mitchell
Olubukola Olowoye
Sally Philp
Emma Reid

Jason Reid
Dianne Scott (Deanery Synod Rep)
Sandra Tuffnell
Michael Whelan (Treasurer)
Susan Whelan

To be approved by the PCC on 07 March 2022 and signed on their behalf by the Revd Anne Crosby (PCC Chair)

PARISH CHURCHWARDENS' REPORT

Ann Moore & Michelle Reeves

In the Parish of Luton, St Anne with St Christopher there are still just two Churchwardens. Both Churchwardens have responsibility for the Parish, but for practical reasons each Churchwarden has particular responsibility for one of the Churches however they work together on all Parish issues and matters pertaining to both churches. In this way each Churchwarden knows what is happening in the Parish and has an awareness of what is happening in each Church and are therefore able to support each other more readily. Going back two years and beyond, there were four Churchwardens so now we have two people doing the same amount of work, if not more than four people were doing previously taking in to account what has happened over the last two years!! Please do consider what you can do to help and support your Churchwardens, if you are not sure what you can offer then do ask.....

This has in many ways continued to be an unusual year, whilst we have been able to worship in our Church buildings more often than in 2021 we have had to continue to work hard to ensure the health and safety of the whole congregation and indeed the Parish. Church and Government Guidelines have continued to be followed at all times and Risk Assessments have been updated appropriately.

The Quinquennial Inspection of St Anne's Church was scheduled to take place in December but the surveying architect was unwell so it did not happen! A new date is still to be arranged. The report from the Quinquennial Inspection at St Christopher's Church in 2020 was finally received in 2021! Fortunately, the report did not contain anything unexpected and will ultimately be used to inform practical work that needs to be completed.

During the course of the year, across the Parish gas boilers have been serviced, PAT testing has been carried out, emergency lighting has been tested, fire alarms have been tested and most of the routine maintenance work has been carried out. Also, the kitchen equipment at St Anne's has been serviced.

The Churchwardens always work closely with the regular hall users and it was good that some of our regular hall users were able to start meeting again in 2021, but obviously with some changes to the way in which they were able to meet. All groups provided a risk assessment before they were able to return and have been encouraged to view these assessments as working documents which will need reviewing and updating as guidelines change.

Thank you to those of you who have been helped and supported the Churchwardens during 2021 while keeping themselves safe. A very particular thank you to the volunteers from the local community and to the Community Payback team who have all helped to keep the Church Grounds so wonderfully tidy.

PCC SECRETARY'S REPORT

Dianne Scott (Secretary from October 2021)

2021 proved to be another extraordinary year for the PCC due to the continuing Covid pandemic.

Nevertheless, the PCC and her Standing Committee met regularly throughout the year, mostly via *Zoom*, but also in person for the September meeting.

PCC meetings always open with prayer and the Gospel reading for the day. Safeguarding, Finance and the care of our buildings always feature on the meeting agendas alongside consideration of the spiritual life of the parish.

In May, most PCC members took the opportunity to attend an online training session- *PCC Tonight*- delivered by our parish patron, CPAS. One thing that was taken from this training was the idea to intentionally evaluate the content and conduct of PCC meetings.

On Saturday 31st July, a well-attended PCC Day was held in person at St. Anne's. Following a shared breakfast, the group took part in a series of activities relating to the Anglican Communion *Five Marks of Mission*. The day ended joyfully with a celebration of the Holy Eucharist in church.

From September onwards the PCC have set aside 30 minutes of each meeting to engage with a training module *-the Mission Tree-* offered by the Diocese of St. Albans to help parishes *Live God's Love* as is our intention.

DEANERY SYNOD REPORT

Dianne Scott

Luton Deanery consists of the Anglican Parishes of Luton plus Woodside and Caddington in the Archdeaconry of Bedford. The Synod is a body consisting of clergy together with lay representatives from every parish elected on a three- yearly basis. Those elected also serve on the Parochial Church Council. Since 2020, Ann Moore and myself have had the privilege to serve in this capacity.

Deanery Synod enables us to encourage one another as we live as Anglicans in this town. It sometimes has to deal with difficult issues, such as financial constraint and parish re-organisation. It also carries out duties relating to Wenlock Church of England School and many other aspects of Church management.

Meetings usually consist of a guest speaker, followed by news, planning, business and financial reports from chaplaincies and news from Diocesan and General Synods.

Once again, Covid has massively influenced so much during the last year. Nevertheless, in 2021, Deanery Synod has convened four times as follows:

Zoom Meeting, 23/02/2021

Including a presentation from Paul Davies, Archdeaconry Church Growth Officer

Zoom Meeting, 16/06/2021

Including a time of working together in creating a new Deanery Mission Action Plan (MAP).

Holy Cross , Marsh Farm 04/10/2021

Including a presentation from Christian Cole Diocesan Youth Missioner: 'Faith in Young People.'

St. Francis Church, 25/11/2021

Including opening prayers from the new incumbent Revd Josias de Souza, and a brief reflection upon how the events of COP26 would influence the Church, in our Deanery, Diocese and beyond.

The Area Dean, Revd David Kesterton paid tribute to the late Valerie Dallinger who had served the Deanery so much over many years, including as Deanery Secretary.

My memory of Valerie for this year will be at the Deanery Barbecue held on 28/07/2021 in St Mary's Churchyard. This was a joyous gathering after all the months that Synod members had been kept apart due to the pandemic. Valerie organized it with precision; it was a good evening; she will be greatly missed.

MISSION PLANNING GROUP

Dianne Scott

Despite beginning the year under Covid restrictions, the Parish Mission Planning Group continued to meet regularly throughout 2021.

The Parochial Church Council adopted the updated Mission Action Plan (MAP) for the parish in February. Since then the Mission Planning Group (Annette Considine; Revd Anne Crosby; Verma Denny; Carol Mitchell; Ann Moore; Emma Reid and Dianne Scott) has worked to enable our stated priorities for the next five years to bear fruit. These priorities are:

- *Prayer will be at the heart of everything we as the Christian community of faith in this place undertake.*
- *Parish Events are fun, engaging, enable faith to grow and seek to raise funds.*
- *Have an established programme of learning available to seekers, enquirers, returnees and existing congregation members to support their journey of faith.*

Just a few highlights of this year's activity include: offering the *Start* course three times; attending Diocesan *MAP Refresh* training; participation in nationwide *Thy Kingdom Come* mission; enabling the leaders of Church groups to have designated prayer time before activities; encouraging the growth of the WhatsApp Prayer Group; enabling the establishment of 'Pray and Play' spaces in both church buildings; engaging with "knitting in public" day; meeting folk on the street for hot chocolate at *Alternative Halloween*; meeting folk inside at the October coffee morning and the December Crib and Tree Festival; Carol singing on Abbottswood Estate; and of course looking outwards into the community beyond our doors through the continued embellishment of our fences featuring prayers, poppies, sunflowers, doves, a community Advent Calendar and much, much more ...

Although, the Mission Planning Group started the year on *Zoom*, we usually now meet about once a month in the Jolly Toppers, joined later by those who wish to participate in the quiz. In October an open meeting was held at Venue 360 to consider the programme of social and fund-raising events for next year in conjunction with the aims of the Mission Action Plan (MAP).

It is good to participate in God's mission together as the family of Christ in this parish. If you are being called to this work, have a word with Revd Anne or Dianne- this is not a closed group.

Dianne Scott, January 2022

CHARITIES COMMITTEE REPORT

Dianne Scott

It is the policy of the Parish of Luton, St. Anne with St. Christopher to donate ten per cent of our unrestricted income each year to charity. This Committee meets annually to talk about this, and make recommendations to the Parochial Church Council (PCC).

During 2021 we financially supported the following charities which the PCC agreed truly reflected the values of our parish at this time:

- | | | |
|-----|----------------|-------------------|
| 1/3 | LOCAL: | AZALEA |
| 1/3 | NATIONAL: | CHURCH URBAN FUND |
| 1/3 | INTERNATIONAL: | USPG |

The work of this committee relates only to those donations that are made directly from our church income. However, it is good to remember that the people of this parish continue to generously support many other charities and good causes through specific fundraising.

During 2021, for example, we have supported: Luton Deanery appeals to help refugees and asylum seekers; the Children's Society through boxes, Christingle and carol singing; the Bishop's Harvest Appeal through a 'virtual' supper; Luton Food Bank through regular collections.

The Parish Charities Committee, met at the Vicarage on Tuesday 7th September 2021 to thank God for his generosity, to pray together and discuss how our charitable giving might be distributed for 2022.

TUESDAY CRAFT GROUP AT ST. ANNE'S

Denise Dove

The craft group were able to meet later in 2021 even through the ups and downs of restrictions that were in place. It has been a successful year even in times of adversity. We were able to take part in the parish tree festival with some success. This year brings hope and with that in mind we are looking forward to new exciting ideas and projects, sharing laughter joy, friendship and fellowship.

SATURDAY CRAFTERS

Ann Moore

The Saturday Craft Group at St Christopher's was finally able to resume meeting in September 2021, and we were pleased to be back! The group meets in the Church on the fourth Saturday of most months between 9.30am and 12.30pm. Generally we will not meet in December. During our three meetings in 2021 we generally brought along our own projects to work on, but often spent more time chatting than we did crafting. We are a small but productive group who continue to work on projects at home and always swap ideas with each other.

The meeting is not just for crafters but for anyone who wants to pop in for a cup of tea or coffee and a chat.

CREATIVE SCRAPBOOKING

Emma Reid

Due to COVID-19 we have recently returned in the September, during this time our numbers have recently grown which has been lovely. We are a small group who enjoy sharing our albums alongside refreshments. To help you create your memories there are a selection of tools on hand for you to use, there is also a selection of papers or card which can be purchased. Not all our members choose to scrapbook, we have paper crafters who use a die cutting machine to make boxes, bags etc, card makers and some crochet. There is a small fee which covers the use of tools and refreshments.

POP-IN-CLUB

Carol Mitchell

Pop-in started back in September 2021 after not meeting since March 2020. We were worried about what attendance would be like, as some of our regular children would now have moved on to nursery or school. After much prayer we are pleased to say Pop-in is as popular as ever and growing. We are a happy group and always find something to talk about. It is a pleasure to see how the children interact with each other and play

.
Also grown in number are our volunteers which has made a big difference to us. As usual I say a big thank you to you all.

LUTON UNITE

Annette Considine

Luton Unite meets at Youthscape on the first Friday of the month, during term-time from 19:00-21:30. It puts on exciting events for young people from Years 7-13. Each evening is an opportunity for them to meet those from different churches and denominations and to be part of a growing, vibrant group. The aim is for young people to be introduced to the breadth and depth of the Christian community in Luton. Each month, two youth leaders from St Anne with St Christopher go along, in order to support our 5 regular attendees. The evening usually starts with an opportunity to socialise with friends before assembling for worship. Live music and games, along with the opportunity for individual prayer are well received. Leaders take turns to open up the Word. Recently, the focus has been on the 'I am' statements. The evening ends with a social event. Previous events have included playing a real-life version of the hugely popular video game Fortnite, a summer beach party, toasting marshmallows over fire pits and a dessert cafe. There is also a Christmas Ball held every December.

During the summer holidays, a 4 day event took place, which was a huge success. In the light of this, a 2 day event is planned for February half term. Please speak to Annette Considine, Michelle Reeves or Emma Reid for more information.

SCOUTS

Tanya Allen

While some of the year was still spent virtually, we were fortunate enough to return to face to face scouting. St. Christopher's garden played host to our meetings for a while, giving us an outdoor space to use before we returned to using St. Anne's hall in September. We worked on our bike badges, learning maintenance as well as safety, we practised knots and planned a cookery evening. The following week we all made pasta bake, Eton Mess and mini pizzas.

The whole group had a night hike from Cockernhoe to Tea Green then to our Treasurers house for hot dogs and hot chocolate. We also paraded from St. Anne's down to the memorial in Crawley Green Road cemetery for Remembrance Day and Cubs then enjoyed a fun day up at Ross Park, taking part in lots of challenges including science experiments, crossbows, backwoods cooking and some particularly tuneful campfire singing.

As usual leaders and young leaders collected the Peace light from St. Saviours Church mid-December and brought it back to our parish where it burned throughout the Christmas period. We even had a visit from the Posada, our Beavers were thrilled to meet the tiny Mary and Joseph touring the parish, tying in perfectly with our Christmas craft activities, they continued their journey the next day from our leaders house to their next stop. We finished the year with our usual festive sing song for parents and raised over £200 from our crafts, tombola and refreshment stalls.

We are off to Santa Camp this week, our first since before the pandemic and we are looking forward, hopefully, to a more normal 2022 but as always pass our thanks on to all our supporters, the group could not continue with all the help we get from our young leaders and our committee. Thank you all for everything you have done throughout 2021 and continue to do.

TALKING ELEPHANTS

Revd Anne

Talking Elephants is a bereavement support group, which was suspended with the outbreak of COVID-19.

In September 2021, in partnership with Neville Funerals, we relaunched this monthly meeting.

Each time we meet there is a different group of people, coming along as their need arises and their availability permits. Generally, there are approximately 8 or 10 people in attendance. Some are quiet, others need to talk. Tears are shed, and a listening ear is offered. Tea and coffee is flowing.

Those attending were invited to the Blue Christmas Carol Service, some came along.

The group continues to meet on the third Thursday morning of each month.

The Talking Elephants prayer is prayed before each meeting.

Heavenly Father,

Your Son Jesus knew what it was to mourn a friend,

and acted with love towards those who had lost someone close.

Heal us from experiences of loss in our own lives and,

through your grace, give us generous hearts

that quietly make room for the suffering of others.

Help us to walk beside those we encounter today;

through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,

who lives and reigns with you,

in the unity of the Holy Spirit forever.

Amen.

“WE PRAY TOGETHER” Report

Dianne Scott

The first priority of our parish Mission Action Plan (MAP), is that: ***prayer will be at the heart of everything we as the Christian community of faith in this place undertake.***

“We Pray Together” is a weekly group that enables us to gather and bring before our loving Heavenly Father the needs of individuals, the community of Luton, our nation and the world as we feel called to do. The order for *Common Worship Daily Prayer* guides each session, followed by a time of open prayer.

The group launched live using *Zoom* in January, replacing *Evening Prayer with Extended Intercessions* which had been prayed through most of 2020 on *Facebook Live*. We did experience technical hitches here and there; nevertheless it was good to have more than one voice on air.

In October, it finally became possible to meet in person and open to the public. **12 Noon on Tuesdays at St. Anne’s Church** is now regular slot and everybody is welcome with the freedom to say as much or as little as feels comfortable.

Parish of Luton, St Anne with St Christopher

Treasurer’s report for the year ending 31 December 2021

The calendar year 2021 was another challenging year for the parish. Like so many other organisations, the work of the parish was severely curtailed by both lockdowns, covid related restrictions and the understandable concern of some people in attending a service while the virus was active.

Income:

The major sources of income of the parish were again from stewardship and pledges, and rental income resulting from the hire by external parties of the parish buildings. Stewardship and pledges fell by 18% to £26,763 (2020: £32,826). Rental income from both the halls and churches fell by 52% to £10,584 (2020: £21,940).

Parish income also usually includes an amount of gift aid, where income tax on donations is reclaimed by the parish where the giver is a UK taxpayer. The claims were processed historically by submitting a claim for each of our two churches separately. The change to processing a combined claim, and the setting up this of process with HMRC, has delayed our latest claim which had not been processed by our year end. The income tax refund claim has, therefore reduced by 100% to £0 (2020: £8,822).

Overall, income reduced by 35% to £45,909 (2020: £70,904). This is a reduction of approximately £25k. The reductions of approximately £6k for stewardship and pledges, £11k for rental income and £9k for the income tax refund, explained above are the major reasons for this reduction.

Expenditure:

The PCC is very aware that the parish is operating in a difficult financial environment and has made every effort to control costs in the year. In addition, the fact that there was less activity at our churches meant that costs linked to usage would also reduce temporarily. As a result costs overall have reduced by 16% to £65,030 (2020: £77,154). Due to financial

constraints, charitable donations reduced by 95% to £230 (2020: £4,198). Other cost reductions fall across several expenditure lines with none large enough to merit a particular note.

One item that always causes considerable debate for the PCC is the parish share. The parish share represents the amount paid to the Diocese of St Albans to reimburse them for their costs, which include all costs relating to the provision of a vicar. The parish was not able to pay the full amount of parish share in 2020. It then paid £31,323, which was approximately 61% of the requested £51,323. As explained already, this year's discussion was held in a difficult financial environment. The conclusion reached was that it would not be desirable to reduce the amount paid for the parish share % lower than last year. This year, we have paid £31,200, which is approximately 63% of the requested £49,622. We do take our responsibilities in respect of the parish share very seriously and it remains our long-term aim to reach a financial position where we can pay it in full. For all the reasons discussed, our current account bank balance has reduced to £47,989 (2020: £67,110).

The year ahead:

I believe that the year ahead will be another challenging year for the parish. There are expected to be cost pressures generally with inflation running at 5%. There are also concerns that energy costs will rise substantially in 2022, a particular worry, as we have two large churches to heat. However, we also expect our income to rise. Rental income is expected to rise to more than double this year's figure as activity recommences. Also, we expect to make up the income tax refund claim amount not shown this year. Overall, and subject to no further covid outbreaks or restrictions, we expect a slightly better outcome than in 2021.

Thank you:

This is my first year as treasurer and I would like to thank all members of the PCC for their support during the year.

Thank you to all the people who have given financially to the parish in any way. Your donations are vital in allowing the important work of the parish to continue.

Thank you to all those who have gift aided their donations. This enables the parish to claim an extra 25% of your donation from the government if you are a UK taxpayer.

Thank you to Ian Gorton who has once again served as the Independent Examiner for the Parish.

Independent Examiner's report to the Parochial Church Council of St Anne's with St Christopher's, Luton

This report on the accounts of the PCC for the year ended 31 December 2021, which are set out on pages to is in respect of an examination carried out in accordance with the Church Accounting Regulations 2006 ('the Regulations') and s.145 of the Charities Act 2011 ('the Act').

Respective responsibilities of the PCC and the examiner

As members of the PCC you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts; you consider that the audit requirement of the Regulations and s.144(2) of the Act does not apply. It is my responsibility to issue this report on those accounts in accordance with the terms of the Regulations.

Basis of this report

My examination was carried out in accordance with the General Directions given by the Charity Commission under s.145(5)(b) of the Act and to be found in the Church guidance, 2006 edition. That examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the PCC and a comparison of the accounts with those records. It also includes considering 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 I do not express an audit opinion on the view given by the accounts.

Independent examiner's statement

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

- i. 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 Act; and
 - to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the requirements of the Act and the Regulations have not been met; or
- ii. to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Signed: IAN GORTON

Date: 25/2/2022

Name: IAN GORTON

Relevant professional qualification(s) or body: FELLOW OF THE CHARTERED INSTITUTE OF MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTANTS

Address: 2 CRESSMANS WALK
LILLEY BOTTOM ROAD
WHITWELL
HITCHIN HERTS SG4 8AW

Parish of Luton, St Anne with St Christopher

Year Ending 31 December 2021

General Fund - Income

2020

2021

£	£		£	£	
		Balances brought forward at 01/01/2021			
73,361.00			Bank general fund	67,110.10	
	73,361.00			67,110.10	
	32,825.92	Stewardship and pledges		26,763.34	Planned giving
	507.28	Gift aided envelopes		455.00	Gift aid
		Guild		228.23	
	762.05	Donations and bequests		1,268.54	Unrestricted and restricted
	614.85	Specific collections		140.00	
	8,822.45	Income tax refund			
		Collections			
650.39			Loose	1,100.10	Cash
35.00			Weddings	135.70	
	685.39				
	3,236.52	Weddings and funeral fees		3,504.00	
	168.38	Refreshments		27.50	
	17,414.42	Hall rental		10,446.17	
	4,525.75	Church rental		138.00	
	590.47	Fundraising events		387.21	
	500.00	Magazine advertising revenue			
	0.00	Bookstall & bible reading notes		35.00	
		Receipt from B & F fund		220.00	

250.01	Sundry income	60.00
70,903.5	Total income for the year	44,908.8
144,264.		112,018.

General Fund - Expenditure

2020		2021	
£	£	£	£
2,829.0	Church:	Light and heat	2,436.9
1,482.3		Insurance	1,507.8
4,725.5		Repairs and	3,013.3
0.00		Organ repairs	
9,036.83		6,958.14	
987.20	Service requirements		260.79
1,355.90	Maintenance grounds		160.00
31,323.0	Parish share scheme		31,200.0
127.16	Youth group and junior church		
4,198.07	Charitable donations		230.00
1,031.42	Administration, stationery and		568.44
1,306.90	Internet / telephone		929.41
5,119.20	Wages		4,416.35
1,218.12	Photocopier / printer		797.87
2,546.43	Clergy expenses		2,709.86

1,690.99	Envelopes / legal / inscriptions		1,315.79
-13.78	Bible reading notes		69.55
122.00	Educational books		13.73
293.00	Parish magazine		
276.60	Outreach magazine		322.25
1,758.1	Hall :	Cleaning	
2,612.3		Repairs and	2,603.4
5,377.9		Light, heat and	5,794.2
500.00		Rent deposit	700.00
2,562.7		Insurance	2,613.1
<u>12,811.2</u>			<u>11,710.8</u>
26.02	Refreshments / church café etc		18.07
1,225.25	Sundry expenses		411.86
84.85	Publicity		
	Transfer B & F account		60.00
2,388.00	Fees		2,877.00
<u>77,154.4</u>	Total expenditure for the year		<u>65,029.9</u>
Balances carried forward at 31 December 2021			
0.00		Cash	0.00
67,110.		Bank - general	46,988.
<u>67,110.1</u>			<u>46,988.9</u>
<u>144,264.</u>			<u>112,018.</u>
Parish Share			
In respect of:			
		2021	2020

	£	£
2021	18,422	
2020	20,000	20,000
2019	0	0
2018 or earlier	0	14,447
Total	38,422	34,447

The present policy of the Diocese is to consider writing off balances over 3 years old, if proposed by the Diocese.

The 2018 or earlier balance of £14,447 has been written off under these

The total parish share liability is not reflected in the above income and expenditure account or closing balance sheet.

Light and heat

There is a disputed liability of £1,407 in respect of our previous gas supplier.

This light and heat liability is not reflected in the above income and expenditure account or closing balance sheet.

Parish of Luton, St Anne with St Christopher

Year Ending 31 December 2021

Charitable

2020		2021
£		£
	Church Army	
1,739.00	Keech Hospice Care	
	Mission to Seafarers	
869.52	USPG	
110.00	The Bishop's Harvest	120.00
869.52	Church Urban Fund	
50.00	Azalea	
210.00	Luton Food bank	20.00
90.00	Children's Society	
	Alzheimer's Society	
	Noah Enterprise	
	Level Trust	
220.00	Hands of Mercy	
40.00	Beds & Herts Historic Church Trust	40.00
	Love Moldova Fund	50.00
4,198.00		230.00

Parish of Luton, St Anne with St Christopher

Year Ending 31 December 2021

Restricted Funds

Building Projects St Annes

2020	
£	
33,299.56	Balance Brought Forward
1,297.47	Receipts
	Income Tax Refund
	From General Fund
-1,770.00	Payments
32,827.03	Balance Carried Forward

Building Projects St Annes

2021	
£	
32,827.03	Balance Brought Forward
1,441.00	Receipts
0.00	Income Tax Refund
0.00	From General Fund
-1,581.26	Payments
32,686.77	Balance Carried Forward

Building Projects St Christopher

2020	
£	
30,556.44	Balance Brought Forward
400.00	Kitchen & toilet fund
27.28	Receipts
	Payments
30,983.60	Balance Carried Forward

Building Projects St Christopher

2021	
£	
30,983.60	Balance Brought Forward
0.00	Kitchen & toilet fund
1,030.00	Receipts
0.00	Payments
32,013.60	Balance Carried Forward

Big Ideas Project

2020	
£	
0.00	Balance Brought Forward
250.00	Receipts
-163.04	Payments
86.96	Balance Carried Forward

Big Ideas Project

2021	
£	
86.96	Balance Brought Forward
0.00	Receipts
0.00	Payments
86.96	Balance Carried Forward

Total Buildings and Fabrics

2020	
£	
63,855.00	Balance Brought Forward
1,574.70	Receipts
0.00	Income Tax Refund

Total Buildings and Fabrics

2021	
£	
63,897.00	Balance Brought Forward
2,471.00	Receipts
0.00	Income Tax Refund

0.00	From General fund		0.00
400.00	Kitchen and Toilet Fund		0.00
-1,933.0	Payments		-1,581.
<u>63,897.</u>	Balance Carried Forward		<u>64,787.</u>
<u>68</u>			<u>42</u>
30.00	Made up as:	Bank HSBC	0.00
63,867.		Bank Nat West	64,787.
<u>68</u>			<u>42</u>
63,897.			64,787.
<u>68</u>			<u>42</u>