

# **St Mark's Parish Church**

Little Common, Bexhill-on-Sea, East Sussex

*Registered Charity No. 1135040*



## **Annual Report and Financial Statements of the Parochial Church Council for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> December, AD 2020**

### **Rector:**

The Reverend Jonathan Fraiss  
St Mark's Rectory, 11 Coverdale Avenue,  
Bexhill-on-Sea, East Sussex, TN39 4TY

### **Independent Examiner:**

Mr David Allen  
5 Mulberry Close  
Bexhill on Sea, East Sussex, TN39 4RX

### **Bankers:**

The Co-operative Bank p.l.c.  
PO Box 250, Delf House, Southway,  
Skelmersdale WN8 6WT

[www.stmarkslittlecommon.co.uk](http://www.stmarkslittlecommon.co.uk)

Parochial Church Council of St Mark's, Little Common  
*Registered Charity No. 1135040*

Annual Report 2020

Administrative information

During the year the following served as members of the Parochial Church Council (PCC)

Rector: The Reverend Jonathan Fraiss

Churchwardens: Mrs Carol Gent  
Mr Steve Whiting

Representatives on Deanery Synod:  
Mrs Carol Gent  
Mrs Doone Ellerton

Elected Members: Mrs Anne Andersen  
Mr Tony Gent  
Mr Richard Gillam, until October 2020  
Mrs Sheila Johnson  
Mr Tommy Mack  
Mr John Philpot (Hon. Treasurer)  
Mrs Sue Rochefort

In 2020, the PCC met four times and the Standing Committee (Rector, Churchwardens, Treasurer) met once. The PCC has complied with section 5 of the Safeguarding and Clergy Discipline Measure 2016 (duty to have due regard to House of Bishops' guidance on safeguarding children and vulnerable adults).

**Purpose** St Mark's exists to share the gospel of Christ which reveals the saving love of God. In being the parish church in Little Common, we serve the local population by providing a place for Christian worship and drawing visitors from within and without the parish boundary to the glory of God and according to his word.

**Method** We spread the gospel by welcoming everyone to our services shaped by varied Bible teaching. We maintain buildings as fit for use, offer pastoral care, and respond to the needs of other charities and people overseas.

**Benefit** We exist to change lives by presenting Jesus Christ and building faith, hope and love in believing hearts. We offer the community a modern hall with spacious car park both of which are well used. A defibrillator is installed outside the hall. We give hospitality to both Guide and Scout groups. We support numerous causes such as FoodBank and Street Pastors, Family Support Work, and overseas Missions. We enjoy links with Little Common Primary School.

## FABRIC REPORTS

**Church:** As with any older building minor repair works are undertaken in the church. Routine maintenance also takes place. This includes twice yearly servicing of the intruder alarm by Holts Security and an annual service of the fire extinguishers by Trafalgar Fire. Three times a year BG Environmental Services clear the valley gutters, drains, downpipes and hoppers. Following severe weather at the end of November, water came through on the west side of the church. In addition to this, water leaked down the bell rope and flooded the electrical cupboard affecting the electrics to the heating system. Jim Berry from Walco has now replaced the burnt out contacts.

The organ and piano have been tuned.

We are grateful to all who help in the small ways throughout the year, the ladies who attend to the Communion Linen, the Flower Guild and other helpers who decorate our church week by week and especially at Festival times. David and Bronwyn Smith keep the church clean, tidy and during the pandemic sanitised. Following COVID 19 guidelines, hand sanitisers were installed in the church.

**Grounds:** Graham Austin continued to cut the Garden of Remembrance grass during the summer months, but during 2020 only once a month. Chris Livings maintains the grounds around the church and hall. Doone Ellerton looks after the rose bushes and small borders leading up to the church – thank you. Rother District Council cuts the graveyard grass. The small notice board in the graveyard was found to be unstable and generally in a poor state, this was removed during the summer. The notice boards outside the south porch and on the corner of the car park provide adequate information. Jim Berry (Walco) has fixed the outside flood lights.

**Hall:** Regular maintenance and servicing is undertaken, Tormax (front doors); Gartec (lift); Airtight Security (intruder and fire alarms); Trafalgar Fire (fire extinguishers). Annual maintenance on the boilers and other plumbing issues, as they arise, are dealt with by Dale Saunders (a local heating engineer) and BG Drains clear the gutters and drains. Angela Lucas is currently employed to clean the hall, but for most of 2020 was furloughed. As required by our insurance company, a five yearly full electrical test was undertaken by Walco and identified works dealt with and a certificate of satisfaction has been issued. The hand rail on the lowers staircase has been safely re-fixed. Following COVID19 guidelines hand sanitisers and paper towel holders were installed. Thank you to Richard Gillam for these and for those in church. Thanks to John Philpot for making a holder for tables in the Walker Hall and shelving in the downstairs cupboard (under the stairs). During the time when the hall was closed, John Piper has now completed decorating the Walker Hall.

Carol Gent & Steve Whiting, Churchwardens

## Review of the year

### Church Attendance

There are 139 on the Church Electoral Roll, of whom 109 are resident and 30 are not resident in the Parish. The average Sunday attendance (sampled in October) was a total of 70 adults and 6 children, across all services.

**CHURCH:** routine maintenance takes place. This includes twice yearly servicing of the intruder alarm by Holts Security and an annual service of the fire extinguishers by Trafalgar Fire. Three times a year BG Environmental Services clear the valley gutters, drains, downpipes and hoppers. The organ and piano have been tuned. We are grateful to all who help in the small ways throughout the year, the ladies who attend to the Communion Linen, the Flower Guild and other helpers who decorate our church week by week and especially at Festival times. David and Bronwyn Smith keep the church clean and tidy.

**GROUNDS:** Graham Austin continued to cut the Garden of Remembrance grass during the summer months, Chris Livings maintains the grounds around the church and hall. Doone Ellerton looks after the rose bushes and small borders leading up to the church – thank you. Rother District Council cuts the graveyard grass. Jim Berry (of Walco) attends to lighting and heating issues as they arise.

**HALL:** Regular maintenance and servicing is undertaken, Tormax (front doors); Gartec (lift); Airtight Security (intruder and fire alarms); Trafalgar Fire (fire extinguishers). Annual maintenance on the boilers and other plumbing issues, as they arise, are dealt with by Dale Saunders (a local heating engineer) and BG Drains clear the gutters and drains. Angela Lucas is currently employed to clean the hall, and an outside contractor to clean the windows outside when required.

## **EVENTS**

The Ark Coffee Lounge closed at the end of March for Lockdown One. The Magazine was re-named The Link and was again produced ten times a year - around four hundred magazines of each edition are either taken or delivered. A collection basket was in regular use for Bexhill Foodbank

On the 9<sup>th</sup> February, St Mark's hosted an evening with speakers from Creation Ministries International. On 1<sup>st</sup> March, St Mark's hosted the Deanery Confirmation led by the Rt Revd Martin Warner, Bishop of Chichester. Four adults from St Mark's were confirmed in Christian faith; three also being baptised. Refreshments were served in the hall. On 15<sup>th</sup> March, coffee was served at church for the last time that year, and Lent Course on 'Hebrews' had to be left unfinished.

On Mothering Sunday the church was open for private prayer only. Sixteen attended. Then St Mark's was closed for three months. St Mark's went online with Youtube services, supplemented by thirty deliveries of written materials on paper for those without computers. In this time the bell was rung on Thursday evenings to coincide with 'clapping for the NHS' and for the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of VE Day. The building re-opened for private prayer in June (on Sundays and Wednesdays) and services resumed on July 5<sup>th</sup>.

The church was decorated for Harvest but no supper was permitted. Following ten years of conscientious work by Peter and Sue Rochefort, the website was upgraded by Carol Gent and now has larger capacity.

Lockdown Two (November) meant no service for Remembrance Sunday but the Rector joined other private individuals at the War Memorial. For the remainder of the month, the church was open for private prayer on Sundays, and also on Thursdays (set by the Archbishops for special prayer following the association of this day with clapping for the NHS in Lockdown One).

In December, Little Common School held three socially-distanced carol concerts at St Mark's (one for each class in Year 6). With rising levels of covid-19 in East Sussex, and with the Rector in isolation following family covid tests (later found to be negative), Christmas services were slimmed down and Christmas day led by lay members of church.

During the year, we welcomed Brig. Ian Dobbie (SASRA) as a visiting preacher and public ministry was also led by local retired clergy such as Don Cormack and John Woodger. Books on sale for £1 at different times were *Do you pray?* (Ryle), *Five things to pray for your city* (P Nicholas and H Thorne), and *Stand* (W. Wiersbe)

In 2020 we said goodbye to Elizabeth Rogers, Ros Evans, Jeanette Miller, Gwen Parke, Jean Machell, Peter Rochefort, Janet Holmes, Richard Mockett whom God took to be with him in glory.

We thank God for his mercies past and trust him for all that is to come. Throughout the pandemic, God has taught us to find him as our refuge and strength, our hope and our peace.

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (continued)**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2020**

**6 Debtors**

	2020	2019
	£	£
Income tax recoverable	3,099	3,228
Prepayments and accrued income	-	-
	<b>3,099</b>	<b>3,228</b>

**7 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year**

	2020	2019
	£	£
Accruals	2,719	5,833
	<b>2,719</b>	<b>5,833</b>

**8 Statement of funds**

	Bal b/fwd 1 Jan 2020	Income	Expenditure	Transfers, other gains and losses	Bal c/fwd 31 Dec 2020
	£	£	£	£	£
<b>Unrestricted Fund</b>					
General fund	1,209,819	86,578	(104,190)	-	1,192,207
	<b>1,209,819</b>	<b>86,578</b>	<b>(104,190)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1,192,207</b>
<b>Restricted Funds</b>					
Specific donations	-	1,757	(1,757)	-	-
	<b>-</b>	<b>1,757</b>	<b>(1,757)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Total funds</b>	<b>1,209,819</b>	<b>88,335</b>	<b>(105,947)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1,192,207</b>

**Independent examiner's report  
To the PCC of St Mark's Church, Little Common  
For the year ended 31 December 2020**

This is my report to the PCC of St Mark's, Little Common on the financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2020, set out on pages 1 to 9.

**Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner**

The PCC members are responsible for the preparation of financial statements and you consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 144 of the Charities Act 2011 ("the Charities Act") and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to:

1. examine the accounts under section 145 of the Charities Act,
2. follow the procedures laid down in the General Directions given by the Charity Commission (under section 145(5)(b) of the Charities Act, and
3. state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

**Basis of independent examiner's statement**

My examination was carried out in accordance with 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 the 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:
  - a. to keep accounting records in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act; and
  - b. to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the requirements of the Charities 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.

Signed.....

David Allen  
5 Mulberry Close  
Bexhill-on-Sea  
East Sussex TN39 4RX

Date 20 April 2021