

THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF THE CHURCH OF THE HOLY CROSS, UCKFIELD

England & Wales · Charity number 1137746

Details

Other names	CHURCH OF THE HOLY CROSS, UCKFIELD
Status	Registered
Legal form	Previously excepted
Registered	2010-09-03
Register	View on the Charity Commission register

Contact

Address	The Church Of The Holy Cross Belmont Centre Belmont Road Uckfield East Sussex TN22 1BP
Phone	01825764889
Email	holycrossuckfield@gmail.com
Website	www.churchoftheholycrossuckfield.co.uk

Activities

Objects: Promoting in the ecclesiastical parish the whole mission of the Church.

Activities: Regular public worship open to all. Pastoral work, including visiting the sick and the bereaved and the housebound. Teaching of Christianity through sermons, courses and small groups. Taking of religious assemblies in schools. Provision of activities for senior citizens, parents and toddlers and other special need groups. Supporting other charities in the UK and overseas.

Classification

- **How:** Makes Grants To Organisations, Provides Buildings/facilities/open Space, Provides Services
- **What:** Religious Activities
- **Who:** Children/young People, The General Public/mankind

Geography

- **Area of benefit:** UNDEFINED. IN PRACTICE, LOCAL.
- East Sussex

Finances

Period end	Income	Expenditure	Assets	Employees
2024-12-31	£178,105	£164,197	-	-
2023-12-31	£148,067	£158,456	-	-
2022-12-31	£156,557	£152,948	-	-
2021-12-31	£134,039	£150,426	-	-
2020-12-31	£298,667	£124,935	-	-

Trustees

Name	Role	Appointed
Rev JOHN CASWALLAN WALL MA	Chair	2016-09-21
ANGELA LESLEY NOEL		
ANN ELIZABETH KENNEDY		
Anthony G Simpson		2022-05-06
Bethany Boag-Morris		2022-05-06
EDNA MARY OSBORNE		2016-04-13
FRANCIS NIGEL WALLACE LL.B		2019-04-23
GILLIAN YOUNGMAN		2013-04-23
JOHN PONTEFRACT		
MRS DEE JOHNSON		
PAUL JOHN IRELAND		2019-05-08
PAUL LESTER CUERDEN BA		
Raymond Pilson		2025-05-15
Rhian Cottrell		2025-05-15
SANDRA MARJORIE BONIFACE		2020-10-18
SARAH ELIZABETH WIDDOWSON		2014-04-09
SHEILA MARY FORDHAM BED Cantab		2015-09-30
TERRY DOUGLAS HALL		

Accounts

**Trustees Annual Report and Financial Report
of
The Parochial Church Council of the Ecclesiastical Parish
of The Church of the Holy Cross, Uckfield**

The Church of the Holy Cross, Church St/Belmont Rd, Uckfield, East Sussex TN22 1BP

Registered Charity no. 1137746

For the year ended 31 December 2024

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Administrative information

Incumbent: The Revd John Wall, The Rectory, 1 Sand Ridge, Ridgewood, Uckfield TN22 5ET

Independent examiner: Mr B Jacobs, 12 Silverdale, Keymer BN6 8RD (appointed 2022)

Bankers: National Westminster Bank, 1 Muster Green, Haywards Heath RH16 4AP

Parish Office: holycrossuckfield@gmail.com

Website: www.churchoftheholycrossuckfield.co.uk

Social Media: Facebook - holycrosschurchuckfield

Advisers to the P.C.C.

Mrs AD Johnson	Churchwarden
Mr J Pontefract	Churchwarden and Health & Safety Officer
Mr P Ireland	P.C.C. Treasurer
Mrs G Youngman	P.C.C. Secretary
Mrs L Ireland	Parish Administrator
Mr P Kennedy	Major Works Project Manager

Thank you to the following people for permission to use their photos:

Sarah Widdowson, Gillian Youngman and Rhian Cottrell.

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THE TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT

OUR AIMS AND PURPOSES AS A CHARITY

'The Parochial Church Council of the Ecclesiastical Parish of the Church of the Holy Cross, Uckfield' is a Charity registered with the Charity Commission in England and Wales as charity number 1137746. It is commonly known by its working name of 'Holy Cross Church, Uckfield'.

Holy Cross Church is set just off the High Street in Uckfield and comes under the Diocese of Chichester. It is part of a Plurality with St Michael and All Angels at Little Horsted and St Margaret of Antioch at Isfield, overseen by the Rector, the Reverend John Wall (Father John). The Parochial Church Council (P.C.C.) is a corporate body established by the Church of England and operates under the Parochial Church Council (Powers) Measure 1956, Church Representation Rules 2006 which states that its principal function is "promoting in the parish the whole mission of the Church".

The P.C.C. has the responsibility of co-operating with the incumbent in:

- The promotion of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ according to the doctrines and practices of the Church of England.
- Promoting in the parish the whole mission of the church: pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical.
- Getting to know Jesus better and make Him better known.
- Practical support and care for people in the parish, from the youngest to the eldest, irrespective of level of need or ability to pay.
- Providing financial support to those in need and to other organisations with similar objectives.
- Demonstrating that our aims are for the public benefit, including charities advancing education or religion or relieving poverty.
- Following the Chichester Diocese Strategy 2020-2025 'Vision for Growth' (More Open; More Converted to Jesus Christ; More Generous; More Engaged).

OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

When planning our activities for the year the P.C.C. and clergy have considered the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit and, in particular, the specific guidance on 'charities for the advancement of religion'.

We enable as many people as possible to worship at our church:

- Enabling as many people as possible to become part of our parish community.
- Teaching, baptising and nurturing new and existing believers.
- Encouraging children we encounter to worship.

We offer services of worship to God:

- Maintaining an overview of worship throughout the parish.
- Considering how services can involve the many groups that live within the parish.
- Putting faith into practice, through prayer and scripture, music and sacrament.
- Providing services and opportunities to worship (other than the regular Sunday services) which reach out to the wider community.
- Services organised by the Youth Group (new this year).

We promote the Gospel and pray that the unchurched may find life in Jesus Christ:

- Assisting people from all walks of life to develop their knowledge of, and trust in, Jesus.
- Sermons and talks to deepen spirituality both as a community and as individuals.
- Offering worship and prayer, learning about the Gospel, in small group situations including monthly services in home complexes for retired living and annual confirmation classes for adults and children.

We engage in evangelism and outreach to the parish in various ways:

- Reaching out through less formal services, children's activities, community, social and fundraising events.
- Bimonthly Community Leaders' Lunches.
- Chaplaincy of Uckfield Bonfire & Carnival Society and the Uckfield Rugby Club.
- Outreach to local schools through assemblies, talks and worship.

We provide a building for people to enjoy:

- Maintaining the fabric of the Church building as a historic centre and focus of life in the town: developing its flexibility and wider use, including keeping it open for all during daylight hours; also maintaining the fabric of The Belmont Centre (Church hall).
- Enabling an appreciation of the Church building in the history and archaeology of the area.

We provide tangible pastoral and financial support to the poor and needy:

- Providing pastoral care for people whether part of the Holy Cross Church family or not, including visiting the sick and dying.
- Providing assistance to the poor and needy of the parish both financially and by initiatives such as Very Chatty Café.
- Providing assistance to the wider community, including the relief of poverty through support to local charities such as the Uckfield Foodbank, the Community Fridge and the Edward Holmes Baldock Charity.

We consider protecting the needs of those entering our church buildings:

- Ensuring all members and visitors to the church are kept safe and that all Safeguarding procedure and policy is followed.
- Supporting the National Church's initiative "Living in Love and Faith" on sexuality.
- Raising awareness of issues of race, bias and inclusion.

We spend money as wisely and responsibly as possible:

- Adhering to our Financial Records and Accounts Policy including authorisation of spending.
- Tendering for large jobs in order to make sure we are getting the work done to our specification while good value for money.
- Spending the income of our parish trusts according to the wishes of their donors.

We consider the needs of people served by other charities and overseas:

- Giving to wider Christian charities and community organisations both at home and overseas.
- Giving to missionary organisations.
- Responding to emergencies and crisis by arranging adhoc appeals and retiring collections.

WHAT WE PLANNED TO DO TO ACHIEVE OUR CHARITABLE OBJECTIVES

PERFORMANCE REVIEW OF ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE YEAR

Worship and Prayer

All are welcome to attend our services and the church family welcomes visitors from within as well as outside the parish boundary.

The regular services are:

- Sunday 8.00am Holy Communion
- Sunday 9.30am Parish Communion (including healing on the 4th Sunday of the month)
- Sunday 10.00am Open Doors (family Eucharist) usually on 2nd Sunday of the month
- Sunday 5.30pm Evensong (see below for details)
- Wednesday 11.00am Holy Communion

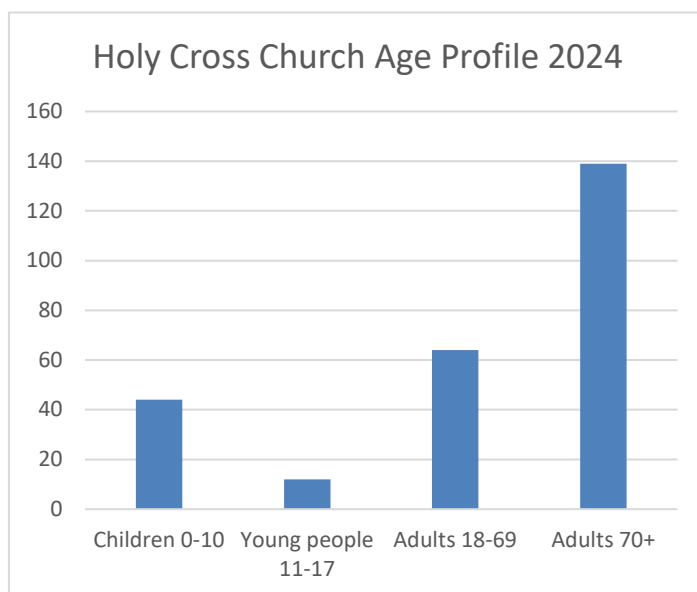
The number of adults attending a **Sunday morning service** in 2024 averaged 77 (this includes the Open Doors service when Junior Church and families participate in the service) and is an increase of two from last year.

Each year the Diocese asks parishes to monitor attendance during Sundays in October. In 2024 the average adult attendance in Church for the morning services in October (including the Harvest Open Doors service) was 82 (one more than last year).

The average number attending the **Open Doors service** was 91 adults (an increase of three from last year) and 15 children. There were by far most children (38) at the Harvest Open Doors service.

The highest attendance for a Sunday morning was Easter Day (like last year) which was a Family Service with 135 adults and 28 children attending (13 adults less and one child more than last year but still a very pleasing turn out).

The Diocese also annually asks for the age profile of our worshipping community and this year the congregation were asked to help with this making it possibly more accurate maybe than previous years. Dee reported that our demographic profile is roughly 50% over 70, 25% 18-69, 25% under 18 with the biggest growth section being 11-17 year olds who we have managed to hold on to thanks to the dedication of those involved. This is illustrated in the chart to the right. She also pointed out that unfortunately there is nowhere in the statistics to put the number of Very Chatty Café attendees which is our biggest outreach work [see Page 11].



Numbers at the weekly **8am Holy Communion service** remained low, ranging from 4 to 14 (the highest attendance being Easter Day) with an average of seven people attending throughout the year. Similarly, attendance at the weekly **Wednesday 11am Holy Communion service** varies from 5 to 15 (the highest attendance being Ash Wednesday) with an average of eight during the year.

A Pet Service was also held this year which attracted 77 adults and 16 children along with 17 dogs and two tortoises. The Holiday Club helpers came dressed as butterflies which they had worn for the Uckfield Carnival Children’s Procession.



Holy Cross Church continues to be one of a very few churches that has an **Evensong Service** but with numbers very low at some of the services a new format was set last year which continued along these lines in 2024:

- 2nd Sunday of the month Festal Choral Evensong
- 4th Sunday Sung Evensong
- 1st, 3rd and 5th Sundays Mainly a Said Evensong with Hymns or “one off” special services.

As can be seen below, numbers varied depending to the type of service:

Evening Prayer	Choral Evensong	Evensong
10-12 (average 11)	24-46 (average 30)	7-20 (average 15)

There were also some **special evening services** which included:

Evensong combined with a BBQ at The Rectory garden in August with 55 attending (38 last year).



Two special evening services were led by the younger members of the congregation. One was on Palm Sunday led by the relatively new Youth Club, and the other a Candlelit Concert in September by the Youth Choir (supported by our Children’s Choir) attended by 65 adults and six children and 71 adults and 25 children respectively. Since starting with five members, the Youth Choir has now grown to 12. The Children’s Choir stayed steady at around 11 children.

Besides the regular Sunday services, **other services** also took place in Holy Cross Church which bring in the wider community, namely: All Souls, Remembrance, Festival of Christmas Trees closing service, the Sussex Bonfire Societies Carol Service, Carols by Candlelight and the Christmas Eve Crib Service.

There was no St George's Day service this year as the Scouts held it in their Scout Hut.

The Church is also used as a suitable venue by others for special events like the Rocks Park School Harvest Service and Uckfield College Carol Concert.

Christmas services were well attended with the Crib 'unrehearsed nativity' Service continuing to be the most popular service of all where children were invited to take part. The galleries come into their own at this service (as photo on right).



The estimated attendance figures for the Crib Service were back up to pre Covid levels [see table below] which is encouraging:

Year	Adults	Children under 16	Total	Notes
2019	490	127	617	
2020	-	-	-	Could not be held due to Covid
2021	200	50	250	Spaces limited and bookings taken
2022	350	150	500	
2023	325	125	450	
2024	500	100	600	

Compline (an Order for Night Prayer) continued at 4.30pm on the 1st, 3rd and 5th Tuesday of the month at **St Saviour's** (following private prayer from 4pm) with an average of five people attending.

From October Fr. John has continued to visit **Millington Court** (a large block of flats in Mill Lane) on a monthly basis to take a Eucharist service in the communal room and since August a similar service started at **Portman Court** (Grange Road), attended by c13 people. An occasional service has begun at Margaret House with c10-12 attendees. It is yet to get into a regular rhythm.

Children's work and attendance

Holy Cross Church still has a lot to offer young families. **Junior Church** continued to meet on the 1st, 3rd and 5th Sundays of the month, participating in the Open Doors family Eucharist on the 2nd Sunday of the month with families having the 4th Sunday free when they can enjoy other activities. Junior Church start their worship in The Belmont Centre, then join the congregation for Communion followed by the children showing what they have been doing which is always a joy to see and hear.

Numbers vary considerably with an average of 17 children and as many as 28 children when they made pancakes and 27 for the Nativity Play in Church. We are very grateful to Sarah, Eleighsia and their helpers, many of whom are parents and can vary from eight to as many as 22 per week.

Two Saturday morning sessions of **Messy Church** were held (Messy Easter and Messy Harvest) each with an attendance of around 50 children. Priority booking is given to Junior Church children with the remaining spaces open to the wider community.



In summer the **Holiday Club** returned with a fun-packed 'Animal Kingdom' theme. Over 50 children were welcomed throughout the three days which were packed with activities, story, music and craft based on a story from the Bible. The following Sunday the usual Holiday Club service was held when children shared with the congregation and families what they had done the previous week. Children and helpers also took part in the Uckfield Carnival Children's Procession as part of the Animal Kingdom.

During 2024 the Youth Club met for a number of sessions including a BBQ, A MacDonald's trip and a hugely well supported Palm Sunday Service. Since the summer, owing to the volume of the young people's activities, the Youth Club has been quiet, maintained largely by membership of the Youth Choir.

It was pointed out that when you entered Holy Cross Church, there is no evidence of children being part of the church, which is far from correct. A sub group of the P.C.C. therefore created a new Children's area in the Christ Church Chapel which was blessed at the Harvest Open Doors Service as a six month trial.

Sarah promoted it on Facebook:

'If you have young children and would like to join us at a church service, but worry about keeping the little one's entertained, please don't worry - we have introduced a new area in the church especially for young children! Obviously we always welcome children to join us in our Junior Church sessions which run on 1st, 3rd & 5th Sundays, but if you wish to keep them in church with you, this will hopefully give you a welcome alternative. Please also know that we fully understand that children make noise! This will never be frowned upon at Holy Cross - children of all ages are always welcome!' This new area has been very well received.



For more information on children's work see the separate *Report containing activities of the church family*.

Life Events

Our Church continued to be appreciated by our parishioners and many others as a space where life events are celebrated with joy and thanksgiving. There were six **Baptisms** (five under the age of one and one adult) and one **Wedding** held during the year. There were 17 **Funerals** in Holy Cross Church and members of clergy took another five funeral services at non-church locations.

Following confirmation classes led by Fr. John, assisted by Judith Banks and Rhian Cottrell, a Deanery service taken by Bishop Will (the Bishop of Lewes) at Newick in June included two adults from Holy Cross Church being confirmed.

Pastoral ministry/care

We greatly appreciate those who lead services at Holy Cross Church and in the plurality. Namely our Rector, Fr John, the Revd. Canon Martha Mutikani (Associate-Vicar of Isfield, Uckfield and Little Horsted), our Honorary Assistant Curates; the Revd. David Ashton and the Revd. Canon Hugh Moseley and our Reader Sheila. Unfortunately, in December Canon Moseley had to withdraw from his ministerial duties (for personal reasons) and will be greatly missed. Also in December, following a long and difficult illness, Penny Blanch sadly died and we welcomed back to the ministerial team plurality the Revd Dr Mike Blanch.

Clergy continued to visit the sick at home and in hospital and Pat Hall her dedicated work taking communion to those in Copper Beech Care Home and from December also to residents in Thornbury Residential Home.

We welcomed five new Ministers of Communion in October after their training: Judith Banks, Alex Beavan, Sandie Boniface, Rhian Cottrell and Ray Pilson. Sue Lannaghan stood down having been a Minister for a considerable number of years; we are very grateful for her period of faithful service.

Late November Will Hier joined us for six months as a Pastoral Assistant spending most Sundays and a weekday with us. This post had first been proposed in 2021 but for various reasons the appointment was delayed.

In the autumn a second Bereavement Group course ran for 5 weeks, led by Canon Martha and Fr David, with the help of Carol Ashton.

Communication

Social media continues to be one of the most effective means of communication and at the end of the year our Facebook page followers numbered 1,900 (an increase of 11.7% on the previous year.) We are indebted to Sarah Widdowson for this as she continually posts things to inform people both within and beyond our congregation of the activities and work of our Church. During the year Sarah also took on the role of maintaining The Holy Cross Church website; we are grateful to John Pontefract for his work on it over the past few years.

Social events and fundraising

Coffee is served in The Belmont Centre after the mid morning service, and in Church after the weekly Wednesday service which is a good way for new members to mix as well as an opportunity for a catch up

with other people. Donations for coffee after the morning Eucharist continue to go towards the Chichester Diocese Children's and Families Work (FSW) and Goodwill Children's Homes.

Refreshments are often served at concerts or special services, sometimes in Church which works well as it saves time and people do not always want to go across to the hall.

Fundraising opportunities are also valuable socialising and wellbeing opportunities for the helpers as well as those attending. We are pleased to say that the family of Holy Cross are good at both volunteering and supporting events.

Throughout Lent Dee Johnson sold a selection of **homemade goodies** (e.g. homemade cakes, bread, jam, marmalade) on Sundays and Sarah then created **Easter Treat boxes** raising £360.

The **Spring Festival** on the first May bank holiday which was due to take place on Luxford Field had to change at the last minute due to the inclement weather. Stalls were instead set up in The Belmont Centre and it became a mini Spring Festival and the support from the community was amazing.



On offer was hot food, vintage tea room, cocktails, arts & crafts, bracelet making, craft ladies, face painting and a rainbow raffle and as a result an impressive £2,000 was raised for the church.

In June Esther and Poppy held a cake sale towards their **Walsingham Youth Pilgrimage Fund**, raising £240.

A **jumble sale** held in July raised over £500 and another in November (unusually in the afternoon) £470.

Harvest Lunch in The Belmont Centre was enjoyed by 90 including young families; thank you to Dee and her team. This followed Junior Church performing a delightful play "The Little Black Cloud" in the Open Doors service.

The annual **Christmas Fair**, held in the Belmont Centre raised just over £1,700, which was very good, especially as numbers seemed down, possibly due to a large Christmas event taking place elsewhere.

The annual **Festival of Christmas Trees** was as excellent as ever breaking records for the number of trees (112), the number of visitors (6500) and the money raised (£17,000) with The Grand Prize Draw raising over £4,000 towards this. This event continues to be a very popular attraction to children and adults both near and far. This spectacle could not take place without the time, dedication and hard work put in by many volunteers from both the church and wider community led by Sarah Widdowson's enthusiasm and vision.

For more information on some of the above events see the separate *Report containing activities of the church family*.



The now well established **(Very) Chatty Cafe** continued to thrive, thanks to a dedicated team of organisers and helpers. New people continually attend as word has spread about this happy, friendly twice monthly event and we are pleased to welcome people with or without a connection to Holy Cross Church. Attendees averaged 60-70 each session with a varied and enjoyable programme and menus. It transpired that there was a national Chatty Cafe organisation

and so the new name of Holy Cross Very Chatty Café was born. Another successful Summer Garden Party was held (thank you to the hosts Wendy, David and Sheena) with the help from some members of Uckfield and District Guides and a large proportion of the profits going towards refurbishing the Guide's Osborn Hall.

One Saturday in September the Very Chatty Café team hosted a Sunflower Fiesta event with afternoon cream teas, market produce, crafts and their own Van Gogh [see right]. This was to raise money to give back to the Church for the free use of The Belmont Centre on Fridays.

For more information on Very Chatty Cafe see the separate *Report containing activities of the church family*.



In May the **Crafty Ladies** announced “We have been around now for some 20 years and are moving towards semi-retirement. Our energy levels are flagging somewhat, which means we’ll be working at a slower pace. We’ll be putting in an appearance at most events and probably fill only a small table with our crafty goodies. The alterations to clothing and Tools with a Mission services will continue. Rhian Cottrell and the Very Chatty Café will take over the shoe boxes for Mustard Seed.” In July the Crafty Ladies and Very Chatty Cafe team held a coffee morning raising £447 to be shared between the Church and transport costs of the Mustard Seed Relief Mission ‘Love in a Box’ for children which following appeals were made up at Very Chatty Café sessions. The Crafty Ladies have worked tirelessly over the years making and selling produce as well as taking on repairs and a selection of specific requests and have raised significant amounts of money.

Throughout the summer Fr. John hosted several **BBQ's** at The Rectory which were very successful and a good chance for (in total c190) people to socialise. These included feeding the Choir, Reflections and all singers, Evensong and a Youth Club BBQ.

Music continues to be a vital part of worship and entertainment but our Director of Music, Tim Guntrip, has identified that as time goes on the **organ** will need some expensive maintenance work doing to it hence ongoing fundraising:

1. Pedal Coupler Renovation - £1,000
2. Cleaning & overhaul - £20,000
3. Electrification – either/or
 - a. Partial Electrification £16,000
 - b. Complete Electrification £26,500
4. Tonal Alterations – Some nice to do's but some may be done
- Up to £22,200

Costs, depending on what is done ranges from the minimum work £37,000 to the maximum of £67,700 and to have some work done at a later stage would incur extra costs taking the organ apart again.



We are very grateful to those from outside the church who have put on social and fundraising events, often for our Church funds.

In March the Ashdown Singers and Fletching Singers presented a **Spring Concert** in Church in aid of the Holy Cross Church Organ Fund.

In October - **Two Become One** concert (Uckfield Singers and Uckfield Soul Survivors) kindly sponsored by CPJ Field, raised £1,291.27 for the Organ Fund.

Later that month Uckfield Concert Brass present **'Dawn, Wisdom'** a free World Premiere which raised £250 for Holy Cross Church.



In December the church hosted “**A Thousand Years of Christmas**”, an evening of Christmas songs and readings though the ages. It featured distinguished soprano Sally Bradshaw, Julian Broughton playing the piano and other instruments and Dr Rowan Williams singing as well as reading a range of characters. It was a very interesting and entertaining evening (this show has been performed in other places in the UK and abroad).

Dr Williams was a former Archbishop of Canterbury and whoever holds that post

is also patron of Holy Cross Church so it was very special to have him visit, possibly the first time an Archbishop had set foot in our church. Holy Cross Church was given half of the proceeds (£537).

A THOUSAND YEARS OF CHRISTMAS

FRIDAY 13TH DECEMBER
7.30PM AT HOLY CROSS CHURCH UCKFIELD

JULIAN BROUGHTON **DR. ROWAN WILLIAMS** **SALLY BRADSHAW**

Here is a special opportunity to get into the Christmas spirit with some of the best people to help you! Dr. Williams reads a range of characters and sentences. Dr. Williams reads a breathtaking range of characters and sentences. Music and readings are drawn from 11th century to our own. There are department store Santas, bishops, Music Hall characters, and Dickensian frosts. Distinguished soprano Sally Bradshaw performs music from medieval times to Bach and Victorian ballads, via Debussy, Britten, carols and folk songs. Julian Broughton plays a range of instruments. Not content with merely the piano, in this show he picks up medieval bells and a violin.

Versions of the show have been a sell-out in London to Manila and has been performed as far afield as Borneo, Greece and the South of France, as well as in theatres up and down the UK from Plymouth to Banstead.

TICKETS £15.00
AVAILABLE ON THE DOOR

Our witness to the community

Holy Cross Church is at the heart of Uckfield and attracts people to both the Church and The Belmont Centre for services and events, especially the Festival of Christmas Trees. The Church also shows witness to the community by supporting and participating in the life of the town as already described.

In September Fr. John said prayers for the town in the High Street on **Carnival night** - this event is a part of the Sussex Bonfire season and is attended by thousands of people from Uckfield and further afield.

On 6th June Uckfield Town Council invited all local residents to be present for a special 80th-anniversary commemoration of the D-Day landings. The day culminated with the **D-Day 80 Beacon Lighting** (part of a national event) in the evening at the site of Uckfield's beacon on Victoria Pleasure Ground where prayers were led by Fr John to an estimated crowd of c1000 adults and c100 children.

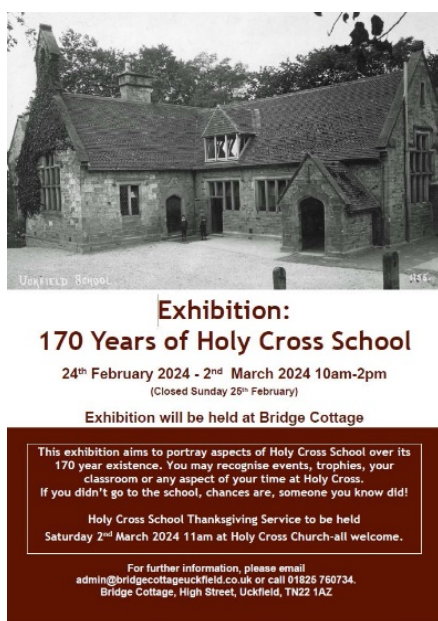
Holy Cross Church gives ongoing support to the town's **Foodbank** by means of a financial donation along with a regular appeal in the weekly pewsheet (a box for donations is put out each Sunday, kindly overseen by Terry Hall). Lorraine Kirkwood, Manager of the Uckfield Foodbank, gave a very informative sermon in August. Despite many people now putting their donations directly into the supermarket collection boxes, Holy Cross Church donates about twelve shopping bags a month which are always gratefully received. Dee Johnson, one of our churchwardens, continues to represent Holy Cross Church as a Trustee of the Foodbank and can also issue food vouchers on behalf of the Church. She told us this year that the food brought into Church is weighed and apart from the collection point in supermarkets we are the next major donor. In September Dee cooked a curry meal for all the Foodbank volunteers as a thank you.

At the Harvest service this year donations were taken in the form of tins and packets for the **Foodbank**, fresh produce for the **Community Fridge**, and a retiring collection raised £180 for Toby Illingworth's **Yashchenko Foundation**, which distributes aid in Ukraine. Toby is the son of Robin and Fiona (who is a

loyal choir member) and Robin told the congregation about the Foundation a couple of weeks later and wrote more about its work in the Link magazine.

Holy Cross Church is a member of the **Uckfield Volunteer Centre** and the **Uckfield Chamber of Commerce**. Both of these organisations hold regular meetings, in person and on Zoom, and work together for the benefit of the local community. We keep contact with them and occasionally Fr. John joins a Zoom Meeting. With regards the Chamber of Commerce, as a major institution in Uckfield, Holy Cross Church impinges on the Business Community as part of its Community Involvement.

Very sadly **Holy Cross Church of England Primary School** closed on 31st December 2023 after over 170 years of being the Parochial School (now The Belmont Centre) then a new building from the 1960's. A six day exhibition of the history of the Schools was organised and hosted by Bridge Cottage which saw 590 people visit. On the last day there was a Thanksgiving Service in Holy Cross Church attended by 280. Various people from the two Schools spoke and it was a very fitting and uplifting service.



Holy Cross Church continued to witness to the community with the bimonthly **Community Leaders Lunches** held at the Rectory, attended by about 25 people. After a cooked lunch provided by the Rector and Gillian Youngman, a short talk is given by someone about the group or organisation that they represent. As a result of this, needs and concerns are shared and networking has been beneficial with organisations sometimes offering financial help or other kind of support to each other.

Mission, outreach and evangelism

A small Giving to Other Charities sub-committee appointed by the P.C.C. met and recommended a number of donations to P.C.C. members to charities which were a mixture of local, UK based and abroad. The recipients of this money are detailed in the Financial report [see page 24].

Other regular charitable giving throughout the year has included Action Aid (sponsoring of Maria Luisa Cucul Yat in Guatemala), Christian Aid, Uckfield Foodbank and The Children's Society. Instead of holding a separate Christmas appeal as in the past, we supported Family2Family in their Christmas appeal to support local children.

The Churchwardens are also trustees of the **"Edward Holmes Baldock Charity"** which is three charities rolled into one. It incorporates the Henry Gardener and Dorothy Ellis charities, and all three of them were

established to relieve poverty in the town of Uckfield. Dorothy Ellis died in 1731 and some of the money she left enabled 12 fourpenny loaves to be provided to 12 poor families at Holy Cross Church every Sunday. In 1846 Edward Holmes Baldock bequeathed the sum of £750 to be invested and distributed each year amongst poor persons of the parish. These combined investments are held with the COIF Charities Investment Fund which provides a quarterly income used to fund an annual donation to three families selected by a sub-committee each year. This is normally made up to £25 per recipient by the P.C.C. As no donations were made in 2023, £50 was given to three recipients in 2024.

Some of the congregation belong to **Caring and Sharing**, a scheme (started in Eastbourne in 1982) which raises money by sacrificial giving by people who try to: 'Live more simply that others may simply live'. It is based on two ideas: the first is that by making a small sacrifice members can turn away from the material values of the western world; the second is that they can share their comparative wealth by sending the savings from this small sacrifice to projects in poorer countries to provide the basic needs of life. By making a small change in lifestyles this year £1,652 was raised. Barbara Cooper faithfully oversaw this for Holy Cross Church over many years and the congregation and town were devastated when in December she died in a tragic accident.

In summer 2023, 100 handheld crosses from Jerusalem were blessed and distributed. These have proved a great source of comfort for people and continue to be available. Often the recipient has given theirs away and needs another. The take up and impact of the crosses has been amazing and in all about 800 have now been purchased.

Ecumenical Relationships

The group 'Churches in Uckfield' is currently in abeyance although members got together to organise and participate in the Good Friday Walk of witness from Cornerstone Church up the High Street to Hartfields café where a short service took place.

PROPERTY

The Belmont Centre

A very short walk from the church is The Belmont Centre which the church owns. The P.C.C. is responsible for the upkeep of the building overseen by the Churchwardens, and the Major Works Project Manager who report back to the P.C.C. The Parish Administrator manages bookings and other day to day activities of the Belmont Centre. The building houses the Parish Office and has a hall and small meeting room and also a good well stocked kitchen and toilets, including a disabled toilet with a nappy changing mat. An additional part of the Belmont Centre is on permanent loan to a Pre-school Group. This wonderful facility is used for Church fundraising and social events and is also an asset for use by the wider community and brings in an income for the Church. Bookings this year went very well with regular bookings on most days of the week as well as parties, wakes and baptism celebrations. In November the Belmont Centre was inspected by the Food Standards Agency and retained its five star food hygiene rating which is the highest level, showing that standards are very good.

St Saviour's

St Saviour's is in the south of the town: it was formerly a chapel and now comprises 16 flatlets and a worship area with seating which also doubles up as a community space for events. It is managed by

Uckfield & District Housing Association Ltd. Ray Pilson continues to be Deputy Churchwarden there. Compline takes place on the 1st, 3rd and 5th Tuesdays as detailed earlier. More details about St Saviour's can be found in the *Report containing activities of the church family*.

VOLUNTEERS

We continue to extend the opportunities for the exercise of ministry and gifts within the life of the community. We are grateful to have the dedication and support of Dee Johnson and John Pontefract as our churchwardens and a full complement of P.C.C. and Deanery Synod members. This was highlighted when in March "The Church Times" published an article "No churchwardens and vacant P.C.C. posts: an investigation into the church volunteering crisis". The weekly Church of England newspaper had written to every diocese the previous month in an attempt to quantify the extent of the recruitment challenge. Those that replied reported that between one quarter and 40 per cent of parishes had only one churchwarden, while between five and 21 per cent had none. One reported that 22 per cent of its parishes were missing one or more people in key positions this January.

There are over 40 roles of individuals and teams which enable Holy Cross Church to run as well as it does. There are so many volunteers giving their time and talent, in some cases to more than one area or role. Fr John acknowledges them all in his annual report. In addition there are those who help at our fundraising events and the many people from the local community (and further afield) who help in various ways with the Festival of Christmas Trees, enabling this annual spectacle to take place. We would like to thank the many people who volunteer in any way to make Holy Cross Church so vibrant and at the heart of the community.

The *Report containing activities of the church family* covers the work of some of these groups and individual volunteers in more detail.

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

The appointment of Parochial Church Council members is governed by and set out in the Church Representation Rules. The P.C.C. members are responsible for making decisions on all matters pertaining to the parish including how funds are to be spent.

It is made up of the following 19 people:

Ex Officio members:

- The Revd John Wall (Rector and Chair)
- Sheila Fordham (Reader)
- Dee Johnson (Churchwarden and Vice Chair)
- John Pontefract (Churchwarden)

Elected members (3 year term)

- Dee Johnson (representative on Deanery Synod)
 - Jill Thornton (representative on Deanery Synod – *resigned November 2024*)
 - Sandie Boniface (representative on Deanery Synod)
 - Francis Wallace ((representative on Deanery Synod)
- Paul Ireland (Treasurer); Gillian Youngman (Secretary)
- Paul Cuerden; Terry Hall; Ann Kennedy; Beth Morris-Boag; Angela Noel; Edna Osborne; Ray Pilson; Anthony Simpson; Sarah Widdowson and Rhian Cottrell (co-opted June 2024).

All those who attend our services are encouraged to apply to be on the Electoral Roll and if appropriate, to stand for election to the P.C.C.. The number of people on the Electoral Roll as of 27 April 2025 was 162 which is a decrease of 27 from last year. There are 19 (just over 10%) people who are not resident in the parish (which is an increase of 1 from last year).

The full **Parochial Church Council** held four meetings during the year at St Saviour's. The average attendance of P.C.C. members at these meetings was 15 (79%) which is the same as last year. A meeting is usually held solely to approve the Trustees Report (including the Financial Review) but this year that was done via email. The Holy Cross Parochial Church Council has complied with the duty under section 5 of the Safeguarding and Clergy Discipline Measure 2016, fully recognising its duty to have due regard to House of Bishops' guidance on safeguarding children and vulnerable adults. We continue to work within the guidelines in the most recently published Parish Safeguarding Handbook (approved by the House of Bishops).

The **P.C.C. Standing Committee** comprises the Rector, Dee Johnson and John Pontefract (Churchwardens), Paul Ireland (P.C.C. Treasurer), Gillian Youngman (P.C.C. Secretary), Angela Noel (P.C.C. representative) and Lynne Ireland (Parish Administrator). The purpose of the Standing Committee is to conduct P.C.C. business in between meetings or in an emergency, including addressing day to day matters and ensuring the smooth running of the church and the Belmont Centre. They only met once (via Zoom) during the year. Often decisions are now instead made via emails or a WhatsApp group which is easier and means they can be dealt with quickly.

With a building the size and age of Holy Cross Church and heavy use of The Belmont Centre, there is a lot of ongoing maintenance required plus we are continually trying to improve the building to make it safe, welcoming and inclusive. Obviously what can be done and when depends on a number of factors like money, sometimes planning permission and approval by the Chichester DAC (Diocesan Advisory Committee for the Care of Churches) which is a statutory body, providing advice and guidance on the care of churches. We are very grateful to Paul Kennedy our Major Works Project Manager who deals with these applications which entail detailed and time consuming form filling.

As part of our **Mission Action Plan**, during 2024 the P.C.C. agreed on the following major work to be done over the next three years:

2024 South door ramp
Automatic internal doors
Choir vestry window

2025 Carpet(s)
North stairwell walls

2026 Organ restoration [see page 12 for breakdown of costs]

Updates on the work for 2024 can be seen in the Fabric and Maintenance Report [see page 22]

Deanery Synod

The Deanery Synod considers matters concerning the Church of England, brings together the views of member parishes on common problems, fosters a sense of community and interdependence among those parishes, and generally to promote in the Deanery the whole mission of the church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical. The Deanery Synod elects clergy and laity Diocesan Synod representatives and has an allocated General Synod representative. Holy Cross Church currently has four representatives on the Uckfield Deanery Synod (which met 3 times in 2024) who report back to the P.C.C. via a written report from Francis Wallace who is Secretary of the Deanery Synod and a P.C.C. member. A more detailed report of 2024 can be seen in the separate *Report containing activities of the church family*.

SAFEGUARDING

Following the publication of an independent review by Keith Makin into the Church of England's handling of allegations of serious abuse by the late John Smyth, on 12th November Justin Welby, Archbishop of Canterbury and patron of our Church resigned:

The Archbishop of Canterbury said:

“Having sought the gracious permission of His Majesty The King, I have decided to resign as Archbishop of Canterbury.

The Makin Review has exposed the long-maintained conspiracy of silence about the heinous abuses of John Smyth.

When I was informed in 2013 and told that police had been notified, I believed wrongly that an appropriate resolution would follow.

It is very clear that I must take personal and institutional responsibility for the long and retraumatising period between 2013 and 2024.”

The above is an extract from the Church of England website. The following message from the Bishop of Chichester was communicated to the congregation the following Sunday:

Dear brothers and sisters,

The publication of the Makin Report reveals an account of horrific brutality, inflicted by John Smyth, a man who abused his claim to be an exponent of the Christian faith.

The consequent resignation of Justin Welby as Archbishop of Canterbury is an indication of the gravity that we must attach to the crimes that are outlined in that report and the seriousness with which the Church of England takes its safeguarding responsibilities. Those responsibilities represent a sacred trust, and it is certain that God will ask us to account for our attention to this when we meet him on the day of resurrection and judgement.

This report graphically reminds us that abuse has been perpetrated within the name of the Church and it has often been covered up. Survivors of that abuse have taught us many important lessons about confronting, with truth and humility, the institutional shame of knowing that people in positions of trust in the Church have sexually abused young, vulnerable and impressionable people in their care. And let us remember that cover-up and poor response can inflict additional damage.

It is essential that the Church of England nationally, and we in the diocese of Chichester, continue to do all we can to ensure that our churches and organisations are safe places, where disclosures of abuse are effectively and appropriately acted upon. These should be places where it can never feel safe to abuse, or to encourage or conceal abuse.

We shall continue to assess the finding of the Makin report. This is a matter of urgency.

Evil deeds were committed by John Smyth who was an evil man. Evil can have a long trajectory. It has to be named and brought to account: that is often a battle and it can be costly. We are seeing the effect of that trajectory now and it must not be permitted to do further harm.

Please pray for the victims of John Smyth and their families, and please hold Justin Welby in your prayers.

Please pray also for the Church: for wisdom, courage and humility to face the challenges of evil. Please pray for all engaged in safeguarding - our parish safeguarding officers, those who ensure the safety of our schools and youth work, our diocesan safeguarding team and all who deliver training for lay and ordained ministers. Thank you for the vigilance you make possible and for helping us to confront evil, protect the vulnerable and bring to account those who seek to do us harm.

Yours in Christ, our Judge and our Redeemer,

+Martin

In his sermon that same Sunday, Fr John spoke with emotion on behalf of himself and his fellow clergy about this dreadful business and had hugely supportive feedback. He said "We carry on in our own parish, faithfully and with conscientious commitment in caring for our communities of church and town."

On the next page is the Safeguarding Report for Holy Cross Church for the last twelve months. Safeguarding is a standing item on our P.C.C. meeting agendas in order to keep our responsibilities high profile.

Safeguarding Report

This year has seen significant changes in safeguarding, but we have consistently addressed various aspects, needs, and requirements effectively.

As you are all aware, strict guidelines are now in place. We must adhere to these guidelines under the Diocese of Chichester, as we do with all safeguarding requirements.

Application forms are now routinely utilised as the initial stage in the recruitment process. The form indicates where a person would like to have a DBS for be it church, youth etc.

We have developed a structured format for formal interviews that is thorough yet manageable for the applicant.

The interviews are with two safeguarding officers plus the person who leads the activity in which the candidate would like to be considered for.

Confidential declarations are given when all have interviews successful along with the Holy Cross Safeguarding policy document.

This year, the work on DBS has been thoroughly overhauled, rewritten, and trailed. We now feel confident that our DBS safeguarding system is comprehensive and robust, which is essential. Diligence is of utmost importance.

We have this year been advising people to sign up for the UPDATING service when they have their DBS it then informs you when your DBS is to be updated.

Please be reminded that this is a mutual process.

This year, we have initiated the creation of a chart that will outline the necessary updates and required training. This will ensure that everyone is informed about what is needed.

Father John has recently completed training on safer recruitment.

This year, we participated in the Independent Safeguarding Audit conducted by the INEQE Safeguarding Group, which resulted in a highly positive report.

The audit was robust. The INEQE has been commissioned to conduct an audit across all Dioceses in the Church of England, regardless of size. A key result of this audit is the broad acknowledgment that "safeguarding has advanced."

At Holy Cross over the year we have "nagged" for the want of a better word about safeguarding and we are really making continued progress with all the legislation that has come our way as safeguarding officers, but over the year we have listened, thought, and consistently acted in the interests of our Holy Cross family from those not yet born to our most vulnerable.

"Vulnerability can exist in any congregation, and it's important to prepare for future risks not just current ones "

Father John has already attended a zoom session on this matter and more training has been earmarked.

SQP Simple Quality Control Protects

SQP is an ongoing initiative, and over the year, the work and activities undertaken by our Church have significantly increased. There has been substantial progress concerning safeguarding measures. We are committed to fulfilling all necessary requirements. Everything we do must prioritize safeguarding. With that in mind, changes are necessary once again.

We have recently been told that we must use the diocese dashboard.

This will replace SQP which we have been using for the last 8 years.

The aim is to simplify safeguarding by consolidating all necessary information in one place. The dashboard will indicate completed and pending tasks, with the goal of achieving consistent progress across all areas.

It is crucial to recognize that issues of abuse are not limited to a single denomination or tradition but are prevalent across all expressions of the church.

Rhian Cottrell (Safeguarding Officer, Holy Cross Church)

Email: safeguardingholycrossuckfield@gmail.com

Fabric and Maintenance Report

Several of the projects planned for 2024 were delayed due to difficulty in obtaining quotes from suitably qualified contractors and the process of applying for a Faculty via the Diocese. Projects that have been started include the conversion of the main south door of the church into a disabled access complete with a ramp and electronic door opener. This is going through the faculty stage and will hopefully get signed off shortly (thank you Paul Kennedy).

The Choir Vestry window refurbishment project has been delayed for a couple of years due to not being able to find a viable alternative to a high quote of £10,000. Paul Kennedy has now found a way of doing this with a couple of contractors rather than just the one for £5,400. Unfortunately the state of the windows has got worse due to the delay so this work will be prioritised for 2025.

Completed Work

- Church Lightning Conductor Testing Certificated in September 2024
- Boiler Hive Controller fitted in Summer 2024. Up and working.

Health and Safety

- Health and Safety Policy Redone by JP August 2024

Ongoing Maintenance

- Regular annual maintenance of the church and Belmont Centre heating systems is done by Hedley Visick.
- Ongoing problem of overpressure of the main water feed to the church boiler. A water pressure regulator has been fitted but doesn't appear to work. We have temporarily shut off the mains water supply to the boiler and just manually let in water when the inlet pressure drops. A regular Sunday check.
- Moss on the Belmont Centre Roof was cleaned off by Cleaning4U and now looks good. He also did the gutters.
- Gallery Floor Woodworm

Church & Belmont Centre Projects from Autumn 2024

- Cardale Hall & Foyer Lighting System Replacement. This work was agreed in 2024 and with a quote now in place the work is being arranged.
- Church Painting & Clean Up. Stairwells are particularly a problem. The church architect has recommended a paint and does not agree with the use of distemper. We must follow his recommendation as he is approved by the Diocese.
- South Entrance Ramp Including Automatic Door opener. Planning permission granted for this. Faculty going through (See above). Thank you to Paul Kennedy for managing this project.

In addition to the Vestry window, the pointing on the South face of the choir vestry needs repairing. This will need to be with lime mortar and the window installer is prepared to do this and a very fair price, c£500, if done at the same time as the window reinstallation.

The P.C.C. should also note that the porch wall is separating from the brick building and needs repointing as there is water ingress. After the Quinquennial review, the architect George Esdaile mentioned that the roof trusses of the Choir Vestry entrance porch need tying into the Choir Vestry to solve the porch wall separating problem. This can be done by 4 wood beams bolting in from underneath and doesn't need a

complete roof removal. We need to get this quoted. Also, the three windows in the porch are sagging and the woodwork in urgent need of preserving and repainting.

Other projects considered by the P.C.C. for reordering and prioritisation during 2025 include:

- Upgrade to Lightning surge protection circuitry recommended by Southern Lightning.
- Church South Boundary Lights.
- Live Streaming Services Equipment. Requires USB outlets in Church.
- Mini Kitchen in Church Building.
- Disabled Toilet in/near church building.
- Organ Renovation (long term project) – see breakdown of cost options on page 12
- Junior Church Requirements.
- Fitment of Gas Hobs in Belmont Centre kitchen which requires new GAS supply pipework.

Heath & Safety Updates

- Health and Safety Policy Redone by JP August 2024. This is kept in the cupboard in the Sacristy. Also there is computer memory stick with all the word documents for this H & S document hanging on the Right Hand Hook in the cupboard.
- The church Lightning Conductor was tested and passed in September 2024. Thank you to Paul Kennedy for organising this. This is carried out every year.
- Fire Extinguisher annual maintenance continues to be carried out.
- The cables and extension leads for FOCT were checked and problems were rectified in November 2024. After which Ian McDonald PAT tested them. My thanks to Paul Kennedy for his help on the preparatory work.
- H & S for FOCT showed no major cause for concern during the event at the beginning of December 2024.
- The Annual Christmas Tree Festival is monitored by volunteers within the church at strategic points.
- We continue to do Risk Assessments for special events such as the Festival of Christmas Trees and other special events including the Palm Sunday walk from the centre of town and on Church Street. In April 2025 we will have helpers direct people across the Church Street at the Palm Sunday walk where the pavement stops.
- We still need to do the light at the bottom of the long path from the municipal car park up through the graveyard to the church.

John Pontefract
Churchwarden and Health & Safety Officer

Financial Review

As the Trustees Annual Report details, 2024 has once again been a great year for the church family and its outreach into the local community with fantastic support for the various activities and events throughout the year. On the financial aspects 2024 shows a small surplus which is a welcome return following deficit situations since the global pandemic in 2020.

During the later part of 2023 the P.C.C. decided to allocate £100,000 of the proceeds of the sale of the former curate's house to generate additional income for the unrestricted P.C.C. funds. Combined with placing funds into a 95 day notice bank account this has generated £4,527 income which has helped offset shortfalls in day to day activities and contributed towards an overall surplus of £13,908. £10,000 of this surplus can be attributed to a donation towards improving the disabled access into the church. This is a restricted fund for the work planned for 2025.

Incoming and outgoing resources

Total receipts on general unrestricted funds, which are detailed in the Financial Statements, were £152,026. This is £12,346 more than 2023, allowing for the £4,527 from the £100,000 investment, this means a net increase of £7,819 from generous support from the regular and cash givers and the various events that have been organised throughout the year.

Our biggest source of income, the regular giving from the Church congregation, was slightly up on 2023. The 2024 total (via bank deposits, weekly envelopes and cash collections) was £61,676 up from £59,893 in 2023. This is still around 8% lower than the £67,165 given in 2019 (pre-Covid). The number of regular givers at the end of 2024 was 86 a net change of 0. The generosity of these regular givers has meant that the average amount given per giver per month has increased from £45 in 2023 to £47 in 2024.

Thanks to the efforts of our fund raising teams and their supporters, organising the Festival of Christmas Trees, the Christmas Fair, Jumble Sales, Spring Fair and many other smaller events throughout the year, a fantastic £25,072 of profit was generated in 2024, this is an increase of £5,104 over 2023. A wonderful reflection of their hard work and also the support that Holy Cross Church has within the congregation and the local community.

Receipts from hiring fees for the Belmont Centre and Church were £28,527 which is an increase of £3,425 showing we have a growing group of regular hirers. Expenditure for the Belmont Centre during 2024 was £15,592 giving a surplus of £12,935 for church funds.

Sharing the ministry costs of the Diocese of Chichester

The largest expenditure of the P.C.C. was the sum of £70,000 paid to the Diocese to cover ministry costs. The parish contribution in 2024 was used towards the stipend, pension and housing costs of the clergy, and a standard sum for diocesan costs, clergy training and a contribution to national church funds. For 2024 we agreed to support the Diocese with the same amount as 2023 to help return our accounts to a surplus position.

Staff costs

Since April 2016 a part-time Parish Administrator has been employed to run the Parish Office. From 2020 the Director of Music and Assistant Director of Music (when post filled) payments are recorded as salary having previously been recorded as upkeep of services. This is following guidance that these roles do not have the autonomy required to be classed as self-employed. During 2024, the three positions did not meet the HMRC thresholds for tax purposes or for the pension auto-enrolment scheme. From 1 Jan 2024 a 3.5% salary increase was applied to the Director of Music and the Administrator and from July 2024 there was no further payments made to the Organist Emeritus, making the staff costs for 2024 £16,904, £204 less than 2023. In the later part of 2024 a Pastoral Assistant has been appointed for a fixed term of six months at £100 per month.

Missionary and Charitable giving

For 2024 the Giving to Other Charities sub-committee were allocated £2,300 of missionary and charitable giving but by the close of the year the recipients had not been agreed so the funds have been accrued. In addition, further giving and donations were made during the year totalling a further £3,768 to give a total missionary and charitable giving for 2024 of £6,068.

Fixed Assets

The Belmont Centre remains at the previous valuation of £1,370,000.

Reserves Policy

During 2024 the minimum balance on the general unrestricted funds (excluding property) equated to approximately 6 month's of unrestricted payments. The financial situation and unrestricted reserves held at the end of 2024 have been reviewed and, with the 2025 budget approved by the P.C.C., show that the Uckfield Parochial Church Council is expected to continue as a going concern for the 2025 financial year.

It is P.C.C. policy to retain any funds not required for day to day transactions on deposit at the bank. During 2023 a 95 day notice account was opened to take advantage of higher interest rates to hold around 90% of the funds on deposit.

Funds held as custodian trustees on behalf of others

The P.C.C. acts as a custodian trustee for the assets of the Edward Holmes Baldock Charity which was established in 1845 for the benefit of poor persons in the parish. Its sole asset is 36.38 income units invested in the COIF Charities Investment Fund.

As at 31 August 2024, its latest valuation date, the value of the investment was valued at £741.73 an increase over 2023 which was £ 686.49. The income in its financial year was £20.08 which is topped up by the P.C.C. and distributed to suitable recipients. The charity is administered by the P.C.C. with the Churchwardens acting as trustees of the charity and is segregated from the assets of the P.C.C.. In July 2024 gifts totalling £75 were made to worthy recipients.

During 2023 the P.C.C. agreed to hold the funds for the Churches Together in Uckfield group. There have been no movement of funds during 2024 so the funds held remain at £429.

Statement of Financial Activities

The financial effect of our activities during the year can be summarised as follows:

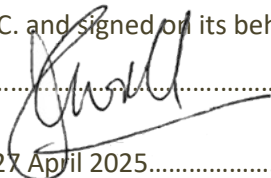
	Unrestricted Fund	Restricted Fund/s	Endowed Fund/s	Total Funds 2024	Total Funds 2023	Notes
	£	£	£	£	£	
Income and endowments from:						
Donations and legacies	104,966	10,974	-	115,940	108,599	
Charitable activities	5,608	-	-	5,608	5,750	
Other trading activities	33,148	-	-	33,148	30,248	
Investments	4,527	5,105	-	9,632	3,180	
Other receipts	3,777	10,000	-	13,777	290	
Total income	152,026	26,079	-	178,105	148,067	2
Expenditure on:						
Raising funds	6,643	-	-	6,643	5,903	
Charitable activities	137,956	2,393	-	140,349	130,149	
Other trading activities	16,006	-	-	16,006	19,060	
Other expenditure	-	1,199	-	1,199	3,344	
Total expenditure	160,605	3,592	-	164,197	158,456	3
Net gains (or losses) on investments	-	-	-	-	-	
Net income or (net expenditure)	(8,579)	22,487	-	13,908	(10,389)	
Transfers between funds	-	-	-	-	-	10
	(8,579)	22,487	-	13,908	(10,389)	
Other recognised gains/(losses):						
Gains/(losses) on revaluation of fixed assets	-	-	-	-	-	11
Other gains/(losses)	-	-	-	-	-	
<i>Reconciliation of funds:</i>						
Net movement in funds	(8,579)	22,487	-	13,908	(10,389)	
Total funds brought forward	1,427,877	206,005	-	1,633,882	1,644,271	
Total funds carried forward	1,419,298	228,492	-	1,647,790	1,633,882	

Balance Sheet

Our financial position and summary of funds at the year end were

	Total Funds 2024	<i>Total Funds 2023</i>	Notes
	£	£	
Intangible assets	-	-	
Tangible assets	1,370,000	<i>1,370,000</i>	12
Heritage assets	-	-	
Endowed investments	-	-	11
Total fixed assets	1,370,000	<i>1,370,000</i>	
Stocks	-	-	
Debtors	4,374	<i>3,850</i>	14
Investments	-	-	
Cash at bank and in hand	281,300	<i>266,611</i>	
Total current assets	285,674	<i>270,461</i>	
Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year	(7,884)	<i>(6,579)</i>	15
Correction for Unrealised Debtors in 2020	-	-	
Net current assets or (liabilities)	277,790	<i>263,882</i>	
Total assets less current liabilities	1,647,790	<i>1,633,882</i>	
Creditors: Amounts falling due after more than one year	-	-	16
Provisions for liabilities	-	-	
Total net assets or (liabilities)	1,647,790	<i>1,633,882</i>	
The funds of the charity:			
Restricted income funds	228,492	<i>206,005</i>	
Unrestricted funds	1,419,298	<i>1,427,877</i>	
Revaluation reserve	-	-	
Total unrestricted funds	1,419,298	<i>1,427,877</i>	
Total charity funds	1,647,790	<i>1,633,882</i>	18

This Financial Report for the year ended 31st December 2024, including the notes following, was approved by the P.C.C. and signed on its behalf by The Revd. John Wall, P.C.C. Chairman:

.....

 Date ...27 April 2025.....

Notes to the Financial Report

1 Accounting policies

Basis of preparation

The P.C.C. is a public benefit entity within the meaning of FRS102. The financial statements have been prepared under the Charities Act 2011 and the Church Accounting Regulations 2006, in accordance with applicable accounting standards and the current Statement of Recommended Practice, Accounting and Reporting by Charities, (SORP (FRS 102)).

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention as modified by the inclusion of investments at market value and the revaluation of fixed assets. The financial statements include all transactions, assets and liabilities for which the P.C.C. is responsible in law. They do not include the accounts of church groups that owe their affiliation to another body, nor those which are informal gatherings of church members.

Funds accounting

Funds held by the P.C.C. are:

Unrestricted funds - general funds which can be used for P.C.C. ordinary purposes

Restricted funds - a) income from trusts or endowments which may be expended only on those restricted objects provided in the terms of the trust or bequest; b) donations or grants received for a specific object or invited by the P.C.C. for a specific object. The funds may only be expended on the specific object for which they were given. Any balance remaining unspent at the end of the year is carried forward as a balance on that fund.

Income and endowments

All income and endowments, accounted for without deduction for any costs of receivability, are recognised when there is evidence of entitlement, receipt is probable, and the amount can be measured reliably.

Donations and legacies

Collections are recognised when received.

Planned giving receivable is recognised when there is evidence of entitlement, receipt is probable, and the amount accords with the Gift Aid declaration or other record of intention to donate.

Gift aid recovered is recognised when the income to which it is attached is recognised.

Grants and legacies are recognised when the formal offer in writing of the funding, is received by the P.C.C.

Charitable activities

Statutory fees for weddings and funerals are recognised when the office occurs.

Other trading activities

Trading activities are where income is receivable in return for selling goods or providing services. Income from trading is recognised either: a - when received, or b - in the case of concerts: for the year in which the event occurs, irrespective of date of receipt. Advance bookings are included in creditors until the concert has taken place.

Sales of magazines are recognised when received.

Rents from property are recognised in accordance with the rental agreements, when receipt is probable.

Investment income

Dividends are accounted for when due and payable. Interest entitlements are accounted for as they accrue.

All other income

All other income is recognised in accordance with the above overall policy.

Gains and losses on investments

Realised gains are recognised when the investments are sold.

Unrealised gains and losses are accounted for on revaluation at 31 December.

Expenditure

Expenditure is recognised when there is evidence of entitlement, payment is probable, and the amount can be measured reliably.

Grants

Grants and donations are accounted for when paid over, or when awarded where the award creates a binding obligation on the P.C.C.

Church activities

The diocesan parish contribution is accounted for on an annual basis, reflecting the allocation set by our Deanery. Any parish contribution unpaid at 31 December is provided for in these accounts as an operational (though not a legal) liability and is shown as a creditor in the balance sheet.

Fixed assets

Tangible fixed assets

Consecrated and beneficed property of any kind is excluded from the accounts by s.10(2) of the Charities Act 2011.

Movable church furnishing held by the Vicar and Churchwardens on special trust for the P.C.C. and which require a faculty for disposal, are accounted as inalienable property unless consecrated. They are listed in the church's inventory which can be inspected but are not included in the financial statements.

All expenditure on consecrated or beneficed buildings and individual items costing under £1,000 are written off in the year they were incurred.

Depreciation

Depreciation is calculated to write down the cost of tangible fixed assets, excluding freehold properties, over their expected useful lives. The rates generally applicable are:

Fixtures and fittings	20%
Audiovisual equipment	33%
Office equipment	25%

No depreciation is provided on freehold buildings as the useful economic life of these assets exceeds 50 years and residual values so high that potential depreciation would be immaterial. It is the P.C.C.'s policy to maintain these assets in a continual state of sound repair. Resulting from regular impairment reviews, provision will be made if there has been any permanent diminution in value.

Investments

Investments are stated at market value at the balance sheet date.

Current Assets

Amounts owing to the P.C.C. at 31 December in respect of fees, rents or other income are shown as debtors, less provision for amounts that may prove uncollectible.

Short-term deposits include cash held on deposit either with the CBF Church of England Funds, or at the bank.

2 Analysis of income and endowments

	Unrestricted Fund	Restricted Fund/s	Endowed Fund/s	Total Funds 2024	Total Funds 2023	Notes
	£	£	£	£	£	
Planned giving (via standing order)	49,211	-	-	49,211	45,415	
Planned giving (via weekly envelopes)	960	-	-	960	719	
Loose cash collections	11,271	234	-	11,505	13,759	
Christmas Tree Festival	17,345	-	-	17,345	8,016	
Other Fund Raising Activities	10,391	-	-	10,391	13,285	
Other donations	2,285	10,740	-	13,025	15,767	
Gift Aid recoverable	12,503	-	-	12,503	11,638	
Legacies	1,000	-	-	1,000	-	
Grants	-	-	-	-	-	
Donations and legacies	£104,966	£10,974	-	£115,940	£108,599	
Fees for weddings & funerals - P.C.C.	1,455	-	-	1,455	2,662	
Fees for weddings & funerals - Clergy	664	-	-	664	306	
Fees for weddings & funerals - DBF	2,884	-	-	2,884	2,547	
Fees for weddings & funerals - Other Wedding	605	-	-	605	235	
Charitable activities	£5,608	-	-	£5,608	£5,750	
Big Day, Xmas Fair & Festival of Christmas Trees	4,393	-	-	4,393	4,885	
Other fund raising activities	-	-	-	-	-	
Parish magazine	228	-	-	228	261	
Belmont Centre hiring fees	28,527	-	-	28,527	25,102	
Other trading activities	£33,148	-	-	£33,148	£30,248	
Bank deposit interest	4,527	5,105	-	9,632	3,180	
Rent from letting of investment property	-	-	-	-	-	
Proceeds from Sale of Assets	-	-	-	-	-	
Investments	£4,527	£5,105	-	£9,632	£3,180	
Other receipts	3,777	10,000	-	13,777	290	
Total income and endowments on all funds	£152,026	£26,079	-	£178,105	£148,067	

3 Analysis of expenditure

	Unrestricted Fund	Restricted Fund/s	Endowed Fund/s	Total Funds 2024	Total Funds 2023	Notes
	£	£	£	£	£	
Uckfield Festival Big Day	-	-	-	-	-	
Festival of Christmas Trees	4,981	-	-	4,981	4,349	
Stewardship costs (printing etc)	-	-	-	-	-	
Other fundraising (non-trading) costs	1,662	-	-	1,662	1,554	
Cost of raising funds	£6,643	-	-	£6,643	£5,903	
Missionary and charitable giving	4,834	1,234	-	6,068	5,543	4
Ministry: Diocesan Parish Share	70,000	-	-	70,000	70,000	
Ministry: Other Clergy costs	8,138	-	-	8,138	7,417	6
Staff: Admin	16,904	-	-	16,904	17,108	5
Upkeep of services	3,108	-	-	3,108	2,990	
Church running costs	12,759	-	-	12,759	17,114	
Junior Church and Clubs (e.g. Choir)	-	1,159	-	1,159	1,764	
Church maintenance and repair	12,932	-	-	12,932	327	
Piano / Organ maintenance and repair	351	-	-	351	280	
Holy Cross School Support	-	-	-	-	250	8
Major Works	-	-	-	-	-	
Miscellaneous	2,536	-	-	2,536	2,125	
Bank charges	894	-	-	894	907	
Messy Church/Holiday Club/Outreach	1,256	-	-	1,256	1,260	
Fees - Paid to Clergy	374	-	-	374	334	
Fees - Paid to DBF	3,125	-	-	3,125	2,545	
Fees - Paid for Wedding Extras	745	-	-	745	185	
Cost of charitable activities	£137,956	£2,393	-	£140,349	£130,149	
Uckfield Festival Big Day	-	-	-	-	-	
Festival of Christmas Trees	414	-	-	414	400	
Other events	-	-	-	-	-	
Belmont Centre running costs	15,592	-	-	15,592	18,660	
Parish magazine costs	-	-	-	-	-	
Other trading costs	-	-	-	-	-	
Cost of other trading activities	£16,006	-	-	£16,006	£19,060	
Other Expenditure	-	1,199	-	1,199	3,344	
Total expended on all funds	£160,605	£3,592	-	£164,197	£158,456	

4 Missionary and charitable giving

	Unrestricted Fund	Restricted Fund/s	Endowed Fund/s	Total Funds 2024	Total Funds 2023	Notes
	£	£	£	£	£	
Overseas:						
<i>Total</i>	1,539	734	-	2,273	2,540	
Home:						
<i>Total</i>	3,295	500	-	3,795	3,003	
	4,834	1,234	-	6,068	5,543	

5 Staff costs

	Unrestricted Fund	Restricted Fund/s	Endowed Fund/s	Total Funds 2024	Total Funds 2023	Notes
	£	£	£	£	£	
Remuneration						
<i>Wages and salaries</i>	16,904	-	-	16,904	17,108	
	16,904	-	-	16,904	17,108	

6 Payments to P.C.C. members

Trustee payments and expenses

The P.C.C. support the Rector, Chair of the P.C.C., by paying Council Tax of £4,219, water and environmental charges amounting to £803 for the Rectory, plus other costs towards travel, hospitality, telephone, internet and postage totalling £3,115 in 2024.

7 Transactions with persons related to P.C.C. members

Since the appointment of a new Treasurer in June 2019, all payments to the Parish Administrator are connected to the trustees as the Treasurer is married to the Parish Administrator. P.C.C. procedures are in place to ensure at least two others are aware of expenditure, other than regular commitments and pre-agreed works, before payment is made. Financial reporting to the P.C.C. and the P.C.C. Standing Committee contains financial detail to ensure transparency. No other payments have been made to persons related to or connected to the trustees.

8 Transactions with related charities

Since the closure of the Holy Cross Church of England Primary School on 31st December 2023 there are no transactions with related charities.

9 Governance

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Fund/s	Endowed Fund/s	Total Funds 2024	Total Funds 2023	Notes
<i>Accounts production</i>	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	
	-	-	-	-	-	

10 Transfers between funds

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Fund/s	Endowed Fund/s	Total Funds 2024	Total Funds 2023	Notes
	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	
	-	-	-	-	-	

11 Fixed assets

a Investments

	Unrestricted Fund	Restricted Fund/s	Endowed Fund/s	Total Funds 2024	Notes
Market value 1 January 2024	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	
Disposals at carrying value	-	-	-	-	
Purchases at cost	-	-	-	-	
Net gains and revaluation	-	-	-	-	
Market value 31 December 2024	-	-	-	-	

12 Fixed assets

Tangible fixed assets

	Freehold land and buildings	Audio visual equipment	Office equipment	Total fixed assets	Notes
Cost or valuation	£	£	£	£	
At 1 January 2024	1,370,000	-	-	1,370,000	
Additions	-	-	-	-	
Disposals	-	-	-	-	
Revaluation	-	-	-	-	
At 31 December 2024	1,370,000	-	-	1,370,000	
Charge for impairment					
At 1 January 2024	-	-	-	-	
At 31 December 2024	-	-	-	-	
Net book amounts					
At 31 December 2024	1,370,000	-	-	1,370,000	
At 31 December 2023	1,370,000	-	-	1,370,000	

The freehold land and buildings comprise the Belmont Centre, Belmont Road. The Belmont Centre remains valued at £1,370,000 as at 31 Dec 2024.

13 Net assets by fund

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Fund/s	Endowed Fund/s	Total Funds 2024	Total Funds 2023	Notes
	£	£	£	£	£	
Fixed assets for church use	1,370,000	-	-	1,370,000	1,370,000	
Current assets (except cash)	4,374	-	-	4,374	3,850	
Cash at bank and on deposit	52,808	228,492	-	281,300	266,611	
Current liabilities	(7,884)	-	-	(7,884)	(6,579)	
Long term liabilities	-	-	-	-	-	
	£1,419,298	£228,492	£-	£1,647,790	£1,633,882	

14 Debtors

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Fund/s	Endowed Fund/s	Total Funds 2024	Total Funds 2023	Notes
	£	£	£	£	£	
Income tax recoverable	2,624	-	-	2,624	2,518	
Prepayments and accrued income	1,750	-	-	1,750	1,332	
Other debtors	-	-	-	-	-	
	£4,374	-	-	£4,374	£3,850	

15 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Fund/s	Endowed Fund/s	Total Funds 2024	Total Funds 2023	Notes
	£	£	£	£	£	
Deferred income	-	-	-	-	-	
Accruals for utilities and other costs	7,204	-	-	7,204	5,899	
Other creditors	680	-	-	680	680	
	£7,884	-	-	£7,884	£6,579	

16 Creditors: amounts falling due after one year

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Fund/s	Endowed Fund/s	Total Funds 2024	Total Funds 2023	Notes
	£	£	£	£	£	
Deferred income	-	-	-	-	-	
Accruals for utilities and other costs	-	-	-	-	-	
Other creditors	-	-	-	-	-	
	-	-	-	-	-	

17 Statement of funds

Restricted Funds - The purpose of the restricted funds are as follows:

- **Organ Fund** – holds funds for repairing and maintaining the Church Organ.
- **Sunday Refreshment Fund** – holds the proceeds of contributions given at coffee after the 9.30am service.
- **Screen and AV Fund** – established in 2018 to raise funds for the installation of a permanent display screen and in 2019 the scope was extended to include the sound system.
- **Youth Club Fund** – holds funds for the Youth Club reintroduced during 2023.
- **Ukraine Donations Fund** – established in 2022 to allow donations to support Ukrainian conflict victims.
- **Action Aid Fund** – holds first £234 of Cash Collections to cover monthly donation to a Guatemala child.
- **Window Appeal Fund** – established in 2019 to raise funds to repair and maintain the church windows.
- **Children's Work** – established during 2021 for funds specifically supporting the children's activities and groups in Church.
- **Clergy Housing** – established in 2020 from the proceeds of the sale of the Curates house at 7 Parkview Road, Uckfield.
- **Flower Fund** – established in 2021 to maintain the funds relating to floral tributes in Church.
- **Children's Society** – used in 2021 to restrict funds from collections not dispersed by the close of the year.
- **In Memory of D Youngman** – established in 2022 from a donation in memory of the Late Mr D Youngman.
- **P.C.C. Investment** – agreed in 2024 to allocate £100,000 of Clergy Housing to generate interest for P.C.C. use.
- **Disabled Access** – established in 2024 to restrict funds donated for an access ramp and powered doors.

Unrestricted funds are not subject to any donor restrictions and can be spent as the P.C.C. decides.

18 Summary of all funds

Fund income and expenditure and final balances are as follows:

	Balances b/fwd 1 Jan 2024	Income	Expenditure	Transfers, other gains and losses	Balances c/fwd 31 Dec 2024
	£	£	£	£	£
Organ Repairs	5,288	6,243	-	377	11,908
Sunday Refreshments	2,149	946	1,000	95	2,190
AV and Screen Fund	2,348	-	-	96	2,444
Youth Club	346	-	-	16	362
Ukraine Donations	11	-	-	-	11
Action Aid	-	234	234	-	-
Window Appeal Fund	1,536	-	-	69	1,605
Children's Work	3,941	763	1,159	168	3,713
7 Park View Road Proceeds	185,613	-	-	(96,159)	89,454
Flower Fund	705	2,788	1,199	67	2,361
Children's Society	14	-	-	1	15
In Mem. D Youngman	4,054	-	-	182	4,236
P.C.C. Investment	-	-	-	100,000	100,000
Disabled Access	-	10,000	-	193	10,193
Total of all restricted funds	206,005	20,974	(3,592)	5,105	228,492
Revaluation of fixed assets	-	-	-	-	-
General fund	1,427,877	152,026	(160,605)	-	1,419,298
Total of all unrestricted funds	1,427,877	152,026	(160,605)	-	1,419,298
Total funds	£1,633,882	£173,000	(£164,197)	£5,105	£1,647,790

Independent Examiner's Report

to the P.C.C. of The Church of the Holy Cross, Uckfield for the Year Ended 31st December, 2024

This is my report to the Parochial Church Council of the Ecclesiastical Parish (P.C.C.) of the Church of the Holy Cross, Uckfield, on the annual report for the year ended 31st December 2024 set out within this document.

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

The P.C.C. members are responsible for the preparation of the annual reports. The P.C.C. members 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. to 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. to 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 (other than that disclosed below in Section B *)

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 accounting 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.

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

Examiner's signature



Examiner's name CAPITALS

BRIAN DAVID JACOBS

Date

29 April 2025

Relevant professional qualification(s) or body if any

Institute of Chartered Accountants in England & Wales

Examiner's address

12 Silverdale
Keymer
Hassocks, BN6 8RD

Section B**Disclosure**

Only complete if the examiner needs to highlight material problems *for example:*

- accounting records have not been kept in accordance with s132 of the Charities' Act 2011 and those accounts do not comply with the requirements of the 2008 Regulations setting out the form and content of charity accounts;
- any material expenditure or action which appears not to be in accordance with the trusts of the charity;
- any failure to be provided with information and explanations by any past or present trustee, officer or employee; and
- any material inconsistency between the accounts and the trustees' annual report.

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

Accounts

**Trustees Annual Report and Financial Report
of
The Parochial Church Council of the Ecclesiastical Parish
of The Church of the Holy Cross, Uckfield**

The Church of the Holy Cross, Church St/Belmont Rd, Uckfield, East Sussex TN22 1BP
Registered Charity no. 1137746

For the year ended 31 December 2023

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Administrative information

Incumbent:	The Revd John Wall, The Rectory, 1 Sand Ridge, Ridgewood, Uckfield TN22 5ET
Independent examiner:	Mr B Jacobs, 12 Silverdale, Keymer BN6 8RD (appointed 2022)
Bankers:	National Westminster Bank, 1 Muster Green, Haywards Heath RH16 4AP
Parish Office:	holycrossuckfield@gmail.com
Website:	Churchoftheholycrossuckfield.co.uk

Advisers to the P.C.C.

Mrs AD Johnson	Churchwarden
Mr J Pontefract	Churchwarden and Health & Safety Officer
Mr P Ireland	P.C.C. Treasurer
Mrs G Youngman	P.C.C. Secretary
Mrs L Ireland	Parish Administrator
Mr P Kennedy	Major Works Project Manager

Thank you to the following people for permission to use their photos:

Sarah Widdowson, Paul Ireland, Gillian Youngman and Mr. Mutikani.

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INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

2023 was very much back to normal and business as usual for Holy Cross Church and the wider community. People still had Covid but it tended to be no more than a cold in most cases. The Daily Mail reported on 6th May "Covid-19 no longer represents a 'global health emergency', the World Health organisation declared yesterday. The announcement marks a major step towards the end of the pandemic, which has killed at least 20 million people and disrupted the global economy."

However, interest rates kept rising and the cost of living remained high (the price of supermarket groceries rose by a record 16.7 per cent in January, adding up to £788 to annual shopping bills, retail analysts Kantar found). Numerous strikes including the ambulance service, doctors, nurses, teachers and train drivers had a negative impact on people.

The war continued between Ukraine and Russia, and in October Israel declared war on the Gaza Strip after an unprecedented attack by the armed Palestinian group Hamas. Both these wars are ongoing and often dominate the news.

On a happier note, the Coronation of Charles III and his wife, Camilla, as King and Queen of the United Kingdom and the other Commonwealth realms, took place on Saturday, 6 May 2023, at Westminster Abbey. The Holy Cross Bell Ringers were honoured to be able to ring all eight bells for this historic event.

Earlier in the year the children from our Junior Church sent a (rather large) card to Their Majesties to wish them all the best for this wonderful occasion. The card was a photograph of a wonderful mural that the children made and inside had a special message along with the names of all the children involved. They were so thrilled much later when they received this lovely card and message of thanks from Buckingham Palace.



With regards church life, the only two things left to reinstate in worship last year were using the rail and kneeler for communion and a monthly Healing Service being incorporated into the Sunday morning service. These were reintroduced in January and October respectively and a service during Holy Week was the first healing/laying on of hands since Covid.

OUR AIMS AND PURPOSES AS A CHARITY

'The Parochial Church Council of the Ecclesiastical Parish of the Church of the Holy Cross, Uckfield' is a Charity registered with the Charity Commission in England and Wales as charity number 1137746. It is commonly known by its working name of 'Holy Cross Church, Uckfield'.

Holy Cross Church is set just off the High Street in Uckfield and comes under the Diocese of Chichester. It is part of a Plurality with St Michael and All Angels at Little Horsted and St Margaret of Antioch at Isfield, overseen by the Rector, the Reverend John Wall (Father John). The Parochial Church Council (P.C.C.) is a corporate body established by the Church of England and operates under the Parochial Church Council (Powers) Measure 1956, Church Representation Rules 2006 which states that its principal function is "promoting in the parish the whole mission of the Church".

The P.C.C. has the responsibility of co-operating with the incumbent in:

- The promotion of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ according to the doctrines and practices of the Church of England.
- Promoting in the parish the whole mission of the church: pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical.
- Getting to know Jesus better and make Him better known.
- Practical support and care for people in the parish, from the youngest to the eldest, irrespective of level of need or ability to pay.
- Providing financial support to those in need and to other organisations with similar objectives.
- Demonstrating that our aims are for the public benefit, including charities advancing education or religion or relieving poverty.
- Following the Chichester Diocese Strategy 2020-2025 'Vision for Growth' (More Open; More Converted to Jesus Christ; More Generous; More Engaged).

OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

When planning our activities for the year the P.C.C. and clergy have considered the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit and, in particular, the specific guidance on 'charities for the advancement of religion'.

We enable as many people as possible to worship at our church:

- Enabling as many people as possible to become part of our parish community.
- Teaching, baptising and nurturing new and existing believers.

We offer services of worship to God:

- Maintaining an overview of worship throughout the parish.
- Considering how services can involve the many groups that live within the parish.
- Putting faith into practice, through prayer and scripture, music and sacrament.
- Providing services and opportunities to worship (other than the regular Sunday services) which reach out to the wider community.

We promote the Gospel and pray that the unchurched may find life in Jesus Christ:

- Assisting people from all walks of life to develop their knowledge of, and trust in, Jesus.

- Offering courses to deepen spirituality both as a community and as individuals.
- Offering worship and prayer, learning about the Gospel, in small group situations.

We engage in evangelism and outreach to the parish in various ways:

- Reaching out to the unchurched through a new Spring Festival, a Fairtrade Feast, a Christmas Bazaar, jumble sales, a Festival of Christmas Trees, a Crib Service, Messy Church sessions and a Holiday Club. We have also formed a Very Chatty Café in response to the national Warm Spaces campaign.
- Bimonthly Community Leaders' Lunches.
- Chaplaincy of Uckfield Bonfire & Carnival Society and the Uckfield Rugby Club.
- Outreach to local schools through assemblies, talks and worship.

We provide a building for people to enjoy:

- Maintaining the fabric of the Church building as a historic centre and focus of life in the town: developing its flexibility and wider use; also maintaining the fabric of The Belmont Centre (Church hall).
- Enabling an appreciation of the Church building in the history and archaeology of the area.

We provide tangible pastoral and financial support to the poor and needy:

- Providing pastoral care for people whether part of the Holy Cross Church family or not.
- Providing assistance to the poor and needy of the parish both financially and by initiatives such as the Christmas Gifts for Kids in our Community campaign.
- Providing assistance to the wider community, including the relief of poverty through support to local charities such as the Uckfield Foodbank, the Community Fridge and the Edward Holmes Baldock Charity.

We spend money as wisely and responsibly as possible:

- Adhering to our Financial Records and Accounts Policy including authorisation of spending.
- Tendering for large jobs in order to make sure we are getting the work done to our specification while good value for money.
- Spending the income of our parish trusts according to the wishes of their donors.

We consider the needs of people served by other charities and overseas:

- Giving to wider Christian charities.
- Giving to missionary organisations.
- Responding to emergencies and crisis by arranging adhoc appeals and retiring collections.

We consider protecting the needs of those entering our church buildings:

- Ensuring all members and visitors to the church are kept safe and that all Safeguarding procedure and policy is followed.
- Supporting the National Church's initiative "Living in Love and Faith" on sexuality.
- Raising awareness of issues of race, bias and inclusion.

WHAT WE PLANNED TO DO TO ACHIEVE OUR CHARITABLE OBJECTIVES

Having restored worship and activities, our objectives in 2023 were to build on them in order to achieve our responsibilities to the congregation and local community. Many of these aspects of planning for the

future of Church life are part of our response to the themes of More Engaged (A sign of being Apostolic) and More Open (A sign of being one) which are part of the Diocesan Strategy 2020-2025.

While costs of virtually everything have increased and continue to do so, the list of work required to be done in the Church, both necessary and desirable, grows longer. This year the P.C.C. looked at how best to invest the money from the former curate's house (see page 20) and build up reserves used during the pandemic, before making any quick decisions. Whilst out of the period of this report, at the beginning of 2024 a priorities sub group of the P.C.C. was set up to address needs, costs and priorities.

During 2023 the following (which had been listed in the Mission Action Plan) progressed as follows:

Online services

- **Our online services during Covid have been very popular. They are costly and time consuming but there is a need for something.**

Action to consider: **Purchase of equipment to live streaming.**

In the summer a 75 inch TV on a movable trolley was purchased along with a wireless adapter (to allow computers to display on the TV without needing to have a cable connecting them). It can be used in different areas of the church and possibly, on occasion, be moved to the Belmont Centre. It is also a good trial for future plans as additional screens may be needed to ensure they are visible to all.

Disability concerns

- **People using mobility aids use a different door to everyone else so may not get the same welcome and do not see clergy when leaving.**

Action to consider: **Make the step at the South door into a small ramp.**

This is being investigated by the Major Projects Officer.

Outreach

- **Known to be a welcoming church. Lots of new housing being built locally - a leaflet drop pre Covid had to be aborted.**

Action to consider: **A joint leaflet to be written as each church offers different things.**

A draft version of the graphics was shared with the P.C.C. in the autumn.

Action to consider: **Have a presence at Weald on the Field.**

The Church had a stall at this annual event for the first time this year.

Social/networking opportunities

- **Restart Ladies Fellowship**

This group which meet monthly restarted after deciding their future at the A.G.M. in the summer.

Raising income

- **Introduce a Junior Church 'sponsorship' challenge for the children to raise funds for youth work.**

The Children from Junior Church and the Junior Choir came together again for their second sponsored run; this year it was a 'colour run' in May which raised £950 towards children's work.

PERFORMANCE REVIEW OF ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE YEAR

Worship and Prayer

All are welcome to attend our regular services and the church family welcomes visitors from within as well as outside the parish boundary.

The regular services are:

Sunday	8.00am	Holy Communion
	9.30am	Parish Communion (including healing on the 4 th Sunday of the month)
	10.00am	Open Doors (family Eucharist) usually on 2 nd Sunday of the month
	5.30pm	Evensong (see below for details)
Wednesday	11.00am	Holy Communion

Visitors attend by personal choice and we welcome people from all walks of life to take part in the life of the church. We contend that voluntary attendance to worship the Lord Jesus Christ is a major demonstration of the public benefit of our activities. The costs and options to provide online services so that others can also share in services continue to be investigated. In the meantime, a new T.V. screen was introduced at the July Open Doors service to replace the pull up screen. This enables an order of service to be displayed as well as pictures and film clips and is more versatile than the previous projector and screen. It was also used at future Open Doors services and during Holiday Club.



The number of adults attending a Sunday morning service in 2023 averaged 75 (this includes the Open Doors service when Junior Church and families participate in the service) and is an increase of five from the previous year.

Traditionally, the Diocese asks parishes to monitor attendance during Sundays in October. In 2023 the average adult attendance in Church for the morning services in October (including the Harvest Open Doors service) was 81 which was four more than last year.

There were 12 Open Doors services with the average number of people attending being 88 (an increase of three from last year). The highest attendance for a Sunday morning was Easter Day which was an Open Doors service with 148 adults and 27 and whilst there were 21 fewer children than the previous year there were 19 more adults. The age profile of our worshipping community last year was approximately one third adults over 70, one third adults under 70 and one third children. Whilst the under 18's remained static this year, there was a bit of a shift with the middle group expanding a bit and the over 70's diminishing.

Numbers at the weekly 8am Holy Communion service are still low, averaging eight to ten people which is about the same as the numbers at the weekly Wednesday 11am Holy Communion.

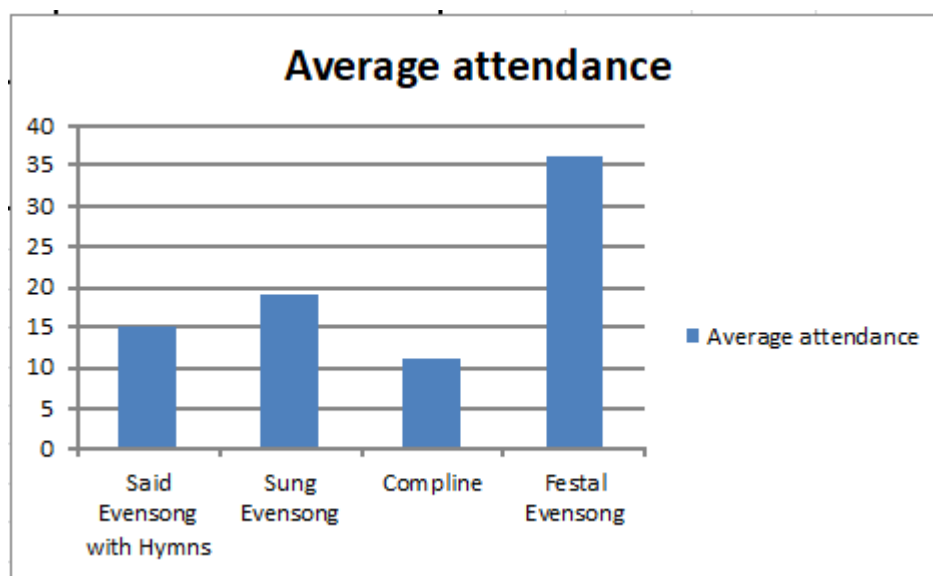
Holy Cross Church is one of a very few churches that has a sung Evensong Service most Sundays of the year. However, numbers have been declining so this year a “reset” was tried with Evening worship from April onwards taking this format:

2nd Sunday of the month	Festal Choral Evensong
4th Sunday	Sung Evensong
1st, 3rd and 5th Sundays	Mainly a Said Evensong with Hymns, but interspersed with Celtic and Taizé Evening Prayer, also Compline, and “one offs” like Prom Praise, Festival of Christmas Trees Service, Songs of Praise etc.

The average attendance at the eleven Evensong services from January to March was 18.

The number of each type of service for the remainder of the year is given below with the average attendance figures:

Type of service	Number of services	Average attendance
Said Evensong with Hymns	6	15
Sung Evensong	6	19
Compline	3	11
Festal Evensong	5	36



There was no Evening worship on the 1st or 3rd Sundays during July and August nor when other services had taken place in the afternoon like the Confirmation service.

Twice Evensong was held at St Saviours which is not included in the above table nor when it was combined with a BBQ at The Rectory (38 attended on that occasion).

Besides the regular Sunday services, other services also took place in Holy Cross Church which reach out to the far wider community, namely: All Souls, Remembrance Day, a closing service at the end of the Festival of Christmas Trees, the Sussex Bonfire Societies Carol Service, St Wilfrid's Hospice 'Lights of Love' Service, Carols by Candlelight and the Christmas Eve Crib Service. It was with great regret that the annual All Souls service in November was cancelled due to severe weather warnings, especially as the weather was not as bad as feared. However, Fr. John went to church and read all the names out.

Christmas afternoon and evening services were very well attended with the Crib Service continuing to be the most popular service of all:

Service	Adults	Children	Total
Festival of Christmas Trees	160	30	190
Nine Lessons and Carols	140	10	150
Christmas Eve Crib Service	325	125	450
Midnight Mass	117	1	118

Whilst there were 25 fewer children at the Crib Service this year than last, there were 28 more people at Midnight Mass.

Compline (an Order for Night Prayer) continued at 4.30pm on the 1st and 3rd Tuesday of the month at St Saviours (following private prayer from 4pm) with an average of six people attending. When there was a 5th Tuesday in the month this had originally been Evensong but then also became Compline.

These are aspects of Church life that show our response to More Converted to Jesus Christ (A sign of being Holy) aspect of the Diocesan Strategy 2020-2025 'Vision for Growth'.

Children's work and attendance

Holy Cross Church continued to have a lot to offer young families and by building on what the church already offered and doing an increasing number of outreach activities, children's work has continued to thrive with other members of the congregation supporting and encouraging them.

Junior Church continued to meet on the 1st, 3rd and 5th Sundays of the month, participating in the Open Doors family Eucharist on the 2nd Sunday of the month with families having the 4th Sunday when they can enjoy other activities. On the Sundays when Junior Church met, the number of children varied between 8 and 34, with an average of 18 per session. Junior Church start their worship in The Belmont Centre, coming into church for Communion and the rest of the service with the children showing the congregation what they have been doing.

In January an afternoon tea was held to raise money for five Junior Church children to go with Sarah Widdowson (Children's Work Coordinator) on a weekend **Pilgrimage to Walsingham** in March. They really enjoyed it and came back sharing their experience with the congregation.

In the first half of 2023 the **Children's Choir** was stronger than it has ever been with a full and enthusiastic group of children who were eager to perform. When the school year ended some girls moved on to secondary school so in an attempt to avoid losing them altogether a **Youth Choir** was created with rehearsals immediately following the Children's Choir; this has gone well with six dedicated girls. The Children's Choir continues but with lower numbers, due to the older girls having a separate session and some other children have moved on or out of the area.





On Remembrance Sunday the Youth Choir beautifully sang “This Remembrance Day” at both the morning service and afternoon Civic Service (see left).

In December both choirs led Carols at The Highlands Inn, which were well supported and, as ever, very popular with the pub clientele.

Three sessions of **Messy Church** were held throughout the year (February - All things nature; April - Messy Easter; October - Messy Harvest). Messy Church consists of a morning of five or six different activities in The Belmont Centre followed by story time and music in the Church (led by Fr. John), a brief activity e.g. Easter egg hunt, then a tea party back in The Belmont Centre. Priority booking is given to Junior Church children with the remaining spaces open to the community.

In summer the **Holiday Club** returned with a fun-packed ‘Space Academy’ theme. 50 children were welcomed throughout the three days which were packed with activities, story, music and craft based on a story from the Bible. The last day coincided with the Very Chatty Café and the children joined the adults there to make dioramas (see right below) and then stay for lunch – the volunteers served meals to 91 adults and children that day.



The following Sunday the usual Holiday Club church service was held when children shared with the congregation what they had done the previous week. Children and helpers also took part in the Uckfield Carnival Children’s Procession, dressed as something from space and they came second.

A new **Youth Club** started in September for those in our churches who had gone through the confirmation process over the past few years. The first of these monthly sessions was a welcome BBQ at the Rectory for the youth and their families. The first real meeting in October was pizza making from

scratch and hilarious games. A Christmas party took place in December which was food and a silent disco. There are some 12 members, of whom some 6-10 regularly meet up.

Life Events

Our church continued to be appreciated by our parishioners and many others as a space where life events are celebrated with joy and thanksgiving. There were 20 Baptisms and one Wedding held during the year as well as two Renewal of Vows. There were also 15 Funerals in Holy Cross Church, and the interment of ashes of four people took place in the graveyard.

Following classes led by Fr. John, a Confirmation Service was led by Bishop Will (the Bishop of Lewes) in June with three adults and six children being confirmed (see right), one of who was Daz who had been baptised during the morning service two weeks before.



Pastoral ministry/care



We are fortunate to have three other members of clergy as well as a Reader to assist Fr. John in the plurality.

The Revd Martha Mutikani (Associate-Vicar of St. Margaret's, Isfield) continued to be a valuable asset in her role in the Plurality. Half way through the year Revd Martha stood down as Racial Justice Officer but remains Assistant Dean of Women's Ministry for the Diocese.

September saw Revd Martha become a Canon at Chichester Cathedral, taking the stall of the Prebendary of Bracklesham. She was one of eight new honorary canons of the cathedral in recognition of the contribution each makes to the apostolic life of the Diocese.

The Honorary Assistant Curates; the Revd. David Ashton and the Revd. Canon Hugh Moseley, regularly lead or participate in services in the plurality, as does Reader Sheila Fordham. They are very much part of the church family and we are extremely grateful for their ongoing support and contribution to the life of Holy Cross Church. Regretfully the Revd Dr Mike Blanch had to step back from helping out as the health of his wife (Penny) deteriorated. The Revd Richard Wolley who had taken services and supported the church in previous years sadly died in November.

Clergy continued to visit the sick at home and in hospital. Pat Hall continued her good work visiting Copper Beech Care Home.

Communication

The weekly pewsheet, monthly parish magazine and monthly Diocesan and Parish intercessions continue to be emailed to people if they wish (and a handful posted). People find it easier to read these publications on their electronic device, can see ahead what is happening and are still kept informed if they are unable to get to church. At the end of March Churchwarden Dee started a WhatsApp group as a quick and easy method to reach out to members of the congregation either telling them information or asking for help etc (at the end of the year there were 26 members).

Social media continues to be one of the most effective means of communication, in particular for up to date information and last minute changes. At the end of the year our Facebook page followers numbered 1,700 which was an increase of 8.7% on the previous year. Our regular and eye catching updates are thanks to Sarah Widdowson who posts upcoming services and events with photographs and feedback afterwards as well as posting other appropriate things relating to the religious calendar or national/international news. The Holy Cross Church website contains lots of useful information for both the congregation and also the wider community and visitors. Information about services and other events means it remains heavily used alongside our social media presence.

Social events and fundraising

Coffee is served in The Belmont Centre after the mid morning service, and in church after the Wednesday service which is a good way for new members to mix as well as an opportunity for a catch up with other people. Donations for coffee after the morning Eucharist go towards the [Chichester Diocese Children's and Families Work](#) and [Goodwill Children's Homes](#). The latter is a charity which has been supporting the care and education of destitute and orphaned children in southern India since 1976. It supports three children's homes, a primary school and a Tribal Outreach Programme (TORP).

Fundraising opportunities are also valuable socialising and wellbeing opportunities for those participating both as attendees or helpers. The church held three [jumble sales](#) this year, in February, July and September. The first one of the year always seems to do better and this year was no exception with the sales raising £575, £420 and £300 respectively and that was despite local competition on the day of the last sale. Comments made have included "Holy Cross Church is such a large part of the Community of Uckfield" and "Good Jumble Sale are so welcome to help the community get through these tougher times".

The traditional [Quiz evening with fish and chips](#) in March raised over £360.

Sarah Widdowson took the initiative to sell [Easter Treat Boxes](#) this year and she raised £400 for the church for which we are very grateful.





Following the success of the [Spring Festival](#) on the Holy Cross School playing field last year, Sarah organised another one this year but this time on a much larger scale on Luxford Field, in the centre of town. Local stall holders, small businesses and charities took part, all of whom found the event hugely beneficial to their organisations. There was a programme of varied entertainment throughout the day including dancing, singing, music and drama. The church ran a number of stalls including the popular Vintage Tea Room, a BBQ and items made by the Crafty Ladies. For children there were also free garden games and a Messy Church tent with arts and crafts. The weather was kind and the day raised an amazing amount of just under £2,500.

Another event organised for the Junior Church members and their families was a sponsored [Colour Run](#). A mix of coloured powders, spaced around a circuit on Holy Cross School field, were thrown at the participants as they ran past. Various distances were completed by the children who couldn't stop smiling while they got covered in 'paint' and water. Everyone enjoyed the event and nearly £1,000 of sponsorship was collected.



In July, The Children's Choir take part in the annual [Proms on the Pitch](#) but this year, due to the predicted high winds the staging/ production/lighting/fireworks/vendors etc were unable to go ahead for safety reasons. Holy Cross Church was pleased to be able to offer the facilities of the Church and Belmont Centre as an alternative venue so that the town event was able to go ahead albeit in a different format.



For the first time Holy Cross Church had a stall at the annual town [Weald on the Field](#) held in August. Started in 2016, this attraction hosts local produce, street food, drink, live music and entertainment. Ours was possibly the only charity with a presence. Unfortunately Dee lost her gazebo in the wind but it was fun to do with a good team; £300 was made and lessons learnt for another time (people wanted to purchase whole puddings or would prefer a stall selling whole cakes).

[Harvest Lunch](#), a popular event on the church calendar, was well attended and the wonderful food enjoyed by all. Thanks go to Dee and her team of caterers for making it possible.

The annual [Christmas Fair](#), held in the Belmont Centre, was an enormous success with fantastic support, once again, from the community. Church stalls included hampers, cakes and bakes, jams and chutneys,

£2 gift stall, bottle game, chocolate tombola and teddy tombola and a cafe. We raised in excess of £2,000, therefore a worthy fundraiser as always. Due to Belmont Centre bookings the Fair was held a week before the Festival of Christmas trees which was a challenge but, nevertheless, was a wonderful community event and certainly kicked off Christmas!

The annual **Festival of Christmas Trees** was a wonderful success with 106 trees on display. We welcomed 6,016 visitors over the three days, many making wonderful and positive comments about the display. The event raised in excess of £15,000 which is a fantastic result.

Throughout the year (following its inception at the end of 2022), the **Chatty Café** went strength to strength from about 24 attending to a regular 45+. There were two sessions most months and during the year more new people came to experience this happy and welcoming environment. The programme included many crafts and people sharing their hobbies or an outside speaker as well as games to play and puzzles to do. These sessions give people the chance to meet and talk to both new and long standing friends. It is lovely to see people attending from Holy Cross Church, other churches or no church at all. Fr. John dropped in when he could. Coffee and cake is served on arrival along with a lovely lunch at the end of the morning for those who wish to stay. Birthdays and special anniversaries are shared and celebrated. The sessions and food are often themed like the Coronation Party where the finishing touches made it a happy and memorable occasion. Much thought and preparation goes into each session and even when a break was taken in August, at the previous session participants were given a 'survival kit' of a drink, biscuit and puzzle. From September the group changed its name to the **Very Chatty Café** (it transpired that there was a national organisation with the former name). Their first birthday was celebrated in style on 10th November with one comment on Facebook summing up this particular session (but it applies to all of them): "Thank you everyone, for another wonderful morning. Pure loving kindness from beginning to end." As this started out as a 'warm space', no charge is made but a donation bowl is available and towards the end of the year, this initiative was fortunate to be given a financial donation by means of a Waitrose Community Award.



In June, a Saturday afternoon **Chatty Café Garden Party** was open to all by kind invitation of David, Wendy and Sheena. It was a lovely sunny day and the many guests who came were spoilt with food and drink and enjoyed sitting and talking, as well as exploring the beautiful garden including the Hobbit House (see right).



Throughout the summer Fr. John hosted several **BBQ's** at The Rectory which were very successful and a good chance for people to socialise. In total, nearly 200 people were fed. This included the fundraising BBQ for Leprosy (mentioned elsewhere) and another with Evensong for the Plurality the end of August with 30+ attending.

Music continues to be a vital part of worship and entertainment but as time goes on it will need expensive work doing to it. Tim Guntrip, our Musical Director, says in the accompanying Report containing activities of the church family: “The [church organ](#) continues to hold its own, but it is fast becoming increasingly unreliable, and we really cannot put off major work to it for much longer. Many pipes internally are now collapsing under their own weight, falling onto others, and affecting the tuning. A note jammed during the Christmas Carol Service which thankfully it was able to temporarily disconnect - otherwise the organ would have been unusable for the remainder of the services over Christmas.” Estimates for the organ to be renovated range from £37,000 to £69,700, depending on how much work is done. Organ maintenance and repair is always accounted for in the budget but obviously separate fundraising is necessary for such vast sums. Last year Tim held an event for the restoration fund and this year the Ashdown Singers, a local group who use the church for their rehearsals, performed Requiem by Gabriel Fauré and other shorter French choral works, raising £750 for the organ fund.

Our witness to the community

Holy Cross Church is at the heart of Uckfield and attracts people to both the Church and The Belmont Centre for services and events, especially the Festival of Christmas Trees. The Church also shows witness to the community by supporting and participating in the life of the town as already described.

This year, as previously mentioned, a Spring Festival, organised by the church was held on Luxford Field for everyone to join in, and the church had a stall at Weald on the Field event for the first time.

In September Fr. John said prayers for the town in the High Street on [Carnival night](#) - this event is a part of the Sussex Bonfire season and is attended by thousands of people from Uckfield and further afield.

We were approached to be a venue for a [Friends of Sussex Hospices](#) fundraising concert in November with Dame Felicity Lott (a great soprano of her time) singing as well as other guests including actor Robert Bathurst. It was very successful with c£3,000 raised for their charity and hopefully will become a bi-annual event.

Holy Cross Church gives ongoing support to the town's [Foodbank](#) with a financial donation along with a regular appeal in the weekly pewsheets (a box for donations is put out each Sunday, kindly overseen by Terry Hall). Despite many people now putting their donations directly into the supermarket collection boxes, Holy Cross Church donates about ten shopping bags a month which are always gratefully received.

Dee Johnson, one of our churchwardens, now represents Holy Cross as a Trustee of the Foodbank and can also issue food vouchers on behalf of the Church. This ability to issue vouchers is reviewed annually i.e. people who don't issue any vouchers are taken off the list after a year.

At the Harvest service this year donations were taken in the form of tins and packets for the Foodbank, fresh produce for the Community Fridge, and a retiring collection for Libya following the recent devastating flooding. There had previously been a retiring collection in aid of the disasters in Libya and Morocco. In early February earthquakes that struck nine hours apart in south eastern Turkey and northern Syria saw the death toll rise to at least 33,185. Collections in Church were held on 12th and 19th February raising £657.

The Toy Drive last year was very successful but was extremely difficult and time consuming to store, sort, assign, wrap and deliver all the gifts before Christmas. Therefore in 2023 our **Christmas Gifts for Kids in our Community** campaign appealed for monetary donations and from the donations received gift vouchers were purchased from local shops and sent out to the families that had made contact appealing for help. This meant that parents were given the support they needed to buy Christmas gifts for their children but also the dignity to go out and choose the gifts themselves. We were pleased to be able to support 66 children in this way.



Holy Cross Church is a member of both the **Uckfield Volunteer Centre** and the **Uckfield Chamber of Commerce**. Both of these organisations hold regular meetings, both in person and on Zoom, and work together for the benefit of the local community. We keep contact with them and occasionally Fr. John joins a Zoom Meeting. With regards the Chamber of Commerce, as a major institution in Uckfield, Holy Cross Church impinges on the Business Community as part of its Community Involvement.

Holy Cross School attended the church occasionally and other schools visited during the year for services and events such as Harvest, Christmas and the Festival of Christmas Trees. Tragically, Holy Cross School closed on 31st December 2023. There was a moving farewell Christmas service for the remaining pupils and staff on 14th December.

In 2023, three members of Holy Cross Church were presented with different awards for their services to church and the community:



Holy Cross Church continued to witness to the community with the bi-monthly Community Leaders Lunches held at the Rectory. After a cooked lunch provided by the Rector and Gillian Youngman, a short talk is given by someone about the group or organisation that they represented. As a result of this, needs and concerns are shared and networking has been beneficial with organisations sometimes offering financial help or other support to each other. In April, the former High Sheriff of East Sussex was the guest speaker (Fr. John was her Chaplain when she was High Sheriff of East Sussex) and surprised Fr. John by presenting him with an **“Award in recognition of great and valuable services to the community.”**





Lynne Ireland, our Parish Administrator, is a great help and continues to be a much appreciated valuable asset with her involvement and connections with other organisations in the town. In November, at the Ashdown Radio Community Awards at The East Sussex National Hotel, Lynne was awarded **The Service to our Community Award** for her work with Uckfield Lions, Uckfield Bonfire & Carnival Society and Holy Cross Church.

Lynne works mainly from her office in The Belmont Centre along with a bit of working from home. Although her hours are Monday, Wednesday and Thursday 9.15am - 12.15pm, she is very flexible which is of great benefit to the church.

Gillian Youngman, our P.C.C. Secretary, was nominated and successfully chosen to be awarded the **Order of St Richard**. Initiated in 2019, this award is for lay people “in recognition of exceptional service to church and community in the Diocese of Chichester”. Forty people across the Diocese receive the award each year and candidates are judged by a Diocesan panel. Gillian was presented with the award by Bishop Ruth at a special evensong in Chichester Cathedral in September in recognition of being an “exceptional PCC Secretary and work with the town community lunch and local preservation society”.



Mission, outreach and evangelism

Throughout November there was a Peace Tree in the Cardale Chapel. As Fr. John wrote in the pewsheet: “In these tragic times of war and conflict in Israel/Gaza and Ukraine, we can feel helpless. One thing we can do is pray, so at Holy Cross we have a ‘Tree of Peace’ in the Cardale Chapel, where you can write a prayer and hang it on a branch. All welcome. It will remain here until the Festival of Christmas Trees.”

A small Giving to Other Charities sub-committee appointed by the P.C.C. met and recommended a number of donations to the P.C.C. (who approved). The recipients of this money are detailed in the Financial report (see page 30)

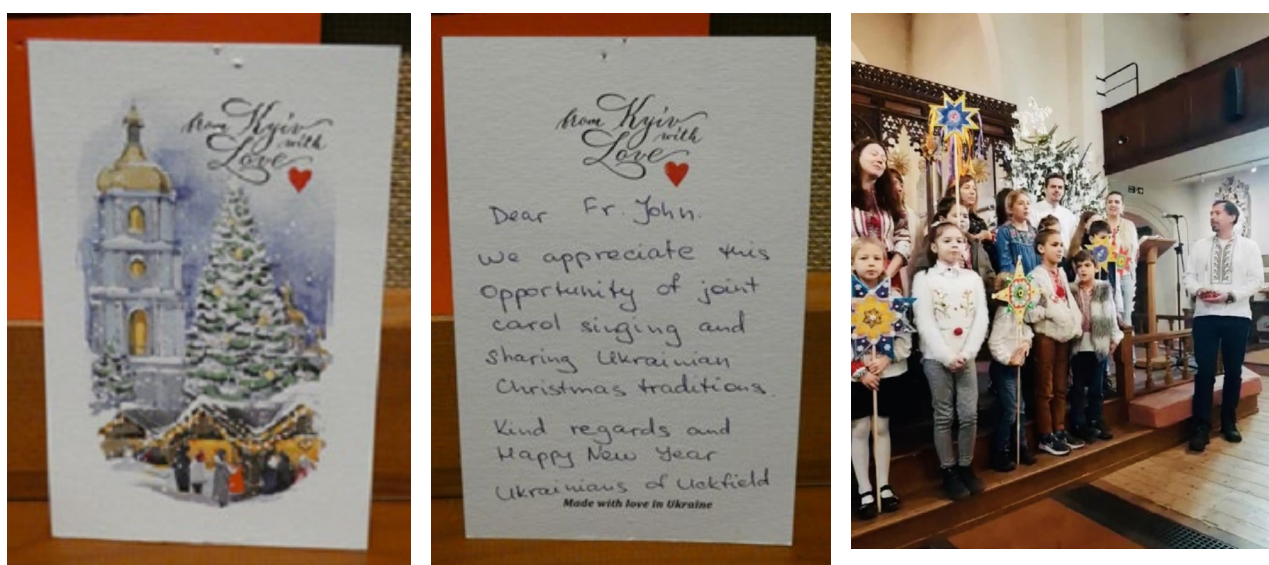
Other regular charitable giving throughout the year has included Action Aid (Sponsoring of Maria Luisa Cucul Yat in Guatemala), Christian Aid, Uckfield Foodbank and The Children’s Society.

The Churchwardens are also trustees of the **“Edward Holmes Baldock Charity”** which is three charities rolled into one. It incorporates the Henry Gardener and Dorothy Ellis charities, and all three of them were established to relieve poverty in the town of Uckfield. Dorothy Ellis died in 1731 and some of the money she left enabled 12 fourpenny loaves to be provided to 12 poor families at Holy Cross Church every Sunday. Then in 1846 Edward Holmes Baldock bequeathed the sum of £750 to be invested and distributed each year amongst poor persons of the parish. The combined investments are held with the COIF Charities Investment Fund which provides a quarterly income which is used to fund an annual donation to three families selected by a sub-committee each year. This is normally made up to £25 per

recipient by the PCC. There were no donations made this year and the funds will be held over to be donated in 2024.

Some of the congregation belong to **Caring and Sharing**, a scheme which raises money by sacrificial giving by people who try to: 'Live more simply that others may simply live'. It is based on two ideas: the first is that by making a small sacrifice members can turn away from the material values of the western world; the second is that they can share their comparative wealth by sending the savings from this small sacrifice to projects in poorer countries to provide the basic needs of life. Money saved by making a small change in lifestyles was this year given to three overseas projects which provide basic necessities for very poor people.

Like last year, Holy Cross Church welcomed members of the local **Ukrainian community** during Sunday Service to sing carols. This year they sang in both January and December and it was very special.



In March we were pleased to welcome the **Blackboys Beavers** on a visit to the church: Sarah Widdowson organised activities and Fr. John read the Easter Story.

In August the Rector hosted a BBQ in aid of **St. Lazarus' Leprosy** (he belongs to the Order of Saint Lazarus of Jerusalem). Constantine (Canon Martha's husband) gave a moving talk about his grandmother who had leprosy. £1000 was raised for this charity.

For the first time in 4 years (since before the Covid pandemic due to concerns about indoor socialising etc), **Ladies Fellowship** met in July. This was an Annual General Meeting followed by a cream tea. The subject of whether to start meetings again was discussed and it was agreed that they would and a small committee was appointed. The monthly meetings since then have been held in The Belmont Centre on the third Thursday afternoon: this is a change of venue and week to before. An average attendance of 20 people have welcomed this opportunity to meet and hear a variety of interesting speakers.

From October Fr. John has visited **Millington Court** (a large block of flats in Mill Lane) on a monthly basis and taken a Eucharist in the communal room. This was on the initiative of David Gilbert after Fr. John had been visiting Fr. Richard and 8-10 attend this serviced which is well received.

In August Fr. John broke the very sad news that his beloved Labrador had had to be put down. **Sophie Wall** was very much the church dog, attending most services and events and there at the door to welcome people to the Rectory. Not only were the congregation upset by this sad loss but there was an outpouring from the community. Someone organised an arrangement of flowers in the Memorial Corner to which Fr John wrote in the pewsheet:

Thank you so much for this lovely thought! So many people have been kind and supportive. I've had upwards of 500 emails, WhatsApps, cards, texts, Facebook messages and responses about Sophie's passing, which is amazing. It has really helped. Thank you. Much love and gratitude,
Fr. John

The Crafty Ladies had made Sophie a 'whole wardrobe of bandanas in the seasonal colours and these were used to decorate Fr John's tree dedicated to her at the Festival of Christmas Trees and a touching card made by 8 year old Theo Widdowson expressed what everyone else was feeling.



In summer 100 **hand held crosses** were blessed and given out on Holy Cross Day in September. They were the initiative of Dee our Churchwarden. By October a further 100 had been ordered and were blessed at the morning service with healing on 29th November. People found them a comfort to keep to hand and several people wanted another, having passed their own on to other people.

They came from 'Plastic Factory Street' in Palestine, an area affected by the war. The second order was supplied from someone different as Dee was not sure what had happened to the original supplier with the war going on. Due to the way in which they have been received, yet more were ordered and Dee was sent a lovely message from the original supplier after she told him we had been praying for him.



Ecumenical Relationships

The group 'Churches in Uckfield' is currently in abeyance although members got together to organise and participate in the Good Friday Walk of witness from Cornerstone Church to Hartfields where a short service took place.

PROPERTY

The Belmont Centre

A very short walk from the church is The Belmont Centre which the church owns. The P.C.C. is responsible for this building overseen by the Churchwardens, and the Major Works Project Manager who report back to the P.C.C. The building houses the Parish Office and has a hall and small meeting room and also a good well stocked kitchen and toilets, including a disabled toilet with a nappy changing mat. An additional part of The Belmont Centre is on permanent loan to a Pre-school Group.

This wonderful facility is used for both church fundraising and social events and while the maintenance and development of The Belmont Centre is planned to support the needs of the church it is also an asset for use by the wider community and brings in an income for the church. Bookings this year went very well with regular bookings on most days of the week as well as parties, wakes and baptism celebrations.

St Saviours

St Saviours is in the south of the town: it was formerly a chapel and now comprises 16 flatlets and a worship area with seating which also doubles up as a community space for events. It is now managed by Uckfield & District Housing Association Ltd. Ray Pilson continues to be Deputy Churchwarden. Compline takes place there on the 1st, 3rd and 5th Tuesdays as detailed earlier. More details about St Saviours can be found in the Report containing activities of the church family.

Curate's House

The parish part owned a property, 7 Parkview Road, which was bought as a home for a curate in training in 1989. When we no longer had a curate the Church Commissioners allowed us to rent the house out for a limited period then repay what we owed or sell it. It is no longer necessary for a parish to provide a house for a training post and therefore the P.C.C. sold it in late 2020. The net proceeds of £183,086 were allocated as a restricted fund for the P.C.C. to decide how best to invest the proceeds for the church. The P.C.C. held a special meeting in August to discuss this, and, after further investigation the decision was made in November to invest the fund in a 95 day notice Liquidity Reserve account to take advantage of a higher interest rate. The proceeds of the investment will be used for general P.C.C. expenditure.

VOLUNTEERS

We would like to thank the many people who volunteer in any way to make Holy Cross Church so vibrant and at the heart of the community. The life of the church would not be so effective without the many volunteers who take on so many roles, both large and small, all making the effectiveness and smooth running of church services and events possible. There is a separate report on Church activities that covers the work of some of these groups and individual volunteers in more detail. There are also others who maintain the buildings, people who help with refreshments on a Sunday and catering on other occasions including at fundraising events, not forgetting those who do other valuable voluntary work behind the scenes. We are privileged to have such a dedicated hard working team supporting Church life.

VOLUNTEER



Would you like to get more involved in Holy Cross Church?

We love our volunteers and the following are currently required:

- Lectors (reading a set Bible passage in the service)
- Bell ringers (ringing the bells on Sundays and special occasions)
- Intercessors (writing the prayers and reading them at the morning service)
- Choir members (singing at Sunday services and special events)
- Coffee makers (making coffee on a rota basis after the morning service)

Training will be given. For more information please get in touch with the relevant person:

Lectors:	Dee: 07969 335417
Intercessors:	Julie: 01825 764843
Bell ringers:	Chris: 01825 765091
Choir members:	Tim: 07827 633258
Coffee makers:	Karen: 01825 764100

August 2025

We continue to extend the opportunities for the exercise of ministry and gifts within the life of the community. Although quite a lot of the church family are already involved in the many roles within the church an appeal was put out in August for specific roles. This was to support many of the key activities of our church while other initiatives like the Very Chatty Café have seen other people get involved while the Festival of Christmas Trees relies on many volunteers from the town to help make this annual spectacle both possible and safe.

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

The appointment of Parochial Church Council members is governed by and set out in the Church Representation Rules. It is made up of the following people:

Ex Officio members:

- The Revd John Wall (Rector and Chair)
- Sheila Fordham (Reader)
- Dee Johnson (Churchwarden and Vice Chair)
- John Pontefract (Churchwarden)

Elected members

- Dee Johnson (representative on Deanery Synod)
- Jill Thornton (representative on Deanery Synod)
- Sandie Boniface (representative on Deanery Synod)
- Francis Wallace ((representative on Deanery Synod)
- Paul Cuerden
- Jacqueline Davies
- Terry Hall
- Paul Ireland (Treasurer)
- Ann Kennedy
- Beth Morris-Boag
- Angela Noel
- Edna Osborne
- Ray Pilson
- Anthony Simpson
- Sarah Widdowson
- Gillian Youngman (Secretary)

Sister Sarah had also been a P.C.C. member, resigning in January and was replaced by Ray Pilson at the A.P.C.M. The P.C.C. members are responsible for making decisions on all matters pertaining to the parish including how funds are to be spent. Elected members serve a three year term. All those who attend our services are encouraged to apply to be on the Electoral Roll and if appropriate, to stand for election to the P.C.C.. The number of people on the Electoral Roll as of 20th April 2024 was 189 which is a decrease of 2 from last year. There are 18 (just under 10%) people who are not resident in the parish (which is the same number as last year).

New P.C.C. members receive information and training as to how the P.C.C. operates.

The full Parochial Church Council held six meetings during the year at St Saviours (one of these was to approve the accounts and another solely to discuss how to invest the money from 7 Park View Road). The average attendance of P.C.C. members at these meetings was 15 (79%). In addition, Karen Smith and Rhian Cottrell (**Safeguarding Officers**) came to part of the January and September meeting: at the latter they spoke about a new process of recruiting volunteers. They also send a report for each P.C.C. meeting. The Holy Cross Parochial Church Council has complied with the duty under section 5 of the Safeguarding and Clergy Discipline Measure 2016, fully recognising its duty to have due regard to House of Bishops' guidance on safeguarding children and vulnerable adults. We continue to work within the guidelines in the most recently published Parish Safeguarding Handbook (approved by the House of Bishops).

At each P.C.C. meeting the Rector and Churchwardens guide the P.C.C. through work and decisions required on what is needed in order to carry out our ongoing aims and objectives. Standing items on each agenda include Safeguarding, Health and Safety, Finance and Deanery Synod feedback as well as reports on Children's work, Events, Very Chatty Cafe etc. Most reports are circulated in advance allowing questions and discussion at the meeting and if a decision is needed a motion is proposed, seconded and a vote taken and minuted. When an urgent matter has cropped up between P.C.C. meetings and a decision is needed, the P.C.C. Secretary conducts an email/phone vote which is recorded at the next meeting, for example the final decision of how to invest the money from 7 Park View Road.

Paul Kennedy (**Major Works Project Manager for Holy Cross Church**) also sends a written report to each P.C.C. meeting and in between liaises closely with John Pontefract (Health and Safety Officer), the P.C.C. and Standing Committee on projects and issues as appropriate.

The **P.C.C. Standing Committee** comprises the Rector, Dee Johnson and John Pontefract (Churchwardens), Paul Ireland (P.C.C. Treasurer), Gillian Youngman (P.C.C. Secretary), Angela Noel (P.C.C. representative) and Lynne Ireland (Parish Administrator). The purpose of the Standing Committee is to conduct P.C.C. business in between meetings or in an emergency, including addressing day to day matters and ensuring the smooth running of the church and the Belmont Centre. They met (via Zoom) six times during the year.

Deanery Synod

The Deanery Synod considers matters concerning the Church of England, brings together the views of member parishes on common problems, fosters a sense of community and interdependence among those parishes, and generally to promote in the deanery the whole mission of the church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical. The Deanery Synod elects clergy and laity Diocesan Synod representatives and has an allocated General Synod representative. Holy Cross Church currently has four representatives on the Uckfield Deanery Synod (which met 3 times in 2023) who report back to the P.C.C. via a written report from Francis Wallace who is Secretary of the Deanery Synod and a P.C.C. member. A more detailed report of 2023 can be seen in the separate report containing Activities of the Church Family.

HOLY CROSS SCHOOL

It was with great sadness that the proposed closure of **Holy Cross School** was announced early in the year. The School started life as Uckfield Parochial School next to the church before moving to a new building in the 1960's. The church took over the old school building which became the Church Centre and in 2009 (following a major redevelopment), The Belmont Centre.



Nusrat Ghani (Member of Parliament for Wealden) made this statement on the School in March:

STATEMENT ON HOLY CROSS CoE PRIMARY SCHOOL, UCKFIELD

"I was disappointed to learn that the Interim Executive Board of Holy Cross Church of England Primary School has come to the decision to write to the Secretary of State with a request for closure.

It is regrettable that Uckfield parents have made the choice not to select Holy Cross CoE Primary School as the preferred place of education for their children and as a result of the lack of demand and declining numbers of pupils over the years, the school no longer has a viable future. It is always sad to see a local school close, especially one with such a long and rich history and strong local presence.

I understand that the Secretary of State will respond to the Interim Executive Board on next steps, and this will be shared with the school community as soon as possible. East Sussex County Council will fully support parents with securing a place at an alternative school ahead of the new school year, should the closure of Holy Cross proceed."



The School closed on 31st December. The much loved Church School had in all served the town for 173 years and is a huge loss.

Our verger and P.C.C. member Angela Noel, a former school governor for 20 years, wrote the following about the link between the church and the School:

"There has always been a very happy, caring relationship between Holy Cross Church and Holy Cross School. Each Rector was Chair of Governors for many years and the Parochial Church Council was responsible for appointing some of the Board of Governors who attended the school not only for meetings but also got involved in the life of the school. Other members of the congregation also helped by listening to the children read on a regular basis.

The Rectors or Curates attended weekly assemblies imparting their Christian faith to the children and staff. In the classrooms beautiful individual Crucifix's were displayed, also in the Hall and Entrance together with the school prayer. The children and staff were invited to attend the Church Services, on fourth Sunday of the month for many years, this was later superseded by Open Doors Service, Children's Choir and Messy Church. The school attended church for a service each new term and all Christian Festivals. Parents were always invited to attend services, most liked to sit in the church gallery enabling

them to have a better view of their children who at the beginning of the Service were encouraged to wave to their parents by the Rector – noisy but fun! Each year a Leavers Service was held at the church for the Year 6 children, attended by all the school, during which the Leavers were given a Blessing by the Rector and presented with a Bible.

In the final few months, Holy Cross Church gave each child a little olive wood holding cross to remember us by and a final beautiful service celebrating the children's achievements was held with the remaining eleven children, the staff, parents, governors, and friends of the school all of whom were emotionally touched by the occasion."

2023 Safeguarding Report

It is so lovely to see, hear and enjoy Holy Cross Church's friendly Christian Outreach, to all age groups, both within the church and the wider community.

All this amazing work has developed due to so many dedicated people at Holy Cross who care and work their socks off to enable the plethora of activities to happen across our church Family.

These activities naturally put great responsibility, paperwork and extra time on the shoulders of the Leaders for the safety of:-

PEOPLE; PRACTICE; ACTIVITIES; STRUCTURES – SQP REQUIREMENTS

IN ADDITION TO DIOCESAN SAFEGUARDING REQUIREMENTS AND TRAINING.

IMPROVING EFFICIENCY OF SAFEGUARDING OFFICERS!

The role divides roughly into 4 parts-

1. Immediate response to a concern
2. Recruiting process
3. DBS processing
4. SQP (Simple Quality Protects) and training

We have divided the role to be the named person for some areas but joint for others. However, liaison between us is still paramount.

So, we will both be available for –

1. Immediate response to a concern
2. Help and advice for the recruiting process

Rhian will be the named person for SQP & Training maintenance.

Karen will be the named person for DBS Processing and Induction.

Obviously, if the named person is unavailable help will be provided by their colleague.

RECRUITMENT – The recruitment process for volunteers has been aligned by the diocese to the practice already in place for paid workers. We are trialing a simplified version, which we hope will be less daunting to volunteers (who may never have been through such a process before), but which ticks all the Diocesan boxes. It still remains a more thorough process.

DBS – The Update Service is proving its worth as fewer people need to go through the renewal of their DBS clearance every 3 years. The numbers will continue to decrease as those completing the previous 5 year renewal schedule come to an end.

SQP – SIMPLE QUALITY PROTECTS - This year has seen Holy Cross, in addition to services, continue to run outreach ministries and social activities in the church or on church premises. All these continue to require Risk Assessments for the

environment in use and the recommended safety measures and, where appropriate, DBS clearance, induction and training. As ever, this means form filling for every activity - these are important as they record what we have done to ensure everyone's safety and show that we are maintaining the level of safeguarding that gained us the Level 1 certificate in 2020 (on the Noticeboard in church). Their continuing observance of current requirements will make it so much easier when we have to work towards Level 2 in the near future.

So, our heartfelt thanks to those leading activities who have continued to "do the paperwork" as well as ensuring the safety of the activity.

The paperwork can now be stored in the cloud (see Lynne Ireland) where it can be easily accessed by those who need to check the information and making it easier for most to complete forms. Those unable to use the cloud may still provide us with paper forms.

We have a duty of care to ensure that all aspects of safeguarding are adhered to, so we know that sometimes your heart may fall if you see us with bits of paper!!

Karen Smith & Rhian Cottrell

Safeguarding Officers/Lead Recruiters

Email: safeguardingholycrossuckfield@gmail.com

Fabric and Maintenance Report 2023

Introduction

It has been agreed by the P.C.C. that all further projects cannot be started until a meeting has been held to prioritise the projects to enable the church to not overcommit finances but this is also balanced against possible deterioration of church fabric. This Projects Priority Meeting has, at the date of this report, yet to take place.

Completed Work

- Refurbished Windows for Spire Room.
- Church Lightning Conductor Testing in September 2023.
- Damp at the North East end of the church caused by blocked gutters was fixed. This had been exacerbated by the trees mentioned in the next item.
- Tree Trimming by Uckfield Town Council at the East end of the church in October in line with request by architect.

Ongoing Maintenance

- Regular annual maintenance of the church and Belmont Centre heating systems is done by Hedley Visick.
- Ongoing problem of overpressure of the main water feed to the church boiler. A water pressure regulator has been fitted but doesn't appear to work. We have temporarily shut off the mains water supply to the boiler and just manually let in water when the inlet pressure drops. A regular Sunday check.
- Gallery Floor Woodworm.

Church & Belmont Centre Projects from Autumn 2023

- Projects Priority Meeting due to meet to decide the priority of various projects and how we can make best use of our funds set against the needs. Date not set for this yet.
- Cardale Hall & Foyer Lighting System Replacement. This is getting imminent as more light units are failing.
- Church Painting & Clean Up. Stairwells are particularly a problem. Jamie Wallace (Stonemason) has been asked to give a talk to the P.C.C. regarding suitable protective coatings for the stonework. Not yet scheduled.
- Boiler Hive Controller Quote £295 + VAT. *Now out of date as 2 years old! This will need a re-quote.*
- South Entrance Ramp including Door opener. Planning permission granted for this. Faculty not applied for yet. Action:- awaiting Projects Priority Meeting decision.
- Choir Vestry Window £10k approx. The problem with the Choir Vestry window is that no one makes them anymore and there have been seven attempts to get quotes only one of which has been successful. Action:- Awaiting Projects Priority Meeting decision.
- Upgrade to Lightning surge protection circuitry has been recommended by our incumbent engineers. Quotes and planning in progress.
- Church South Boundary Lights. Not done yet. Quotes have been requested.
- Live Streaming Services Equipment. Permanent locations for cameras awaiting electrical works.

- Organ Renovation (long term project):-
 1. Pedal Coupler Renovation - £1,000
 2. Cleaning & overhaul - £20,000
 3. Electrification – either/or
 - a. Partial Electrification £16,000
 - b. Complete Electrification £26,500
 4. Tonal Alterations – Some nice to do's but some may be done – Up to £22,200
 5. Costs Depending On What is done:-
 - a. Maximum £69,700.
 - b. Doing some upgrades:- 1, 2, 3b = £47,500
 - c. Minimum Work:- 1,2 & 3a= £37,000
- Junior Church Requirements.

John Pontefract, Churchwarden and Health & Safety Officer

Financial Review

As the Trustees report details, 2023 has been a great year for the church family and its outreach into the local community. On the financial side we are still seeing the impact of the cost of living changes and also the increase in cost of key items such as energy. This has resulted in a deficit situation for 2023. Of the £10,389 deficit, £6,306 was due to the need to refurbish windows in the Spire Pre-school area. The remainder of the deficit was a result of income falling slightly short of expenditure.

The church and wider community have done a fantastic job once again in organising and supporting our various events and fund raising initiatives which has ensured the deficit is kept to a minimum.

Incoming and outgoing resources

Total receipts on general unrestricted funds, which are detailed in the Financial Statements, were £139,860. This is £4,950 decrease from 2022, partly accounted for by a drop in regular giving, which is compounded as the amount of Gift Aid Tax reclaimable is less, and just over £1,000 less in fees for the P.C.C. from life services.

Our biggest source of income, the regular giving from the church congregation, continues to decline. The 2023 total (via bank deposits, weekly envelopes and cash collections) was £59,893, down from £61,148 in 2022 and £67,165 in 2019 (pre-Covid). Over 2023 there was a net loss of 6 regular givers and this trend is likely to continue year on year. Towards the end of 2023 a pledge scheme was launched to reverse this trend. Initial indications by the end of 2023 were positive with a large number of givers pledging increases for 2024.

Thanks to the efforts of our fund raising teams and their supporters, organising the Festival of Christmas Trees, the Christmas Fair, Jumble Sales, Spring Festival and many other smaller events throughout the year, a fantastic £20,284 of profit was generated in 2023. A wonderful reflection of their hard work and also the support that Holy Cross Church has within the congregation and the local community.

Receipts from hiring fees for the Belmont Centre were £25,102 which is very similar to 2022 showing we have a sustainable group of regular hirers. Expenditure for the Belmont Centre during 2023 was £12,354 giving a surplus of £12,748 but with £6,306 being spent for the repair/refurbishment of windows in the Spire pre-school area the net surplus for church funds was £6,442.

Sharing the ministry costs of the Diocese of Chichester

The largest expenditure of the P.C.C. was the sum of £70,000 paid to the Diocese to cover ministry costs. The parish contribution in 2023 was used towards the stipend, pension and

housing costs of the clergy, and a standard sum for diocesan costs, clergy training and a contribution to national church funds. For 2023 we agreed an increase of nearly 4%, which is above the parish budget recommended increase of 3.5%, as we continue to work towards contributing 100% of ministry costs.

Staff costs

Since April 2016 a part-time Parish Administrator has been employed to run the Parish Office. From 2020 the Director of Music and Assistant Director of Music payments are recorded as salary having previously been recorded as upkeep of services. This is following guidance that these roles do not have the autonomy required to be classed as self-employed. During 2023, the three positions did not meet the HMRC thresholds for tax purposes or for the pension auto-enrolment scheme. From 1 Jan 2023 a 3.5% salary increase was applied to the Director of Music and the Administrator and a slight adjustment made to change the Assistant Director of Music to Organist Emeritus, making the staff costs for 2023 £17,108, just £147 more than 2022.

Missionary and Charitable giving

For 2023 the Giving sub-committee recommended the following £2,300 of missionary and charitable giving which was agreed by the P.C.C.

Overseas

- | | |
|--------------------------|-------|
| • Water Aid | £ 350 |
| • Kids 4 Kids | £ 350 |
| • Tear Fund | £ 300 |
| • Medecins san Frontiers | £ 350 |

Home

- | | |
|----------------------------------|-------|
| • Uckfield Community Fridge | £ 200 |
| • Sussex Church Bell Restoration | £ 25 |
| • Uckfield Foodbank | £ 500 |
| • St Wilfrids Hospice | £ 225 |

In addition, further giving and donations were made during the year totalling a further £3,243 to give a total missionary and charitable giving for 2023 of £5,543.

Fixed Assets

The Belmont Centre remains at the previous valuation of £1,370,000.

Reserves Policy

During 2023 the minimum balance on the general unrestricted funds (excluding property) equated to approximately 6 months of unrestricted payments. The financial situation and unrestricted reserves held at the end of 2023 have been reviewed and, with the 2024 budget

approved by the P.C.C., show that the Uckfield Parochial Church Council is expected to continue as a going concern for the 2024 financial year.

It is P.C.C. policy to retain any funds not required for day to day transactions on deposit at the bank. During 2023 a 95 day notice account was opened to take advantage of higher interest rates to hold around 90% of the funds on deposit.

Funds held as custodian trustees on behalf of others

The P.C.C. acts as a custodian trustee for the assets of the Edward Holmes Baldock Charity which was established in 1845 for the benefit of poor persons in the parish. Its sole asset is 36.38 income units invested in the COIF Charities Investment Fund.

As at 31 August 2023, its latest valuation date, the value of the investment fell slightly on the 2022 value to £686.49. The income in its financial year was £19.82 which is topped up by the P.C.C. and distributed to suitable recipients. The charity is administered by the P.C.C. with the Churchwardens acting as trustees of the charity and is segregated from the assets of the P.C.C.. In 2023 no donations were made with the funds being held over for 2024.

During 2023 the P.C.C. agreed to hold the funds for the Churches in Uckfield group. At the end of 2023 the funds held total £429.

Statement of Financial Activities

The financial effect of our activities during the year can be summarised as follows

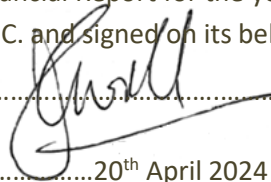
	Unrestricted Fund	Restricted Fund/s	Endowed Fund/s	Total Funds 2023	Total Funds 2022	Notes
	£	£	£	£	£	
Income and endowments from:						
Donations and legacies	102,746	5,853	-	108,599	103,673	
Charitable activities	5,750	-	-	5,750	9,957	
Other trading activities	30,248	-	-	30,248	41,339	
Investments	827	2,353	-	3,180	568	
Other receipts	290	-	-	290	1,020	
Total income	139,861	8,206	-	148,067	156,557	2
Expenditure on:						
Raising funds	5,903	-	-	5,903	4,583	
Charitable activities	128,151	1,998	-	130,149	132,071	
Other trading activities	19,060	-	-	19,060	16,294	
Other expenditure	-	3,344	-	3,344	-	
Total expenditure	153,114	5,342	-	158,456	152,948	3
Net gains (or losses) on investments	-	-	-	-	-	
Net income or (net expenditure)	(13,253)	2,864	-	(10,389)	3,609	
Transfers between funds	-	-	-	-	-	10
	(13,253)	2,864	-	(10,389)	3,609	
Other recognised gains/(losses):						
Gains/(losses) on revaluation of fixed assets	-	-	-	-	-	11
Other gains/(losses)	-	-	-	-	-	
<i>Reconciliation of funds:</i>						
Net movement in funds	(13,253)	2,864	-	(10,389)	3,609	
Total funds brought forward	1,441,130	203,141	-	1,644,271	1,640,663	
Total funds carried forward	1,427,877	206,005	-	1,633,882	1,644,272	

Balance Sheet

Our financial position and summary of funds at the year end were

	Total Funds 2023	Total Funds 2022	Notes
	£	£	
Intangible assets	-	-	
Tangible assets	1,370,000	1,370,000	12
Heritage assets	-	-	
Endowed investments	-	-	11
Total fixed assets	1,370,000	1,370,000	
Stocks	-	-	
Debtors	3,850	5,062	14
Investments	-	-	
Cash at bank and in hand	266,611	274,163	
Total current assets	270,461	279,225	
Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year	(6,579)	(4,953)	15
Correction for Unrealised Debtors in 2020	-	-	
Net current assets or (liabilities)	263,882	274,272	
Total assets less current liabilities	1,633,882	1,644,272	
Creditors: Amounts falling due after more than one year	-	-	16
Provisions for liabilities	-	-	
Total net assets or (liabilities)	1,633,882	1,644,272	
The funds of the charity:			
Restricted income funds	206,005	203,142	
Unrestricted funds	1,427,877	1,441,130	
Revaluation reserve	-	-	
Total unrestricted funds	1,427,877	1,441,130	
Total charity funds	1,633,882	1,644,272	18

This Financial Report for the year ended 31st December 2023, including the notes following, was approved by the P.C.C. and signed on its behalf by The Revd. John Wall, P.C.C. Chairman:

.....

 Date 20th April 2024

Notes to the Financial Report

1 Accounting policies

Basis of preparation

The P.C.C. is a public benefit entity within the meaning of FRS102. The financial statements have been prepared under the Charities Act 2011 and the Church Accounting Regulations 2006, in accordance with applicable accounting standards and the current Statement of Recommended Practice, Accounting and Reporting by Charities, (SORP (FRS 102)).

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention as modified by the inclusion of investments at market value and the revaluation of fixed assets. The financial statements include all transactions, assets and liabilities for which the P.C.C. is responsible in law. They do not include the accounts of church groups that owe their affiliation to another body, nor those which are informal gatherings of church members

Funds accounting

Funds held by the P.C.C. are:

Unrestricted funds - general funds which can be used for P.C.C. ordinary purposes

Restricted funds - a) income from trusts or endowments which may be expended only on those restricted objects provided in the terms of the trust or bequest; b) donations or grants received for a specific object or invited by the P.C.C. for a specific object. The funds may only be expended on the specific object for which they were given. Any balance remaining unspent at the end of the year is carried forward as a balance on that fund

Income and endowments

All income and endowments, accounted for without deduction for any costs of receivability, are recognised when there is evidence of entitlement, receipt is probable, and the amount can be measured reliably

Donations and legacies

Collections are recognised when received.

Planned giving receivable is recognised when there is evidence of entitlement, receipt is probable, and the amount accords with the Gift Aid declaration or other record of intention to donate

Gift aid recovered is recognised when the income to which it is attached is recognised

Grants and legacies are recognised when the formal offer in writing of the funding, is received by the P.C.C.

Charitable activities

Statutory fees for weddings and funerals are recognised when the office occurs

Other trading activities

Trading activities are where income is receivable in return for selling goods or providing services. Income from trading is recognised either: a - when received, or b - in the case of concerts: for the year in which the event occurs, irrespective of date of receipt. Advance bookings are included in creditors until the concert has taken place

Sales of magazines are recognised when received

Rents from property are recognised in accordance with the rental agreements, when receipt is probable

Investment income

Dividends are accounted for when due and payable. Interest entitlements are accounted for as they accrue

All other income

All other income is recognised in accordance with the above overall policy

Gains and losses on investments

Realised gains are recognised when the investments are sold

Unrealised gains and losses are accounted for on revaluation at 31 December

Expenditure

Expenditure is recognised when there is evidence of entitlement, payment is probable, and the amount can be measured reliably

Grants

Grants and donations are accounted for when paid over, or when awarded where the award creates a binding obligation on the P.C.C.

Church activities

The diocesan parish contribution is accounted for on an annual basis, reflecting the allocation set by our Deanery. Any parish contribution unpaid at 31 December is provided for in these accounts as an operational (though not a legal) liability and is shown as a creditor in the balance sheet

Fixed assets

Tangible fixed assets

Consecrated and beneficed property of any kind is excluded from the accounts by s.10(2) of the Charities Act 2011.

Movable church furnishing held by the Vicar and Churchwardens on special trust for the P.C.C. and which require a faculty for disposal, are accounted as inalienable property unless consecrated. They are listed in the church's inventory which can be inspected but are not included in the financial statements

All expenditure on consecrated or beneficed buildings and individual items costing under £1,000 are written off in the year they were incurred

Depreciation

Depreciation is calculated to write down the cost of tangible fixed assets, excluding freehold properties, over their expected useful lives. The rates generally applicable are:

Fixtures and fittings	20%
Audio visual	33%
Office equipment	25%

No depreciation is provided on freehold buildings as the useful economic life of these assets exceeds 50 years and residual values so high that potential depreciation would be immaterial. It is the P.C.C.'s policy to maintain these assets in a continual state of sound repair. Resulting from regular impairment reviews, provision will be made if there has been any permanent diminution in value

Investments

Investments are stated at market value at the balance sheet date

Current Assets

Amounts owing to the P.C.C. at 31 December in respect of fees, rents or other income are shown as debtors, less provision for amounts that may prove uncollectible

Short-term deposits include cash held on deposit either with the CBF Church of England Funds, or at the bank

2 Analysis of income and endowments

	Unrestricted Fund	Restricted Fund/s	Endowed Fund/s	Total Funds 2023	Total Funds 2022	Notes
	£	£	£	£	£	
Planned giving (via standing order)	45,415	-	-	45,415	48,669	
Planned giving (via weekly envelopes)	719	-	-	719	1,211	
Loose cash collections	13,759	-	-	13,759	11,268	
Christmas Tree Festival	8,016	-	-	8,016	6,218	
Other Fund Raising Activities	13,285	-	-	13,285	9,028	
Other donations	9,914	5,853	-	15,767	13,032	
Gift Aid recoverable	11,638	-	-	11,638	14,247	
Legacies	-	-	-	-	-	
Grants	-	-	-	-	-	
Donations and legacies	£102,746	£5,853	-	£108,599	£103,673	
Fees for weddings & funerals - P.C.C.	2,662	-	-	2,662	3,167	
Fees for weddings & funerals - Clergy	306	-	-	306	1,392	
Fees for weddings & funerals - DBF	2,547	-	-	2,547	3,332	
Fees for weddings & funerals - Other Wedding	235	-	-	235	2,066	
Charitable activities	£5,750	-	-	£5,750	£9,957	
Big Day, Xmas Fair & Festival of Christmas Trees	4,885	-	-	4,885	13,461	
Other fund raising activities	-	-	-	-	739	
Parish magazine	261	-	-	261	1,318	
Belmont Centre hiring fees	25,102	-	-	25,102	25,821	
Other trading activities	£30,248	-	-	£30,248	£41,339	
Bank deposit interest	827	2,353	-	3,180	568	
Rent from letting of investment property	-	-	-	-	-	
Proceeds from Sale of Assets	-	-	-	-	-	
Investments	£827	£2,353	-	£3,180	£568	
Other receipts	290	-	-	290	1,020	
Total income and endowments on all funds	£139,861	£8,206	-	£148,067	£156,557	

3 Analysis of expenditure

	Unrestricted Fund	Restricted Fund/s	Endowed Fund/s	Total Funds 2023	Total Funds 2022	Notes
	£	£	£	£	£	
Uckfield Festival Big Day	-	-	-	-	75	
Festival of Christmas Trees	4,349	-	-	4,349	2,784	
Stewardship costs (printing etc)	-	-	-	-	-	
Other fundraising (non-trading) costs	1,554	-	-	1,554	1,724	
Cost of raising funds	£5,903	-	-	£5,903	£4,583	
Missionary and charitable giving	5,309	234	-	5,543	5,231	4
Ministry: Diocesan Parish Share	70,000	-	-	70,000	67,500	
Ministry: Other Clergy costs	7,417	-	-	7,417	7,051	6
Staff: Admin	17,108	-	-	17,108	16,961	5
Upkeep of services	2,990	1,304	-	4,294	2,888	
Church running costs	17,114	2,040	-	19,154	16,318	
Junior Church and Clubs (e.g. Choir)	-	1,764	-	1,764	1,408	
Church maintenance and repair	327	-	-	327	691	
Piano / Organ maintenance and repair	280	-	-	280	1,235	
Holy Cross School Support	250	-	-	250	1,750	8
Major Works	-	-	-	-	-	
Miscellaneous	2,125	-	-	2,125	3,804	
Bank charges	907	-	-	907	924	
Messy Church/Holiday Club/Outreach	1,260	-	-	1,260	817	
Fees - Paid to Clergy	334	-	-	334	1,458	
Fees - Paid to DBF	2,545	-	-	2,545	3,650	
Fees - Paid for Wedding Extras	185	-	-	185	385	
Cost of charitable activities	£128,151	£5,342	-	£133,493	£132,071	
Uckfield Festival Big Day	-	-	-	-	-	
Festival of Christmas Trees	400	-	-	400	2,803	
Other events	-	-	-	-	-	
Belmont Centre running costs	18,660	-	-	18,660	18,491	
Parish magazine costs	-	-	-	-	-	
Other trading costs	-	-	-	-	(5,000)	
Cost of other trading activities	£19,060	-	-	£19,060	£16,294	
Total expended on all funds	£153,114	£5,342	-	£158,456	£152,948	

4 Missionary and charitable giving

	Unrestricted Fund	Restricted Fund/s	Endowed Fund/s	Total Funds 2023	Total Funds 2022	Notes
	£	£	£	£	£	
Overseas:						
<i>Total</i>	2,306	234	-	2,540	4,119	
Home:						
<i>Total</i>	3,003	-	-	3,003	1,813	
<i>Accrued amount (2021 Reversal)</i>	-	-	-	-	(700)	
	5,309	234	-	5,543	5,231	

5 Staff costs

	Unrestricted Fund	Restricted Fund/s	Endowed Fund/s	Total Funds 2023	Total Funds 2022	Notes
	£	£	£	£	£	
Remuneration						
<i>Wages and salaries</i>	17,108	-	-	17,108	16,961	
	17,108	-	-	17,108	16,961	

6 Payments to P.C.C. members

Trustee payments and expenses

The P.C.C. support the clergy by paying Council Tax of £4,024, water and environmental charges amounting to £919 for the Rectory, plus other costs towards travel, hospitality, telephone, internet and postage totalling £2,473 in 2023.

7 Transactions with persons related to P.C.C. members

Since the appointment of a new Treasurer in June 2019, all payments to the Parish Administrator are connected to the trustees as the Treasurer is married to the Parish Administrator. P.C.C. procedures are in place to ensure at least two others are aware of expenditure, other than regular commitments and pre-agreed works, before payment is made. Financial reporting to the P.C.C. and the P.C.C. Standing Committee contains financial detail to ensure transparency. No other payments have been made to persons related to or connected to the trustees.

8 Transactions with related charities

The Holy Cross Church of England Primary School is supported by the Clergy and financial assistance is provided in agreement with the P.C.C.. The incumbent was an ex-officio member of the Board of Governors for part of 2023.

9 Governance

	Unrestricted <u>Funds</u>	Restricted <u>Fund/s</u>	Endowed <u>Fund/s</u>	Total Funds <u>2023</u>	Total Funds <u>2022</u>	Notes
Accounts production	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	
	-	-	-	-	-	

10 Transfers between funds

	Unrestricted <u>Funds</u>	Restricted <u>Fund/s</u>	Endowed <u>Fund/s</u>	Total Funds <u>2023</u>	Total Funds <u>2022</u>	Notes
	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	
	-	-	-	-	-	
	-	-	-	-	-	

11 Fixed assets

a Investments

	Unrestricted <u>Fund</u>	Restricted <u>Fund/s</u>	Endowed <u>Fund/s</u>	Total Funds <u>2023</u>	Notes
Market value 1 January 2023	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	
Disposals at carrying value	-	-	-	-	
Purchases at cost	-	-	-	-	
Net gains and revaluation	-	-	-	-	
Market value 31 December 2023	-	-	-	-	

12 Fixed assets

Tangible fixed assets

	<u>Freehold land and buildings</u>	<u>Audio visual equipment</u>	<u>Office equipment</u>	<u>Total fixed assets</u>	<i>Notes</i>
	£	£	£	£	
Cost or valuation					
At 1 January 2023	1,370,000	-	-	1,370,000	
Additions	-	-	-	-	
Disposals	-	-	-	-	
Revaluation	-	-	-	-	
At 31 December 2023	1,370,000	-	-	1,370,000	
Charge for impairment					
At 1 January 2023	-	-	-	-	
At 31 December 2023	-	-	-	-	
Net book amounts					
At 31 December 2023	1,370,000	-	-	1,370,000	
At 31 December 2023	1,370,000	-	-	1,370,000	

The freehold land and buildings comprise the Belmont Centre, Belmont Road. The Belmont Centre remains valued at £1,370,000 as at 31 Dec 2023.

13 Net assets by fund

	<u>Unrestricted Funds</u>	<u>Restricted Fund/s</u>	<u>Endowed Fund/s</u>	<u>Total Funds 2023</u>	<u>Total Funds 2022</u>	<i>Notes</i>
	£	£	£	£	£	
Fixed assets for church use	1,370,000	-	-	1,370,000	1,370,00	
Current assets (except cash)	3,850	-	-	3,850	5,062	
Cash at bank and on deposit	60,606	206,005	-	266,611	274,163	
Current liabilities	(6,579)	-	-	(6,579)	(4,953)	
Long term liabilities	-	-	-	-	-	
	£1,427,877	£206,005	£-	£1,633,882	£1,644,272	

14 Debtors

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Fund/s	Endowed Fund/s	Total Funds 2023	<i>Total Funds 2022</i>	<i>Notes</i>
	£	£	£	£	£	
Income tax recoverable	2,518	-	-	2,518	2,576	
Prepayments and accrued income	1,332	-	-	1,332	2,486	
Other debtors	-	-	-	-	-	
	£3,850	-	-	£3,850	£5,062	

15 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Fund/s	Endowed Fund/s	Total Funds 2023	<i>Total Funds 2022</i>	<i>Notes</i>
	£	£	£	£	£	
Deferred income	-	-	-	-	-	
Accruals for utilities and other costs	5,899	-	-	5,899	4,703	
Other creditors	680	-	-	680	250	
	£6,579	-	-	£6,579	£4,953	

16 Creditors: amounts falling due after one year

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Fund/s	Endowed Fund/s	Total Funds 2023	<i>Total Funds 2022</i>	<i>Notes</i>
	£	£	£	£	£	
Deferred income	-	-	-	-	-	
Accruals for utilities and other costs	-	-	-	-	-	
Other creditors	-	-	-	-	-	
	-	-	-	-	-	

17 Statement of funds

Restricted Funds - The purpose of the restricted funds are as follows:

- **Organ Repair Fund** – holds funds for repairing and maintaining the Church Organ.
- **Sunday Refreshment Fund** – holds the proceeds of contributions given at coffee after the 9.30am service and is used for charitable donations to good causes.
- **Screen and AV Fund** – established in 2018 to raise funds for the installation of a permanent display screen and in 2019 the scope was extended to include the sound system.
- **Youth Club Fund** – holds funds for the Youth Club which has been reintroduced during 2023.
- **Ukraine Donations Fund** – established in 2022 to allow donations to support Ukrainian conflict victims.
- **Action Aid Fund** – established in 2018 to support, by monthly donation, the education of a child in Guatemala.
- **Window Appeal Fund** – established in 2019 to raise funds to repair and maintain the church windows.
- **Children's Work** – established during 2021 due to the fund raising and donations specifically supporting the children's activities and groups in Church.
- **Clergy Housing** – established in 2020 from the proceeds of the sale of the Curates house at 7 Parkview Road, Uckfield.
- **Flower Fund** – established in 2021 to maintain the funds relating to floral tributes in Church.
- **Children's Society** – used in 2021 to restrict funds from collections not dispersed by the close of the year.
- **In Memory of D Youngman** – established in 2022 from a donation in memory of the Late Mr D Youngman.

Unrestricted funds are not subject to any donor restrictions and can be spent as the P.C.C. decides.

18 Summary of all funds

Fund income and expenditure and final balances are as follows:

	Balances b/fwd 1 Jan 2023	Income	Expenditure	Transfers, other gains and losses	Balances c/fwd 31 Dec 2023
	£	£	£	£	£
Organ Repairs	4,447	785	-	56	5,288
Sunday Refreshments	1,352	777	-	20	2,149
AV and Screen Fund	4,350	-	2,040	38	2,348
Youth Club	342	-	-	4	346
Ukraine Donations	10	-	-	1	11
Action Aid (Guatemala Child)	-	234	234	-	-
Window Appeal Fund	1,513	5	-	18	1,536
Children's Work	3,039	2,626	1,764	40	3,941
7 Park View Road Proceeds	183,490	-	-	2,123	185,613
Flower Fund	576	1,426	1,304	7	705
Children's Society	14	-	-	-	14
In Mem. D Youngman	4,008	-	-	46	4,054
Total of all restricted funds	203,141	5,853	(5,342)	2,353	206,005
Revaluation of fixed assets	-	-	-	-	-
General fund	1,441,130	139,861	(153,114)	-	1,427,877
Total of all unrestricted funds	1,441,130	139,861	(153,114)	-	1,427,877
Total funds	£1,644,271	£145,714	(£158,456)	£2,353	£1,633,882

Independent Examiner's Report

to the P.C.C. of The Church of the Holy Cross, Uckfield

for the Year Ended 31st December, 2023

This is my report to the Parochial Church Council of the Ecclesiastical Parish (P.C.C.) of the Church of the Holy Cross, Uckfield, on the annual report for the year ended 31st December 2023 set out within this document.

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

The P.C.C. members are responsible for the preparation of the annual reports. The P.C.C. members 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. to 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. to 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 (other than that disclosed below in Section B *)

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 accounting 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.

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

Examiner's signature



Examiner's name CAPITALS

BRIAN DAVID JACOBS

Date

23 April 2024

Relevant professional qualification(s) or body

Institute of Chartered Accountants in England & Wales

if any

Examiner's address

12 Silverdale
Keymer
Hassocks, BN6 8RD

Only complete if the examiner needs to highlight material problems *for example:*

- accounting records have not been kept in accordance with s132 of the Charities' Act 2011 and those accounts do not comply with the requirements of the 2008 Regulations setting out the form and content of charity accounts;
- any material expenditure or action which appears not to be in accordance with the trusts of the charity;
- any failure to be provided with information and explanations by any past or present trustee, officer or employee; and
- any material inconsistency between the accounts and the trustees' annual report.

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

None

Accounts

Trustees Annual Report and Financial Report of The Parochial Church Council of the Ecclesiastical Parish of The Church of the Holy Cross, Uckfield

The Church of the Holy Cross, Church St/Belmont Rd, Uckfield, East Sussex TN22 1BP
Registered Charity no. 1137746

For the year ended 31 December 2022

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Administrative information

Incumbent: The Revd John Wall, The Rectory, 1 Sand Ridge, Ridgewood, Uckfield TN22 5ET

Independent examiner: Mr B Jacobs, 12 Silverdale, Keymer BN6 8RD (appointed 2022)

Bankers: National Westminster Bank, 49 High Street, Uckfield TN22 1AN

Parish Office: holycrossuckfield@gmail.com

Website: Churchoftheholycrossuckfield.co.uk

Advisers to the P.C.C.

Mrs AD Johnson – Churchwarden

Mr J Pontefract – Churchwarden and Health & Safety Officer

Mr P Ireland – P.C.C. Treasurer

Mrs G Youngman – P.C.C. Secretary

Mrs L Ireland – Parish Administrator

Mr P Kennedy – Major Works Project Manager

Thank you to the following people for permission to use their photos:

Sarah Widdowson, Rhian Cottrell, Bridge Cottage archives, Lisa Williamson (Diocesan Communications and Engagement Office) and Gillian Youngman.

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The Trustees Annual Report

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

Introduction

2022 was a far more positive year with many things returning to how they were before COVID-19 (albeit with caution) which was good news for both Holy Cross Church and the wider community. Fr John summed 2022 up by saying that we had been treading water to get back to where we were.

- 19th January - The government no longer asked people to work from home (though a lot continued to do so)
- 27th January - "Plan B" rules were scrapped meaning face masks were no longer mandatory in indoor venues i.e. shops, theatres, public transport and classrooms although face coverings were still to be worn in health and care settings,
- 28th January - A church cleaning session was held where the tapes marking off alternate pews in the side aisles were removed.
- 20th February - Revised Covid measures implemented at Holy Cross: "Covid is still widespread in our area and we continue to try to keep our congregation safe! We respectfully request, please, that everyone attending continues to wear a mask (including children aged 11+). We still encourage everyone to take a Lateral Flow Test (LFT) before coming to the church, but it is optional and an individual choice: no-one will be asked if they have taken one! Hand sanitiser will be available at the entrance and inside church. Thank you! Fr John"
(Source: The Grapevine)
- March - Around 1 in 35 had Covid as of 1st March (2.88% of people) and later that month 1 in 16 (6.37%) (Source: Imperial College London)
- 3rd April - Covid tests no longer requested by the congregation as lateral flow tests were no longer free after 31st March.
- 26th April - 7 in 10 people have had Covid since the pandemic began (source: Daily Mail)
- 5th June - The P.C.C. agreed to lift some restrictions; the following changes (with the emphasis on personal preference) were introduced:
- Masks - you may wear a mask OR not wear one as you choose; however, we still recommend that you use hand sanitiser and if you feel unwell we request that you do not come to church.
 - You may shake hands to share the Peace, should you wish, but if you do not wish to share the peace physically, please ensure you keep your arms across your chest.
 - Communion will still be administered to you standing but will be available in one kind OR two i.e. you can take wine as well if you so wish. You are kindly requested though, for health and safety reasons, not to dip your wafer into the wine.
 - We are reintroducing the elements being carried up to the altar and the collection plate being passed round. (Source: The Grapevine)

By the end of the year, the only things that had not been reinstated in worship were using the rail and kneeler for communion and a monthly Healing Service being incorporated into the Sunday morning service.

In the autumn, invitations were issued for people to have a 4th Covid vaccination and although there were still cases of people testing positive for Covid, the majority were mild cases with cold like symptoms, if any, and masks were still compulsory in health environments. During the year the media stopped publishing statistics about how many people had Covid or had died from it.

It was a year of national highs and lows. As Covid restrictions were relaxed in the first half of the year, a feeling of normality started to come back and the first weekend in June saw many events able to take place celebrating the Platinum Jubilee of Queen Elizabeth II. Sadly however, the year was overshadowed by two major events which had an effect locally, nationally and worldwide:

- 24th February - the invasion of Ukraine by Russia (the war still continues into 2023)
It was reported in early December that up to 13,000 Ukrainian soldiers had been killed in battle (source: BBC) and up till 22nd December 6,826 civilians were killed and 10,769 injured (source: United Nations) Also 180,000 Russian troops killed or injured (source: Daily Mail 1 February 2023)
- 8th September - the death of Queen Elizabeth II
The Queen had reigned for 70 years 7 months 1 day, making her the longest-reigning British monarch in history

There were also two deaths in Uckfield of people who had given so much to the town in their many roles and are greatly missed by Holy Cross Church: Mike Skinner who had supported and publicised special Church services and events through his involvement in local radio and John Carvey, a local councillor and former town mayor, who was the Independent Examiner for our church accounts, a job which he loved doing.

As a result of the war and possibly partly Brexit, the UK (and indeed the world) suffered a severe cost of living crisis with huge hikes especially in energy prices "General food and drink inflation is continuing to soar. Official figures... showed prices increased by 16.8% in the year to December... marking the highest level since September 1977" (source: Yahoo). The NHS, already under pressure before the pandemic, saw the waiting list for hospital treatment rise to a record 7 million in September 2022 with more people going to A&E, ambulance response rates rose and A&E hospital waiting times reached a record high (source: House of Commons Library).

Towards the end of the year there was unrest among many, leading to strikes for more pay; including Royal Mail workers, train staff and nurses (nearly 2.5million working days were lost to strike action in the second half of last year; source: Daily Mail). Meanwhile, the Office of National Statistics said "The real value of pay has fallen over the year by 2.5%, one of the largest drops since records began in 2001, as pay increases fail to keep pace with inflation". Cost of living support packages were put in place by the Government including every household in the UK receiving a £400 discount on energy bills in six monthly instalments from October.

The war, along with the death of a worldwide treasure who was Head of the Church of England and the cost of living crisis, put Holy Cross Church even more at the heart of the community of Uckfield.

OUR AIMS AND PURPOSES AS A CHARITY

'The Parochial Church Council of the Ecclesiastical Parish of the Church of the Holy Cross, Uckfield' is a Charity registered with the Charity Commission in England and Wales as charity number 1137746. It is commonly known by its working name of 'Holy Cross Church, Uckfield'.

Holy Cross Church is set just off the High Street in Uckfield and comes under the Diocese of Chichester. It is part of a Plurality with St Michael and All Angels at Little Horsted and St Margaret of Antioch at Isfield, overseen by the Rector, Revd John Wall (Father John). The Parochial Church Council (P.C.C.) is a corporate body established by the Church of England and operates under the Parochial Church Council (Powers) Measure 1956, Church Representation Rules 2006 which states that its principal function is "promoting in the parish the whole mission of the Church".

The P.C.C. has the responsibility of co-operating with the incumbent in:

- The promotion of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ according to the doctrines and practices of the Church of England.
- Promoting in the parish the whole mission of the church: pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical.
- Getting to know Jesus better and make Him better known.
- Practical support and care for people in the parish, from the youngest to the eldest, irrespective of level of need or ability to pay.
- Providing financial support to those in need and to other organisations with similar objectives.
- Demonstrating that our aims are for the public benefit, including charities advancing education or religion or relieving poverty.
- Following the Chichester Diocese Strategy 2020-2025 'Vision for Growth' (More Open; More Converted to Jesus Christ; More Generous; More Engaged).

OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

When planning our activities for the year the P.C.C. and clergy have considered the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit and, in particular, the specific guidance on 'charities for the advancement of religion'.

We enable as many people as possible to worship at our church:

- Enabling as many people as possible to become part of our parish community.
- Teaching, baptising and nurturing new and existing believers.

We offer services of worship to God:

- Maintaining an overview of worship throughout the parish.
- Considering how services can involve the many groups that live within the parish.
- Putting faith into practice, through prayer and scripture, music and sacrament.
- Providing services and opportunities to worship (other than the regular Sunday services) which reach out to the wider community.

We promote the Gospel and pray that the unchurched may find life in Jesus Christ:

- Assisting people from all walks of life to develop their knowledge of, and trust in, Jesus.
- A range of courses to deepen spirituality both as a community and as individuals.

- Offering worship and prayer, learning about the Gospel, in small group situations.

We engage in evangelism and outreach to the parish in various ways:

- Reaching out to the unchurched through a new Spring Festival, a stall at the 'Big Day' fete, a Fairtrade Feast, a Christmas Bazaar, a Festival of Christmas Trees, a Crib Service, Messy Church sessions and a Holiday Club. We have also formed a Chatty Café in response to the national Warm Spaces campaign.
- Community Leaders' Lunches.
- Chaplaincy of Uckfield Bonfire & Carnival Society and the Uckfield Rugby Club.
- Outreach to local schools through assemblies, talks and worship.

We provide a building for people to enjoy:

- Maintaining the fabric of the church building as a historic centre and focus of life in the town: developing its flexibility and wider use; also maintaining the fabric of The Belmont Centre (Church hall).
- Enabling an appreciation of the Church building in the history and archaeology of the area.

We provide tangible pastoral and financial support to the poor and needy:

- Providing pastoral care for people whether part of the Holy Cross Church family or not.
- Providing assistance to the poor and needy of the parish both financially and by initiatives such as the Toy Drive delivering gifts for Christmas.
- Spending the income of our parish trusts according to the wishes of their donors.

We consider the needs of people served by other charities and overseas:

- Giving grants to wider Christian charities.
- Giving grants to missionary organisations.
- Responding to emergencies and crisis by arranging adhoc appeals and retiring collections.
- Providing assistance to the wider community, including the relief of poverty through support to local charities such as Uckfield Foodbank, the Community Fridge and the Edward Holmes Baldock Charity.

We consider protecting the needs of those entering our church buildings:

- Ensuring all members and visitors to the church are kept safe and that all Safeguarding procedure and policy is followed.
- Ensuring all members and visitors to the church are protected as much as possible from COVID-19 by following Government guidelines and having safety procedures in place including doing appropriate Risk Assessments, while respecting people's own sense of responsibility.
- Supporting the National Church's initiative "Living in Love and Faith" on sexuality.
- Raising awareness of issues of race, bias and inclusion.

WHAT WE PLANNED TO DO TO ACHIEVE OUR CHARITABLE OBJECTIVES

One of our main objectives in 2022 was to continue the process of restoring worship and activities largely back to how they were pre COVID-19 in order to achieve our responsibilities to the congregation and local community. Many of these aspects of planning for the future of Church life are part of our response to the themes of More Engaged (A sign of being Apostolic) and More Open (A sign of being one) which are part of the Diocesan Strategy 2020-2025. At the same we recognised that some aspects of life had

changed and we took lessons from what we had learnt. Opportunities for socialising continued to be valuable for mental wellbeing and more fundraising events could take place than the previous year.

It had been recognised that the P.C.C.'s long term vision for practical improvements to Holy Cross Church had seen priorities change post the pandemic. However, no plans were looked at in 2022 (as had been intended) largely because of Russia invading Ukraine leading to severe cost of living crisis with prices of virtually everything increasing for individuals, families, businesses and charities.

However, the following which had been listed in the Mission Action Plan were implemented:

- Bereavement course running Nov 2021 – Feb 2022.
This course ended and two meals out held in 2022 for the group to meet up again.
- Explore and revisit Prayer Workshop Sessions and Quiet Days.
In October a Prayer Workshop led by Fr John was attended by 19 people.
- Have a series on “Art & Spirituality” in Lent.
During Lent there was a series of sermons about painting during the Sunday morning Eucharist service and the Diocesan Lent course “Comfort ye my people” led by Fr John on Zoom included looking at powerful images from The Visual Commentary on Scripture.
- Look to ways we can support our people’s mental health.
In December a new initiative commenced known as Chatty Café - an opportunity to talk, do activities and make friends.

These plans are in hand:

- A leaflet drop to new housing in and around Uckfield promoting the different churches in the plurality.
At the end of the year the Rector was in discussion with a graphic designer from another church in the Plurality.
- Revisit our way forward regarding improvements to the church building and Belmont Centre as our priorities have changed i.e. the loop system in church needs extending and installing in The Belmont Centre.
A Standing Committee meeting is booked for early February 2023 to open up the dialogue again and take feedback to the P.C.C. for discussion.

PERFORMANCE REVIEW OF ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE YEAR

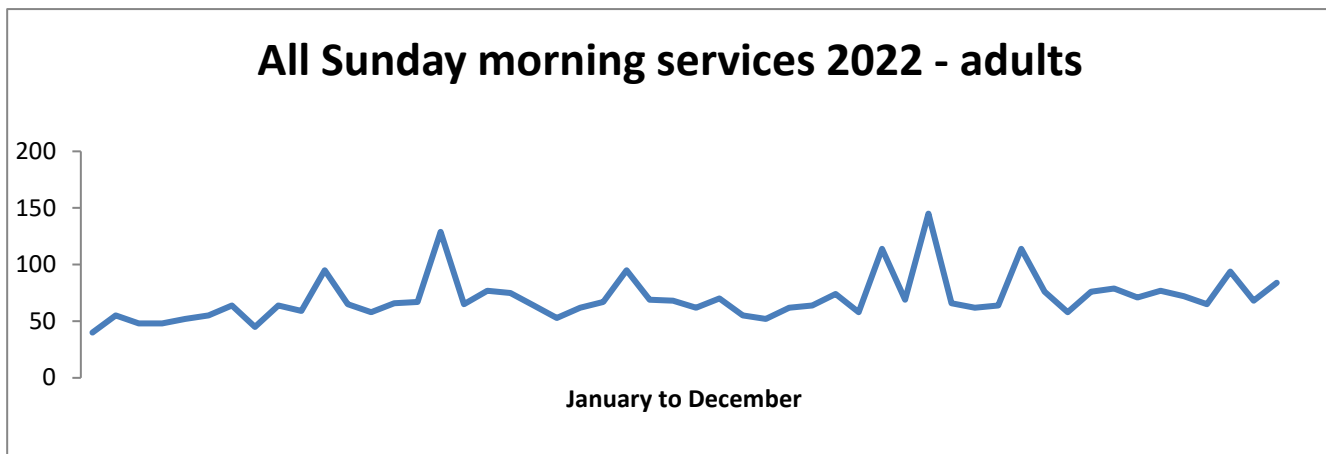
Worship and Prayer

Unlike the previous two years, services were able to be held in Holy Cross Church throughout the whole of 2022. Unfortunately no online services were available due to production costs but alternative options will be looked at in 2023. All are welcome to attend our regular services and the church family welcomes visitors from within as well as outside the parish boundary. Visitors attend by personal choice and we welcome people from all walks of life to take part in the life of the church. We contend that voluntary attendance to worship the Lord Jesus Christ is a major demonstration of the public benefit of our activities.

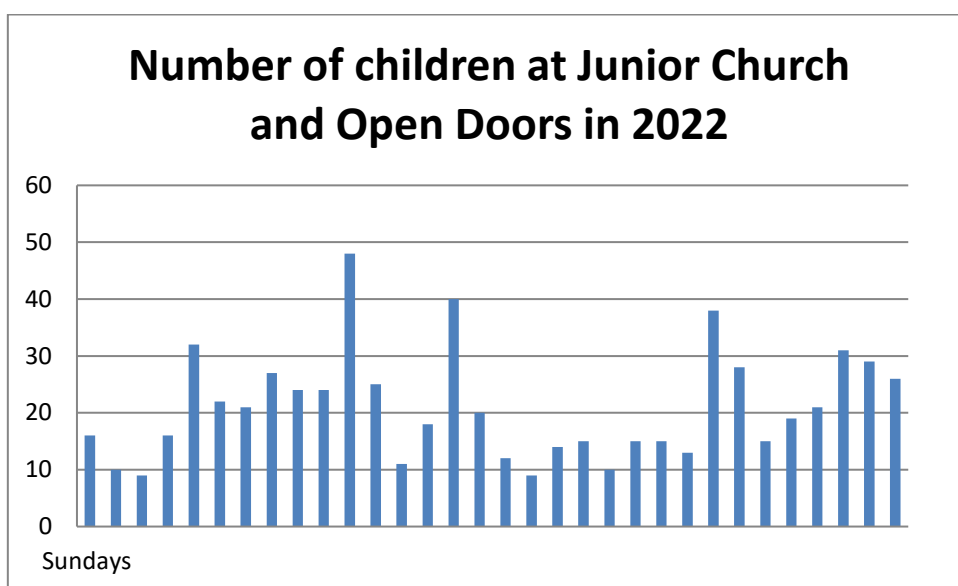
Traditionally, the Diocese asks parishes to monitor attendance during Sundays in October. In October 2022 the average adult attendance in Church for the morning service (including the Harvest Open Doors)

was 77. This was nine more than last year, the increase due partly to people continuing to come back to church after the pandemic, along with some new people coming to Holy Cross.

The number of adults attending a Sunday morning service in 2021 averaged 56 (for all the Sundays from Easter when the church reopened). In 2022 this average had increased to 70; this includes the monthly Open Doors service when Junior Church and families participate in the service.



There were 11 Open Doors services, three of which included baptisms; the average number of people attending these services were 85 adults and 22 children (78 adults and 19 children at the services without the baptisms). The Open Doors service in September was planned as a celebration of the summer Holiday Club but was replaced by a special service following the death of Queen Elizabeth II which had the highest attendance of any Sunday morning in 2022 with 145 adults. The second highest attendance for a Sunday morning was the Open Doors Easter Day service with an amazing 129 adults and 48 children. These numbers are reflected in the peaks on the graph (below). The breakdown of our average congregation shows roughly one third adults over-70, one third adults under 70 and one third children.



Numbers at the weekly 8am Holy Communion service were still very low, especially following the pandemic, averaging about six people besides the priest and Churchwarden. Evensong at 5.30pm had an attendance on average of 12 to 16 (which includes the Choir) other than special services. Holy Cross Church is one of the few churches who still hold Evensong, a tradition we hope to maintain and to promote next year. At the end of June a Celtic evensong was held (the first service of that type since pre Covid) attended by 25 people and in October Evensong was replaced by Uckfield Concert Brass performing their Harvest Prom Praise which attracted 114 adults and 38 children. The December Carols by Candlelight service is always popular with 200 adults and 10 children attending. Evensong at the end of September was held at St Saviours to enable residents to participate.



Besides the regular Sunday services, other services also took place in Holy Cross Church which reach out to the far wider community, namely: All Souls, Remembrance Day, a closing service at the end of the Festival of Christmas Trees, the Sussex Bonfire Societies Carol Service, St Wilfrid's Hospice 'Lights of Love' Service, Carols by Candlelight and the Christmas Eve Crib Service. The latter continues to be the most popular service of all and this year it attracted 150 children and 350 adults. As usual on arrival children were invited to dress up and participate in the story of the Nativity.

From July, a new mid week service started of Compline at 5.30pm, on the first and third Tuesdays of the month at St. Saviour's, and the second and fourth Tuesdays of the month at Holy Cross. Before each service there is the opportunity for half an hour of silent prayer. Within a few weeks it was evident that St Saviours was the more popular venue so all services were moved to there and from November the service was brought forward to 4.30pm. Six to eight people attend this service.

These are aspects of Church life that show our response to More Converted to Jesus Christ (A sign of being Holy) aspect of the Diocesan Strategy 2020-2025 'Vision for Growth'.

Children's work and attendance

Holy Cross Church continued to have a lot to offer young families and by building on what the church had to offer and doing an increasing number of outreach activities, children's work has continued to thrive with the other members of the congregation supporting and encouraging them.

Junior Church was held on the 1st, 3rd and 5th Sundays of the month, participating in the Open Doors family Eucharist on the 2nd Sunday of the month meaning families have one Sunday each month where they can enjoy other activities. On the Sundays when Junior Church met, there were an average of 20 children and 11 helpers.



Ages ranged from babies to 12 years old with the older children seeing their roles as 'helpers' and take it upon themselves to help those around them. Sunday sessions were based around a story of the Bible or time of year, instilling the importance of Kindness, Compassion, Friendship, Community and Love and stand out activities this year include the '40 Good Deeds for Lent' challenge, Easter garden, Jubilee celebration and the poignant Remembrance display (below).

Junior Church start their worship in The Belmont Centre, coming into church for Communion and staying for the rest of the service when they show the congregation what they have been doing before processing out with a child holding a special small processional cross. Their arrival and enthusiasm to show what they have been doing is a joy to behold and people leave the service on a high.



At the Harvest Open Doors the children performed "Tattybogle" (based on a children's story about a scarecrow) which was very well received.

Parents have become actively involved in the Church community and are very willing and able to help whenever they can with a lot of them stepping up at events such as the Festival of Christmas Trees, Christmas Fair and Messy Church sessions as well as the hugely successful Spring Festival.

The **Children's Choir** continued to grow with 25 children now participating in weekly sessions and occasional performances. The children really enjoy the sessions and in 2022 they performed at Uckfield's Proms on the Pitch which is always a highlight for the children and their families as well as a Spring Concert where the children sang songs from some favourite musicals. Christmas performances included the Festival of Christmas Trees, The Highlands Inn, Christingle Service, Crib Service and Thornbury Care Home. Feedback includes the following comment from a parent:

'It's such a nurturing and encouraging group and I can't believe how much her confidence has grown in the past year'

Messy Church sessions held in 2022 were Messy Candlemas, Messy Easter and Messy Harvest. Numbers were still limited to 40 children which proved very manageable. One feedback comment was:

'We are so lucky to have such a generous church community – events such as these give our children so much enrichment, thank you'

In summer the **Holiday Club** returned with a three-day fun-packed 'under the sea' session for over 50 different children. The children were put into three age groups and a different story was explored each day; Jonah, Noah and Moses; with themed crafts, music and games. It was not possible to finish with the traditional Holiday Club



service at Church due to the passing of the Queen, however the children and others took part in the fantastic Uckfield Carnival Children's Parade for the first time at the beginning of September. This was a really special day which saw the children win first place for the wonderful efforts with their under the sea costumes and props.



Life Events

Our church continued to be appreciated by our parishioners and many others, as a space where life events are celebrated with joy and thanksgiving. There were 22 Baptisms and four Weddings held during the year, one of which was our Director of Music Tim and Eleighsia who helps with Children's work/Junior Church.

There were also twenty Funerals in the church, one Memorial Service, three Graveside Services, seventeen Crematoria Services and the interment of ashes of three people took place in the graveyard at Holy Cross and the Cemetery at Snatts Road.

A Confirmation Service led by Bishop Will was held in September at Holy Cross Church, the candidates (three children and six adults) attended classes.

Pastoral ministry/care

The contribution to the Plurality and Diocese of the Revd Martha Mutikani (Associate-Vicar of St. Margaret's, Isfield) is much appreciated and her role in the Diocese has grown. In January she was appointed Assistant Dean of Women's Ministry alongside the Dean, Revd. Helen Garratt. The Diocese issued this statement: "The appointment of Helen and Martha feels like an expression of confidence among ordained women in the diocese of Chichester, with an unquestioned recognition that they are

integral to its life. Helen and Martha will undoubtedly ensure that, in nurturing vocations and making appointments, we continue to shape the exercise of ordained ministry in ways that reflect the needs and aspirations of the parishes we serve."

Reverend Martha acted as an advisor for the Bishops about Racial Justice Sunday and in February Holy Cross Church hosted the main service for the Diocese of Chichester at which Bishop Martin presided and members of the Zimbabwean National Federation (ZINAFE) were welcomed. The photograph below was taken in The Belmont Centre after the service.



Bishop Martin is pictured with Fr John Wall and Revd Martha Mutikani, and joined by guests from Steyning Grammar School, students Dane and Tami with Head of Boarding Tom Leighton, Mother Canon Roxanne from Southwark Diocese and Revd Godfrey Kesari from Southwater.

Photograph courtesy of Lisa Williamson

In October the Revd Martha Mutikani was appointed as the Diocese of Chichester's first Racial Justice Officer and was commissioned during a special service in Chichester Cathedral to mark Black History month.

We continue to be greatly indebted for the valuable support and assistance of the Honorary Assistant Curates; the Revd. David Ashton and the Revd. Canon Hugh Moseley who regularly lead or participate in services, as well as Reader Sheila Fordham. We are also grateful to the Revd Dr Mike Blanch although unfortunately he was not able to join us so much this year. Ellie McKay Smith was on a five week placement with us as an ordinand from 1st October.

Early in the year Fr. John rang people who had not been back to church following the pandemic. At the February P.C.C. meeting he reported a number of reasons why people have felt unable to return to church.

He added that *"we needed to keep tabs on those who are too scared to come back. We are getting about 50/55 adults attending services at present. Numbers are down but we have had some new faces too. When*

Junior Church is in we are looking at 75-80 including 15-25 children. We are doing better than a lot of other churches."

Communication

Although they are available to pick up on a Sunday, the weekly pewsheets, monthly parish magazine and intercessions continue to be emailed to people as requested (and a handful posted). People find it easier to read these publications on their electronic device, can see ahead what is happening and are still kept informed if they are unable to get to church. At the end of the year, the pewsheets were emailed to 132 parishioners of Holy Cross Church and the magazine to 121 (one or two of these are people who have moved away but wish to remain in touch).

Social media continues to be a vital and effective means of communication especially for up to date information and last minute changes. Our Facebook page followers increased by 16% (the same rise as last year) from 1340 to 1560. This is thanks to Sarah Widdowson who posts regular eye catching updates of services and events coming up with photographs and feedback afterwards as well as posting other appropriate things relating to the religious calendar or national/international news. The Holy Cross Church website continues to be heavily used with an average number of visitors per day of 67. The highest number of visitors by far were during the Festival of Christmas Trees period with the average increasing to nearly 200 per day.

Visits to nursing homes and hospitals remained very limited during 2022 making it hard for family members even to visit. There were a number of home visits by clergy both for those who were sick and bereaved.

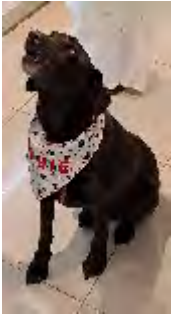
Social events and fundraising

A jumble sale planned for January was cancelled due to high Covid rates but went ahead in late March raising over £300. Countryman's lunches also restarted briefly at the end of March.

The Fairtrade Feast (open to the town) took place in March. With about 40 people attending, it was not as well supported as in past years with a few late drop outs due to testing positive for COVID. However, reports back on the food which our Churchwarden Dee organised were very positive.

The BBQ and refreshments stall was again a great success at the Uckfield Festival Big Day, and along with the Crafty Ladies over £1300 was raised for church funds. A second jumble sale in September raised over £430 and the Harvest lunch was enjoyed by around 100 people and raised over £350.

The annual Christmas Bazaar in early November was hugely successful raising around £1600. We are becoming very well known in the community for this event and it was well supported, hugely benefitting from external stall holders taking part and therefore offering variety and interest.



Later that month the Rector hosted an afternoon tea and evening party for his dog Sophie's 10th birthday. It was three years since any such event had been able to be held at The Rectory. Sophie was spoilt with a range of wonderful doggie presents and a special cake.

Our Musical Director Tim Guntrip gave an Organ Concert (with big screen projection) in November where a retiring collection raised £540 towards the restoration costs of the organ.

The four day Festival of Christmas Trees, now in its 13th year continues to be as popular as ever and attracted visitors from all over Sussex and neighbouring counties. This year the opening hours were extended slightly and once again, a 'Quiet hour' held on the Saturday morning which was very much appreciated by visitors who struggle with crowds and loud noises. Like last year, numbers within the church at any one time were limited and the Festival was hugely successful with over 5500 visitors throughout the weekend and we were fortunate to have a full day's coverage via BBC South East. A total raised of £15,000 was a new record figure for the event.

From the end of November, following concerns of rising heating bills and isolation, Rhian Cottrell and Judith Banks set up an initiative to welcome anyone to a 'warm space' in the Belmont Centre. Messy Cafe was to run on the last Friday of every month, with activities plus jigsaws, word puzzles, art and craft available as well as refreshments and a light lunch. Chatty Cafe would be on the second Friday of every month with similar craft activities, refreshments and light lunches (from early in 2023 they merged and both became known as Chatty Café). The P.C.C. gave a

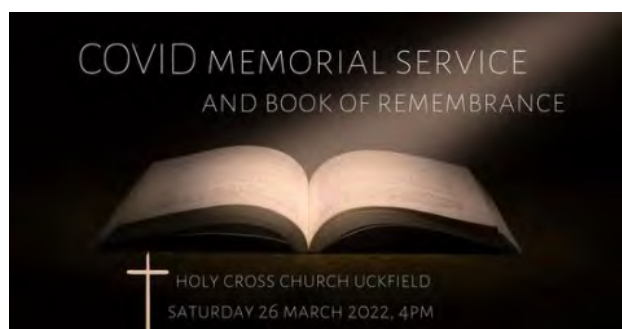


'start-up' donation and while there was no charge, attendees could make a donation if they so wished. Lifts were also provided for those unable to get there otherwise. The first session was attended by 18 people and in early December 180 Christingle 'packs' were made for the next Open Doors service. On 30th December about 26 folk braved the pouring rain to attend. A dedicated team of helpers has started to grow. Reaching beyond the church community has begun by small steps. Several sincere comments have been made: *'It was fun', 'thank you', 'what a lot of time has been put into the preparation', 'it is great to be out socialising as mobility has been a drawback', and 'we see each other in church, but we didn't know each other but now we do'!*



Our witness to the community

In March a Memorial Service was held for families and friends of those who had lost loved ones through COVID-19, some of whom had not been able to hold an appropriate funeral due to restrictions. All the families who had been affected in the past two years were personally invited as were the Mayor and Town Council. A Book of Remembrance was available beforehand in the Civic Centre and names in it were read out at the service along with others.



The 70th anniversary of the Queen's accession took place in February and to celebrate her Platinum Jubilee the Spring Bank Holiday was moved to Thursday 2nd June while 3rd June was made an additional Bank Holiday and events nationally and locally were held from the Wednesday to the Sunday.



Following an appeal in the pewsheets, people knitted triangles of bunting to decorate the outside of the church. It was very effective and showed the town our support of Queen Elizabeth II, 'the Defender of the Faith and Supreme Governor of the Church of England'. On the Sunday evening the church put on 'Pomp and Pimm's': A Platinum Jubilee Musical Celebration with a selection of hymns, patriotic organ pieces and readings/poetry which was attended by 56 people.

On the evening of Thursday 8th September it was announced that Queen Elizabeth had died peacefully that afternoon, aged 96. Members of the Standing Committee immediately opened the Church and put into place protocol for when such an event happens and in a very short time a memorial book was open and photograph of the Queen on display along with candles for people to light. People came in; they were in great shock and visibly upset at the loss of someone whom for most people was the only monarch they had ever known. The Union Jack flew at half mast and someone who lived near the church arrived and offered to toll the church bell for us on this sad, historic day. The church (which at that point was not usually open other than for services), was opened 9am to 9pm on the Friday and Saturday.



On the Sunday the Open Doors service (which was to have been on the Holiday Club theme) was cancelled and instead Fr John led an appropriate service following the death of our Monarch. 145 adults and 15 children attended which was the most for any Sunday morning service since pre Covid. The following Sunday, Holy Cross Church held a Candlelit Vigil from after evensong until 9.00 p.m., incorporating a National minute's silence at 8.00 p.m.



In the pewsheet the Rector wrote:

"A symbol of stability, duty, self-sacrifice and dedication, she has been the foundation of our National Life for as long as many of us can remember. It also feels so personal, as if we've lost one of our own family. Many can remember her coming to Holy Cross and Little Horsted."

Photograph (undated) of The Queen at Holy Cross Church (courtesy of Bridge Cottage)

Both Lord Rupert and his wife Lady Nevill were childhood friends of Queen Elizabeth II. The Nevill's lived at Uckfield House until 1964 when they moved to nearby Horsted Place. The Queen would worship at Holy Cross Church during her fairly frequent visits which made local and sometimes national press headlines (e.g. front page of The Yorkshire Observer in 1954).

Our Churchwarden Dee wrote about the late Queen in the October parish magazine:

"Whilst the nurse in me recognized the signs that she was indeed ageing, still the shock and grief remains. What a great example of the Leader of our Church, let alone the nation we have had in her. Dignity, Faith, Service, Dedication and so much more. Very, very wise shoulders and we have indeed been blessed by her guidance and love".

The Diocesan Secretary emailed in September:

I'd like to begin by noting the momentous impact of the past days in which we have mourned the death of a Sovereign and acclaimed the accession of the King.

This has been a demanding time for clergy and parishes but it has also shown the importance that the Church can have in responding to the spiritual and emotional needs of the local community, and of the whole nation.

Later that month the church was open again every weekday for private prayer and visitors for the first time in over two years. In December the Daily Telegraph reported on a survey of almost 530 churches: "Now, more than half of them only open for services and events, new research reveals". Criminal damage and anti-social behaviour were among factors for this statistic and whilst we have had a few problems in the past, they have occurred usually during school holiday so it is sometimes necessary to keep the building shut then. We feel it important to keep the church open for anyone near and far to visit for a variety of reasons. One person had come to Uckfield to see where a relative had lived and discovered two children had been baptised in the church. They wrote in the Visitors Book *"What a beautiful church and surroundings"*.



The annual Remembrance Parade up the High Street to Holy Cross Church took place on the Sunday afternoon. Unfortunately this year there was nowhere in Uckfield to purchase a poppy; this was very disappointing and greatly missed. On enquiring it transpired that there was no longer a local poppy appeal organiser. This concern was raised at a P.C.C. meeting, wondering if the Church could help, but it seems the job is quite involved and time consuming and the British Legion had meanwhile hopefully found someone to take on this role.

The Junior Church made this wonderful poppy art installation out of recycled materials which was a stunning and moving tribute and could be seen by people driving and walking past the church.

A new initiative organised by Sarah, our Children's Work Coordinator, was a Christmas Toy Drive. She said *"Christmas was going to be a difficult time for so many people and families in our community – the cost of living has had a massive impact...it didn't sit well with me that there would be children waking up on Christmas day with nothing under their tree. It seemed the right thing to do to help as much as possible and so the Toy Drive was born"*.

Ashdown Radio supported the cause and talked about it on air to ensure as many families in need were reached as well as members of the congregation having personal links.





The response was overwhelming with many presents donated and volunteers offered to help sort, wrap and deliver the gifts. Further toys were purchased with financial donations, supporting local businesses.

Two days were spent sorting out the donations and then a weekend allocating gifts for each child, wrapping and delivering to 121 children in our community with a very grateful and emotional response from families. Among the recipients were a few Ukrainian families now living here.

Other ways in which Holy Cross Church witnessed to the community was the continuing of the bi-monthly Community Leaders Lunches held at the Rectory. After a cooked lunch provided by the Rector and Gillian Youngman, a short talk was given by someone about the group or organisation that they represent. As a result of this, needs and concerns are shared and networking has been beneficial with organisations sometimes offering financial help or other support to each other.

Holy Cross School attended the church occasionally and other schools visited during the year for services and events such as Harvest, Christmas and the Festival of Christmas Trees.

In September Fr. John said prayers for the town in the High Street on Carnival night - this event is a part of the Sussex Bonfire season and is attended by thousands of people from Uckfield and further afield.

The Community Fridge which opened towards the end of last year has proved a popular asset to the town. As one of the organisers said: *"It gives an opportunity for the community to care for and share with each other. It also tackles the stigma associated with food poverty and getting food for free. Finally, the fridge can reduce isolation and loneliness."* With the cost of living crisis the Community Fridge has become even more important and the hours were extended this year. Holy Cross Church continues to support it and this year donated £100.

Holy Cross Church has continued to support the local Foodbank with a regular appeal in the weekly pewsheet as donations were again accepted in church each Sunday morning, kindly overseen by Terry Hall. After the Harvest Service the fresh produce went to the Community Fridge and the rest to the Foodbank.

Holy Cross Church are members of both the Uckfield Volunteer Centre and the Uckfield Chamber of Commerce. Both of these organisations hold regular meetings, both in person and on Zoom, and work together for the benefit of the local community.

Mission, outreach and evangelism

A small group was appointed by the P.C.C. to look at away giving and make recommendations back to them: these are detailed in the accounts.

On 24th February Russia invaded Ukraine and the world watched with horror as this war start to unfold. In early March Fr. John wrote in the pewsheet:

"We are appalled at what is happening in Ukraine - the violence and suffering. At Holy Cross, as well as the Ukraine Appeal, when this Sunday and next we will have retiring collections, (which will be sent to a Ukraine Appeal Charity), we will also be holding a Prayer Vigil between 5-5.30pm before our regular Evensong this Sunday, 6th March. There will be prayers and quiet, and candles to light. As this appalling war unfolds in Ukraine, our hearts go out to those caught up in the violence. We feel so helpless in the face of this horror: the least we can do is pray."

About 60 people attended the Prayer Vigil, including the Mayor and her Deputy. In all, our Ukraine appeal raised over £1,400. After that, although Holy Cross Church was still not open other than services, the Church was left open all day for Prayer and Candles for Ukraine between the morning service and Evensong on a Sunday. In early March, the church registered with Sanctuary Foundation, a charity launched the previous month "a rapid response initiative to inspire families, individuals, churches, community groups and businesses to welcome Ukrainian refugees".

On 20th March the Ukraine National Anthem was played at the start of the morning service as a sign of solidarity and the church bells were rung at 4pm along with cathedrals.

The following day our Verger received a letter which was a request from a church in Poland for money to help with refugees: the church had a connection with someone at the Catholic Church in Uckfield. Karen Smith was asked to help as she oversees Sunday morning refreshments and working with the Catholic Church, a Coffee Morning was held in May and the wonderful sum of £1,250 raised.



Donations for coffee after the morning Eucharist go towards the Chichester Diocese Children's and Families Work and the Goodwill Children's Homes. The latter is a charity which has been supporting the care and education of destitute and orphaned children in southern India since 1976. It supports three children's homes, a primary school and a Tribal Outreach programme (TORP). We received an Easter card (left) from the Goodwill Children's Home in Tamil Nadu (southern India).

COFFEE MORNING FOR UKRAINE**SATURDAY 7TH MAY**
10AM - 12 NOON BELMONT CENTRE
HOLY CROSS CHURCH

Dear Parishioners of Churches Together in Uckfield.
We received a request from the Holy Trinity Parish in Warsaw, Poland asking us for assistance for a group of 50 Adults and 10 children, some with special needs, who are refugees from Ukraine.
It is of special interest to Liz Campbell who is a member of St. Philip's RC Church for over 45 years as she is originally from Warsaw.
It is her cousin who has sent the letter which has gone to many churches abroad asking for help.
We would like to help them by holding a coffee morning on Saturday 7th of May at 10 am to 12 noon in the Belmont Centre of Holy Cross Church.

**Karen Smith**
764100

PLEASE DO SUPPORT THIS FUNDRAISING EVENT


**Liz Campbell**
765671

The Giving to Other Charities sub-committee met and recommended a number of donations to the P.C.C. (who approved), these recipients are detailed in the Financial report.

Other regular charitable giving throughout the year has included Action Aid (Sponsoring of Maria Luisa Cucul Yat in Guatemala), Christian Aid, Uckfield Foodbank and The Children's Society.

The Churchwardens are also trustees of the "Edward Holmes Baldock Charity" which is three charities rolled into one. It incorporates the Henry Gardener and Dorothy Ellis charities, and all three of them were established to relieve poverty in the town of Uckfield. Dorothy Ellis died in 1731 and some of the money she left enabled 12 fourpenny loaves to be provided to 12 poor families at Holy Cross Church every Sunday. Then in 1846 Edward Holmes Baldock bequeathed the sum of £750 to be invested and distributed each year amongst poor persons of the parish. The combined investments are held with the COIF Charities Investment Fund which provides a quarterly income which is used to fund for an annual donation to three families selected by a sub-committee each year. Three recipients were identified and each received a £25 award.

Some of the congregation belong to Caring and Sharing, a scheme which raises money by sacrificial giving by people who try to: 'Live more simply that others may simply live'. It is based on two ideas: the first is that by making a small sacrifice members can turn away from the material values of the western world; the second is that they can share their comparative wealth by sending the savings from this small sacrifice to projects in poorer countries to provide the basic needs of life. Money saved by making a small change in lifestyles was this year given to three overseas projects which provide basic necessities for very poor people.

Deanery Synod

Holy Cross Church currently has four representatives on the Uckfield Deanery Synod (which met 3 times in 2022) who report back to the P.C.C.. The Deanery Synod considers matters concerning the Church of England, brings together the views of member parishes on common problems, fosters a sense of community and interdependence among those parishes, and generally to promote in the deanery the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical. The Deanery Synod elects clergy and laity Diocesan Synod representatives and has an allocated General Synod representative. A report of 2022 can be seen in the separate report containing Activities of the Church Family.

Ecumenical Relationships

The Rector and John Pontefract (Churchwarden) represent Holy Cross Church on 'Churches in Uckfield' which meets three or four times a year. They organise the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity when the different churches host services and private prayer throughout a week in January which Holy Cross Church participated in. They also oversee the Good Friday Walk of Witness which was able to take place again this year. However, the annual "Sunday Funday" was again unable to happen this year due to COVID-19. This event was part of the Uckfield Festival which has been an annual event since its inception in the Millennium until the pandemic. Sadly, in early January 2023 the Uckfield Festival Charity folded up. The Association's Director said "We have tried very hard in recent years to attract new, and younger, people

to join the organising committee with only limited success. With no-one left to run the show the charity has been closed.”

PROPERTY

The Belmont Centre

A very short walk from the church is The Belmont Centre which the Church owns. The P.C.C. is responsible for this building overseen by the Churchwardens, and the Major Works Project Manager who report back to the P.C.C. As well as housing the Parish Office, there is a good well stocked kitchen as well as toilet facilities, a hall and a small meeting room. This wonderful facility is used for both Church fundraising and social events as well as being hired out and bringing in income for the Church. An additional part of The Belmont Centre is on permanent loan to a Pre-school Group.

The maintenance and development of The Belmont Centre is planned to support the needs of the Church but also for it to remain as an asset for use by the wider community. Bookings at The Belmont Centre have picked up well after the pandemic and are now better than before we went into lockdown. We have a variety of regular bookings and also birthday parties, wakes and baptism celebrations.

St Saviours

St Saviours is in the south of the town: it was formerly a chapel and now comprises 16 flatlets and a worship area with seating which also doubles up as a community space for events. It is now managed by Uckfield & District Housing Association Ltd. Ray Pilson continues to be Deputy Churchwarden. Last year regular weekly services at St Saviours stopped but from July Compline started with the opportunity for half an hour of silent prayer beforehand. The service alternated between St. Saviour's and Holy Cross Church. St Saviours proved to be a more popular venue so all services were moved to there.

Curate's House

The parish part owned a property, 7 Parkview Road, which was bought as a home for a curate in training in 1989. When we no longer had a curate the Church Commissioners allowed us to rent the house out for a limited period then repay what we owed or sell it. It is no longer necessary for a parish to provide a house for a training post and therefore the P.C.C. sold it in late 2020. The net proceeds of £183,086 were allocated as a restricted fund for the P.C.C. to decide how best to invest the proceeds for the Church. 2022 was not the time to be looking at this matter when the church was still trying to get its own finances back on an even keel so it will be addressed as a priority in 2023.

VOLUNTEERS

We would like to thank the many people who volunteer in any way to make Holy Cross Church so vibrant and at the heart of the community. The life of the church would not be so effective without the many volunteers who take on so many roles, both large and small, all making the effectiveness and smooth running of services and events possible. We should like to pay tribute to Mary Fox who died this year, she led the Cleaning Guild for many years and her love of the church and dedication to cleaning it was an example to us all. Even during lockdown she wanted to know when she could next clean her beloved place of worship.

We continue to seek to extend the opportunities for the exercise of ministry and gifts within the life of the community. While a large number of the church family are already involved in the many roles within the Church, new initiatives like Chatty Café and the Toy Drive have seen more people involved along with the Festival of Christmas Trees which relies on volunteers from the town to help make this spectacle both possible and safe.

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

The appointment of Parochial Church Council members is governed by and set out in the Church Representation Rules. It is made up of the following people:

Ex Officio members:

- The Revd John Wall (Rector and Chair)
- Sheila Fordham (Reader)
- Dee Johnson (Churchwarden and Vice Chair)
- John Pontefract (Churchwarden)

Elected members

- Dee Johnson (representative on Deanery Synod)
- Jill Thornton (representative on Deanery Synod)
- Sandie Boniface (representative on Deanery Synod)
- Francis Wallace ((representative on Deanery Synod)
- Paul Cuerden
- Jacqueline Davies
- Terry Hall
- Paul Ireland (Treasurer)
- Ann Kennedy
- Beth Morris-Boag
- Anthony Simpson
- Angela Noel
- Edna Osborne
- Barbara Poole
- Sister Sarah
- Sister Mary Paul
- Sarah Widdowson
- Gillian Youngman (Secretary)

The P.C.C. members are responsible for making decisions on all matters pertaining to the parish including how funds are to be spent. Elected members serve a three year term. All those who attend our services/members of the congregation are encouraged to register on the Electoral Roll and stand for election to the P.C.C.. The number of people on the Electoral Roll as of 6th April 2023 was 191 which is an increase of 4 from last year. There are 18 (just under 10%) people who are not resident in the parish (which is the same number as last year).

New P.C.C. members receive information and training as to how the P.C.C. operates.

The full Parochial Church Council met five times during the year (four times at St Saviours and once in Holy Cross Church): The average attendance of P.C.C. members at these meetings was 77% (85% at four of these meetings but the fifth one to approve the accounts was held at short notice).

At each P.C.C. meeting the Rector and Churchwardens guide the P.C.C. through work and decisions required on what is needed in order to carry out our ongoing aims and objectives. Standing items on each agenda include Safeguarding, Health and Safety, Finance and Deanery Synod feedback as well as reports on Children's work, Events etc. Most reports are circulated in advance and when a decision is needed, at the meeting, following discussion a motion is proposed, seconded and a vote taken and minuted. When an urgent matter has cropped up between P.C.C. meetings and a decision is needed, the P.C.C. Secretary conducts an email/phone vote which is recorded at the next meeting, for example the appointment of a new independent examiner for the accounts.

Paul Kennedy (Major Works Project Manager for Holy Cross Church) sent a written report to each P.C.C. meeting and in between liaised closely with John Pontefract (Health and Safety Officer), the P.C.C. and Standing Committee on projects and issues as required.

Our Safeguarding Officers, Karen Smith and Rhian Cottrell also send a report for each P.C.C. meeting and joined us in person at the September meeting. The Holy Cross Parochial Church Council has complied with the duty under section 5 of the Safeguarding and Clergy Discipline Measure 2016, fully recognising its duty to have due regard to House of Bishops' guidance on safeguarding children and vulnerable adults. We continue to work within the guidelines in the most recently published Parish Safeguarding Handbook (approved by the House of Bishops).

The P.C.C. Standing Committee comprises the Rector, Dee Johnson and John Pontefract (Churchwardens), Paul Ireland (P.C.C. Treasurer), Gillian Youngman (P.C.C. Secretary), Angela Noel (P.C.C. representative) and Lynne Ireland (Parish Administrator). The purpose of the Standing Committee is to conduct P.C.C. business in between meetings or in an emergency, including addressing day to day matters and ensuring the smooth running of the Church and the Belmont Centre. As Covid related issues settled down and things returned to how they had been, the Standing Committee did not find it necessary to meet as often as last year and their two meetings in January and one in June had 100% attendance. Although it was no longer necessary, they continue to meet via Zoom for convenience.

Lynne Ireland, our Parish Administrator, continues to work from a combination of home and her office in the Belmont Centre. Her hours are Monday, Wednesday and Thursday 9.15am - 12.15pm but she is very flexible and a much appreciated valuable asset with many useful connections in the town.

Safeguarding Report

It is heart warming to be writing this report as it is a reminder of the large number of children and lots of amazing volunteers working, in a variety of ways, with them in our church. Also, with reference to SQP requirements, the number of activities involving church members and the wider community. Neither could happen if organisers didn't observe the safety requirements and complete myriad forms; you are all stars.

DBS – *checks/renewals up to date with some due later in the year.

DBS Clearance Certificates are now valid for 3 years, bringing them into line with Training Certificates. Certificates awarded prior to January 2022 will continue to be valid for 5 years and their renewal will be on the 3 year cycle.

Everyone is now required to sign up for the Update Service when they receive their Clearance Certificate. This will make their certificate more portable for roles that have the same requirements. It also makes renewal of their Certificate a great deal easier. The details will be explained to each person when their DBS Clearance application/ renewal is made/due.

The Self Declaration form has also been changed and can be completed online.

SQP – Simple Quality Protects **

Safer Places; Safer People; Safer Activities; Safer Practice

Under the section "Safer People" the requirements for recruiting volunteer workers have been brought nearer to those for recruiting paid workers. It will be a learning curve for all involved, but has been implemented by the Diocese in order to ensure that there are no holes in our "Safeguarding Safety Net".

TRAINING – The 3 trainings used are all now on line trainings and accessed via the Diocesan website.

Basic Training – actively encouraged and open to all members of the congregation and parents/guardians of children who attend Holy Cross activities. It is a pre – requisite to Foundation Training.

Foundation Training – Required by anyone who has safeguarding responsibilities or contact, in their church role, with children or vulnerable adults. It is a pre- requisite to Leadership Training.

Safeguarding Leadership Training - A more rigorous training, at present only required of Clergy, Safeguarding Officers/ Lead Recruiters and those Leading Activities with children or vulnerable adults.

The highest level training, needed for your role, should be redone every 3 years and recorded as done. The trainings are updated regularly so the content changes over the years.

Compliance with the above maintains our Level 1 achievement for SQP**

*DBS – Disclosure and Barring Service

A national service to ensure that no one with a criminal background, who could present a danger whilst working or volunteering in the area of children and vulnerable adults, is accepted in any such role.

**** SQP – Simple Quality Protects**

A national system for the Third (ie voluntary) Sector to maintain standards in the area in which they are working.

The Diocese has set this as a model standard for all parishes. We have achieved Level 1 and must maintain standards to that level.

Karen Smith & Rhian Cottrell
Safeguarding Officers/Lead Recruiters

Email: safeguardingholycrossuckfield@gmail.com

Fabric Committee Report

Holy Cross Church and Belmont Centre Property Maintenance Report 2022

Completed Work

- Major Works – See separate report from Paul Kennedy. Thank you for all your diligent work on these projects Paul. It is possible this report will duplicate some of Paul's report.
- Belmont Centre Exterior Repaint after kitchen window repair and back door. Organised by Paul Kennedy who employed Daniel Picton and it took place during the last week of August 2022.
- Belmont Centre Alarm System issues. We have changed the Alarm System Maintenance Firm due to cost issues.
- New strap fitted for Belmont Centre tables in exit area of Cardale Hall.
- Hedley Visick fitted non-return valves to disabled toilet and also been to fix leaking inlet water to toilet cistern in the Spire Pre-school area. 09-02-2022.
- Lightning Conductor Testing Done and passed Oct 2022
- Hedley Visick fitted church boiler protection valves. Protects against boiler having over pressure water.
- Spire Pre-school Lighting Ian MacDonald. Lights were fitted during half term beginning 14-02-2022:- 6 fittings in classroom 1; 4 fittings in entrance classroom. £2634.24 incl VAT.
- Belmont Centre Roof issues:- Done by Alex Stenning in late December 2021
- Belmont Centre Kitchen Window repair done by Ollie Brown.
- Belmont Centre Spire Pre-school back door repair done by Ollie Brown.
- Belmont Centre Spire Pre-school Internal Doors and locks replaced.
- Belmont Centre Spire Pre-school Rear Gatepost. Has been supported by a truss to the building wall.
- Damp was showing in the church upstairs on the North East internal wall. Remedied by the removal of accumulated leaves from the roof gutter by contractor Paul James.
- Belmont Centre Spire Pre-school Taps dripping. This was fixed in April 2022.
- Gutters and downpipe cleaning of Belmont Centre.
- The trees from Grant's Hill Court over the fence at the west end of the Belmont Centre were overhanging and resting on the roof. Done by Wealden Council.
- Brick pathway outside southern entrance to church was relaid due to uplifted bricks due to the roots of the yew tree. Holly Goring, Uckfield Town Clerk, organised this after I liaised with her.
- For the Queen's Platinum Jubilee, temporary bunting was fitted outside the church.
- Usual replacement of blown spot bulbs were done in the church.

Pending work/to do list for 2023

- Belmont Centre Spire Pre-school area metal window repair. We must get this done this year. We have put it off for too long.

Two quotes:-

- o Steel Window Service:- £9015.98 plus VAT:- £10819.18
- o Clifford Durrant:- £5255 plus VAT:- £6303

Even though it is about a year since we got the quotes, Clifford Durrant has agreed to keep to this quote.

- Church Internal Stairways Paintwork Redo. Scheduled for 2023. Awaiting info from Church Architect regarding paint type. Paul Kennedy has tried to get hold of him lots of times recently but will persist.
- Refurbishment of East end external light over steps.
- Cardale Hall Lights replacement as fitted to Spire would cost £2800+ but would use substantially less power and come on instantly. No decision has been made by P.C.C. yet but the old lights are running out of life. The consumption of each current lamp is some 150w, so with 10 units the consumption is 1.5Kw. LED replacements, as used in the Spire, are 40w panels giving 480w including all four being replaced in the Foyer.
- Hive System for Church Boiler. Suggest fitment of Hive system running off WiFi which we use for donations. Quote is £295 including fitting but the HIVE system actually costs £179.
- New Radio Microphones with high rejection (feedback reducing) approx £1000 including radio licence.

John Pontefract, Churchwarden and Health & Safety Officer

Financial Review

As the trustees report details, 2022 was a much more normal year following 2 years of impact from the pandemic. Holy Cross Church continues to play a very important part in the local community during the recovery from the pandemic and the more recent challenges with world events and the impact on the UK cost of living. In 2022 this has been reflected in the finances with some very impressive figures on fund raising activities due to the amount of support from the congregation and the wider community.

With some lower than expected expenses in 2022 it is hugely positive to be able to show a surplus, after two years of deficit, in the 2022 accounts of £3,609 which represents an almost £20,000 improvement on the 2021 accounts.

In celebrating this recovery we must be cautious and pay careful attention to one of our biggest sources of income, the regular giving from the church congregation. The amount of money received from regular giving (via bank deposits, weekly envelopes and cash collections) is falling, in 2022 this total was £61,148 against £67,165 in 2019. This is due to less people giving by standing order and the impact of the higher cost of living. There have been several notices given from people either stopping or reducing their giving in 2023. Plans are being made to run a generous giving campaign to slow the decline and thoughts given to see how we can encourage new people to start regular giving.

With the surplus we have slightly increased the reserves and continue to maintain a healthy financial situation that enabled the support for our own Church family, our financial commitment to the Diocese and away giving during the 2022 financial year.

Incoming and outgoing resources

Total receipts on general unrestricted funds, which are detailed in the Financial Statements, were £144,810. This is an 11% (£14,582) increase on 2021 but still £11,564 less than 2019. Over 50% of this shortfall against 2019 can be accounted for in the reduction in regular giving.

Thanks to the efforts of our fund raising teams and their supporters, organising the Festival of Christmas Trees, the Christmas Fair, Jumble Sales, Spring Fair and many other smaller events throughout the year, a fantastic £22,060 of profit was generated in 2022. A wonderful reflection of their hard work and also the support that Holy Cross Church has within the congregation and the local community.

During 2022 the amount of Planned Giving and cash collections increased over 2021 by about £4,000 but remains £6,000 below 2019. There have been losses due to people passing to higher service but we have also seen the impact of the increased cost of living which means we had a

total Planned Giving figure of £49,880 for 2022, down £2,243 on 2021. Cash collections for the year totalled £11,268 which is almost back to the £12,467 figure achieved in 2019.

Receipts from hiring fees for the Belmont Centre were £25,821 which is an increase of 45% on 2021. Expenditure for the Belmont Centre during 2022 was £18,491 which included two major expenditure items totalling £5,748. They were the replacement of the lighting in the Spire Pre-school area and the external decoration of the Belmont Centre. The energy cost increases were not as large as expected due to Government support and price caps. The net result was a surplus of £7,330 for Church funds.

Sharing the ministry costs of the Diocese of Chichester

The largest expenditure of the P.C.C. was the sum of £67,500 paid to the Diocese to cover ministry costs. The parish contribution in 2022 was used towards the stipend, pension and housing costs of the clergy, and a standard sum for diocesan costs, clergy training and a contribution to national church funds. For 2022 we once again agreed an increase of nearly 5%, which is above the parish budget recommended increase of 3.5%, as we continue to work towards contributing 100% of ministry costs.

Staff costs

Since April 2016 a part-time Parish Administrator has been employed to run the Parish Office. From 2020 the Director of Music and Assistant Director of Music payments are recorded as salary having previously been recorded as upkeep of services. This is following guidance that these roles do not have the autonomy required to be classed as self-employed. During 2022, the three positions did not meet the HMRC thresholds for tax purposes or for the pension auto-enrolment scheme. From 1 Jan 2022 a 5% salary increase was applied for the three roles so the staff costs for 2022 were £16,961.

Missionary and Charitable giving

For 2022 the Giving sub-committee recommended the following missionary and charitable giving totalling £5,931 to home and overseas which was agreed by the P.C.C.. *Note – the accounts show a total figure of £5,231 which is due to a £700 correction for un-spent giving allowed for in the 2021 accounts.*

Overseas

• Water Aid	£ 225
• Kids 4 Kids	£ 225
• Tear Fund	£ 200
• Medecins san Frontiers	£ 225
• Ukraine Relief Fund	£ 2 710
• Action Aid	£ 234
• Goodwill Children's Home	£ 300

Home

• Children's Society	£ 243
• Uckfield Community Fridge	£ 100
• Sussex Church Bell Restoration	£ 25
• Chichester Family Support Work	£ 300
• Chichester Diocese	£ 91
• Uckfield Foodbank	£ 157
• Royal British Legion	£ 357
• Uckfield Concert Brass	£ 464
• Baldock Charity Recipients	£ 75

Fixed Assets

The Belmont Centre remains at the previous valuation of £1,370,000.

Reserves Policy

During 2022 the minimum balance on the general unrestricted funds (excluding property) equated to approximately 6 month's of unrestricted payments. The financial situation and unrestricted reserves held at the end of 2022 have been reviewed and, with the 2023 budget approved by the P.C.C., show that the Uckfield Parochial Church Council is expected to continue as a going concern for the 2023 financial year.

It is P.C.C. policy to retain any funds not required for day to day transactions on deposit at the bank.

Funds held as custodian trustees on behalf of others

The P.C.C. acts as a custodian trustee for the assets of the Edward Holmes Baldock Charity which was established in 1845 for the benefit of poor persons in the parish. Its sole asset is 36.38 income units invested in the COIF Charities Investment Fund.

As at 31 August 2022, its latest valuation date, the value of the investment was £ 700.13. The income in its financial year was £19.67 which is topped up by the P.C.C. and distributed to suitable recipients. The charity is administered by the P.C.C. with the Churchwardens acting as trustees of the charity and is segregated from the assets of the P.C.C.. In 2022 three £25 donations were made to deserving individuals meeting the criteria from the Edward Holmes Baldock Charity.

Statement of Financial Activities

The financial effect of our activities during the year can be summarised as follows

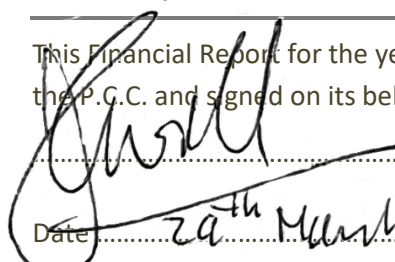
	Unrestricted Fund	Restricted Fund/s	Endowed Fund/s	Total Funds 2022	<i>Total Funds 2021</i>	Notes
	£	£	£	£	£	
Income and endowments from:						
Donations and legacies	93,524	10,149	-	103,673	99,433	
Charitable activities	9,957	-	-	9,957	10,867	
Other trading activities	41,339	-	-	41,339	22,795	
Investments	148	420	-	568	27	
Other receipts	(158)	1,178	-	1,020	917	
Total income	144,810	11,747	-	156,557	134,039	2
Expenditure on:				-		
Raising funds	4,583	-	-	4,583	4,043	
Charitable activities	126,350	5,721	-	132,071	132,150	
Other trading activities	16,294	-	-	16,294	14,233	
Other expenditure	-	-	-	-	-	
Total expenditure	147,227	5,721	-	152,948	150,426	3
Net gains (or losses) on investments	-	-	-	-	-	
Net income or (net expenditure)	(2,417)	6,026	-	3,609	(16,387)	
Transfers between funds	-	-	-	-	-	10
	(2,417)	6,026	-	3,609	(16,387)	
Other recognised gains/(losses):						
Gains/(losses) on revaluation of fixed assets	-	-	-	-	-	11
Other gains/(losses)	-	-	-	-	-	
<i>Reconciliation of funds:</i>						
Net movement in funds	(2,417)	6,026	-	3,609	(16,387)	
Total funds brought forward	1,443,547	197,116	-	1,640,663	1,657,050	
Total funds carried forward	1,441,130	203,142	-	1,644,272	1,640,663	

Balance Sheet

Our financial position and summary of funds at the year end were

	Total Funds 2022	Total Funds 2021	Notes
	£	£	
Intangible assets	-	-	
Tangible assets	1,370,000	1,370,000	12
Heritage assets	-	-	
Endowed investments	-	-	11
Total fixed assets	1,370,000	1,370,000	
Stocks	-	-	
Debtors	5,062	4,034	14
Investments	-	-	
Cash at bank and in hand	274,163	276,355	
Total current assets	279,225	280,389	
Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year	(4,953)	(4,950)	15
Correction for Unrealised Debtors in 2020	-	(4,776)	
Net current assets or (liabilities)	274,272	270,663	
Total assets less current liabilities	1,644,272	1,645,439	
Creditors: Amounts falling due after more than one year	-	-	16
Provisions for liabilities	-	-	
Total net assets or (liabilities)	1,644,272	1,640,663	
The funds of the charity:			
Restricted income funds	203,142	197,116	
Unrestricted funds	1,441,130	1,443,547	
Revaluation reserve	-	-	
Total unrestricted funds	1,441,130	1,443,547	
Total charity funds	1,644,272	1,640,663	18

This Financial Report for the year ended 31st December 2022, including the notes following, was approved by the P.C.C. and signed on its behalf by The Revd. John Wall, P.C.C. Chairman:


 Date 29th March 2023

Notes to the Financial Report

1 Accounting policies

Basis of preparation

The P.C.C. is a public benefit entity within the meaning of FRS102. The financial statements have been prepared under the Charities Act 2011 and the Church Accounting Regulations 2006, in accordance with applicable accounting standards and the current Statement of Recommended Practice, Accounting and Reporting by Charities, (SORP (FRS 102)).

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention as modified by the inclusion of investments at market value and the revaluation of fixed assets. The financial statements include all transactions, assets and liabilities for which the P.C.C. is responsible in law. They do not include the accounts of church groups that owe their affiliation to another body, nor those which are informal gatherings of church members

Funds accounting

Funds held by the P.C.C. are:

Unrestricted funds - general funds which can be used for P.C.C. ordinary purposes

Restricted funds - a) income from trusts or endowments which may be expended only on those restricted objects provided in the terms of the trust or bequest; b) donations or grants received for a specific object or invited by the P.C.C. for a specific object. The funds may only be expended on the specific object for which they were given. Any balance remaining unspent at the end of the year is carried forward as a balance on that fund

Income and endowments

All income and endowments, accounted for without deduction for any costs of receivability, are recognised when there is evidence of entitlement, receipt is probable, and the amount can be measured reliably

Donations and legacies

Collections are recognised when received.

Planned giving receivable is recognised when there is evidence of entitlement, receipt is probable, and the amount accords with the Gift Aid declaration or other record of intention to donate

Gift aid recovered is recognised when the income to which it is attached is recognised

Grants and legacies are recognised when the formal offer in writing of the funding, is received by the P.C.C.

Charitable activities

Statutory fees for weddings and funerals are recognised when the office occurs

Other trading activities

Trading activities are where income is receivable in return for selling goods or providing services. Income from trading is recognised either: a - when received, or b - in the case of concerts: for the year in which the event occurs, irrespective of date of receipt. Advance bookings are included in creditors until the concert has taken place

Sales of magazines are recognised when received

Rents from property are recognised in accordance with the rental agreements, when receipt is probable

Investment income

Dividends are accounted for when due and payable. Interest entitlements are accounted for as they accrue

All other income

All other income is recognised in accordance with the above overall policy

Gains and losses on investments

Realised gains are recognised when the investments are sold

Unrealised gains and losses are accounted for on revaluation at 31 December

Expenditure

Expenditure is recognised when there is evidence of entitlement, payment is probable, and the amount can be measured reliably

Grants

Grants and donations are accounted for when paid over, or when awarded where the award creates a binding obligation on the P.C.C.

Church activities

The diocesan parish contribution is accounted for on an annual basis, reflecting the allocation set by our Deanery. Any parish contribution unpaid at 31 December is provided for in these accounts as an operational (though not a legal) liability and is shown as a creditor in the balance sheet

Fixed assets

Tangible fixed assets

Consecrated and beneficed property of any kind is excluded from the accounts by s.10(2) of the Charities Act 2011.

Movable church furnishing held by the Vicar and Churchwardens on special trust for the P.C.C. and which require a faculty for disposal, are accounted as inalienable property unless consecrated. They are listed in the church's inventory which can be inspected but are not included in the financial statements

All expenditure on consecrated or beneficed buildings and individual items costing under £1,000 are written off in the year they were incurred

Depreciation

Depreciation is calculated to write down the cost of tangible fixed assets, excluding freehold properties, over their expected useful lives. The rates generally applicable are:

Fixtures and fittings	20%
Audio visual	33%
Office equipment	25%

No depreciation is provided on freehold buildings as the useful economic life of these assets exceeds 50 years and residual values so high that potential depreciation would be immaterial. It is the P.C.C.'s policy to maintain these assets in a continual state of sound repair. Resulting from regular impairment reviews, provision will be made if there has been any permanent diminution in value

Investments

Investments are stated at market value at the balance sheet date

Current Assets

Amounts owing to the P.C.C. at 31 December in respect of fees, rents or other income are shown as debtors, less provision for amounts that may prove uncollectible

Short-term deposits include cash held on deposit either with the CBF Church of England Funds, or at the bank

2 Analysis of income and endowments

	Unrestricted Fund	Restricted Fund/s	Endowed Fund/s	Total Funds 2022	Total Funds 2021	Notes
	£	£	£	£	£	
Planned giving (via standing order)	48,669	-	-	48,669	44,955	
Planned giving (via weekly envelopes)	1,211	-	-	1,211	7,168	
Loose cash collections	11,268	-	-	11,268	5,941	
Christmas Tree Festival	6,218	-	-	6,218	8,387	
Other Fund Raising Activities	9,028	-	-	9,028	5,991	
Other donations	2,883	10,149	-	13,032	14,220	
Gift Aid recoverable	14,247	-	-	14,247	12,501	
Legacies	-	-	-	-	-	
Grants	-	-	-	-	-	
Donations and legacies	£93,524	£10,149	-	£103,673	£99,433	
Fees for weddings & funerals - P.C.C.	3,167	-	-	3,167	3,726	
Fees for weddings & funerals - Clergy	1,392	-	-	1,392	1,226	
Fees for weddings & funerals - DBF	3,332	-	-	3,332	5,822	
Fees for weddings & funerals - Other Wedding	2,066	-	-	2,066	93	
Charitable activities	£9,957	-	-	£9,957	£10,867	
Big Day, Xmas Fair & Festival of Christmas Trees	13,461	-	-	13,461	4,257	
Other fund raising activities	739	-	-	739	130	
Parish magazine	1,318	-	-	1,318	538	
Belmont Centre hiring fees	25,821	-	-	25,821	17,870	
Other trading activities	£41,339	-	-	£41,339	£22,795	
Bank deposit interest	148	420	-	568	27	
Rent from letting of investment property	-	-	-	-	-	
Proceeds from Sale of Assets	-	-	-	-	-	
Investments	£148	£420	-	£568	£27	
Other receipts	(158)	1,178	-	1,020	917	
Total income and endowments on all funds	£144,810	£11,747	-	£156,557	£134,039	

3 Analysis of expenditure

	Unrestricted Fund	Restricted Fund/s	Endowed Fund/s	Total Funds 2022	Total Funds 2021	Notes
	£	£	£	£	£	
Uckfield Festival Big Day	75	-	-	75	30	
Festival of Christmas Trees	2,784	-	-	2,784	3,206	
Stewardship costs (printing etc)	-	-	-	-	86	
Other fundraising (non-trading) costs	1,724	-	-	1,724	2721	
Cost of raising funds	£4,583	-	-	£4,583	£4,043	
Missionary and charitable giving	1,687	3,544	-	5,231	6,087	4
Ministry: Diocesan Parish Share	67,500	-	-	67,500	64,500	
Ministry: Other Clergy costs	7,051	-	-	7,051	6,031	6
Staff: Admin	16,961	-	-	16,961	16,153	5
Upkeep of services	2,058	830	-	2,888	6,975	
Church running costs	16,318	-	-	16,318	12,242	
Junior Church and Clubs (e.g. Choir)	298	1,110	-	1,408	602	
Church maintenance and repair	691	-	-	691	3,369	
Piano / Organ maintenance and repair	998	237	-	1,235	916	
Holy Cross School Support	1,750	-	-	1,750	750	8
Major Works	-	-	-	-	5,652	
Miscellaneous	3,804	-	-	3,804	849	
Bank charges	924	-	-	924	857	
Messy Church/Holiday Club/Outreach	817	-	-	817	201	
Fees - Paid to Clergy	1,458	-	-	1,458	1,584	
Fees - Paid to DBF	3,650	-	-	3,650	5,332	
Fees - Paid for Wedding Extras	385	-	-	385	50	
Cost of charitable activities	£126,350	£5,721	-	£132,071	£132,150	
Uckfield Festival Big Day	-	-	-	-	-	
Festival of Christmas Trees	2,803	-	-	2,803	290	
Other events	-	-	-	-	-	
Belmont Centre running costs	18,491	-	-	18,491	13,943	
Parish magazine costs	-	-	-	-	-	
Other trading costs (inc 2021 Reversal)	(5,000)	-	-	(5,000)	-	
Cost of other trading activities	£16,294	-	-	£16,294	£14,233	
Total expended on all funds	£147,227	£5,721	-	£152,948	£150,426	

4 Missionary and charitable giving

	Unrestricted <u>Fund</u>	Restricted <u>Fund/s</u>	Endowed <u>Fund/s</u>	Total Funds <u>2022</u>	Total Funds <u>2021</u>	Notes
	£	£	£	£	£	
Overseas:						
<i>Total</i>	875	3,244	-	4,119	1,946	
Home:						
<i>Total</i>	1,512	300	-	1,812	2,640	
<i>Accrued amount (2021 HX School Governors)</i>	-	-	-	-	1,500	
<i>Accrued amount (2021 Reversal)</i>	(700)	-	-	(700)	-	
	1,687	3,544	-	5,231	6,086	

5 Staff costs

	Unrestricted <u>Fund</u>	Restricted <u>Fund/s</u>	Endowed <u>Fund/s</u>	Total Funds <u>2022</u>	Total Funds <u>2021</u>	Notes
	£	£	£	£	£	
Remuneration						
<i>Wages and salaries</i>	16,961	-	-	16,961	16,153	
	16,961	-	-	16,961	16,153	

6 Payments to P.C.C. members

Trustee payments and expenses

The P.C.C. support the clergy by paying Council Tax of £3,466, water and environmental charges amounting to £802 for the Rectory, £459 for a replacement washer/dryer plus other costs towards travel, hospitality, telephone, internet and postage totalling £2,324 in 2022.

7 Transactions with persons related to P.C.C. members

Since the appointment of a new Treasurer in June 2019, all payments to the Parish Administrator are connected to the trustees as the Treasurer is married to the Parish Administrator. P.C.C. procedures are in place to ensure at least two others are aware of expenditure, other than regular commitments and pre-agreed works, before payment is made. Financial reporting to the P.C.C. and the P.C.C. Standing Committee contains financial detail to ensure transparency. No other payments have been made to persons related to or connected to the trustees.

8 Transactions with related charities

The Holy Cross Church of England Primary School is supported by the Clergy and financial assistance is provided in agreement with the P.C.C.. The incumbent is an ex-officio member of the Board of Governors.

Financial support has been given to Holy Cross School during 2022 for the Governors - £1,750.

9 Governance

	Unrestricted <u>Funds</u>	Restricted <u>Fund/s</u>	Endowed <u>Fund/s</u>	Total Funds <u>2022</u>	Total Funds <u>2021</u>	Notes
Accounts production	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	
	-	-	-	-	-	

10 Transfers between funds

	Unrestricted <u>Funds</u>	Restricted <u>Fund/s</u>	Endowed <u>Fund/s</u>	Total Funds <u>2022</u>	Total Funds <u>2021</u>	Notes
	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	
	-	-	-	-	-	

11 Fixed assets

a Investments

	Unrestricte d <u>Fund</u>	Restrict ed <u>Fund/s</u>	Endowe d <u>Fund/s</u>	Total Funds <u>2022</u>	Note s
Market value 1 January 2022	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	
Disposals at carrying value	-	-	-	-	
Purchases at cost	-	-	-	-	
Net gains and revaluation	-	-	-	-	
Market value 31 December 2022	-	-	-	-	

12 Fixed assets

Tangible fixed assets

	<u>Freehold land and buildings</u>	<u>Audio visual equipment</u>	<u>Office equipment</u>	<u>Total fixed assets</u>	<i>Notes</i>
	£	£	£	£	
Cost or valuation					
At 1 January 2022	1,370,000	-	-	1,370,000	
Additions	-	-	-	-	
Disposals	-	-	-	-	
Revaluation	-	-	-	-	
At 31 December 2022	1,370,000	-	-	1,370,000	
Charge for impairment					
At 1 January 2022	-	-	-	-	
At 31 December 2022	-	-	-	-	
Net book amounts					
At 31 December 2022	1,370,000	-	-	1,370,000	
At 31 December 2022	1,370,000	-	-	1,370,000	

The freehold land and buildings comprise the Belmont Centre, Belmont Road. The Belmont Centre remains valued at £1,370,000 as at 31 Dec 2022.

13 Net assets by fund

	<u>Unrestricted Funds</u>	<u>Restricted Fund/s</u>	<u>Endowed Fund/s</u>	<u>Total Funds 2022</u>	<u>Total Funds 2021</u>	<i>Notes</i>
	£	£	£	£	£	
Fixed assets for church use	1,370,000	-	-	1,370,000	1,370,00	
Current assets (except cash)	5,062	-	-	5,062	4,034	
Cash at bank and on deposit	71,021	203,142	-	274,163	271,578	
Current liabilities	(4,953)	-	-	(4,953)	(4,950)	
Long term liabilities	-	-	-	-	-	
	£1,441,130	£203,142	£-	£1,644,272	£1,640,662	

14 Debtors

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Fund/s	Endowed Fund/s	Total Funds 2022	Total Funds 2021	Notes
	£	£	£	£	£	
Income tax recoverable	2,576	-	-	2,576	2,926	
Prepayments and accrued income	2,486	-	-	2,486	1,108	
Other debtors	-	-	-	-	-	
	£5,062	-	-	£5,062	£4,034	

15 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Fund/s	Endowed Fund/s	Total Funds 2022	Total Funds 2021	Notes
	£	£	£	£	£	
Deferred income	-	-	-	-	-	
Accruals for utilities and other costs	4,703	-	-	4,703	4,630	
Other creditors	250	-	-	250	320	
	£4,953	-	-	£4,953	£4,950	

16 Creditors: amounts falling due after one year

	Unrestrict ed Funds	Restrict ed Fund/s	Endowe d Fund/s	Total Funds 2022	Total Funds 2021	Note s
	£	£	£	£	£	
Deferred income	-	-	-	-	-	
Accruals for utilities and other costs	-	-	-	-	-	
Other creditors	-	-	-	-	-	
	-	-	-	-	-	

17 Statement of funds

Restricted Funds - The purpose of the restricted funds are as follows:

- **Organ Repair Fund** – holds funds for repairing and maintaining the Church Organ.
- **Sunday Refreshment Fund** – holds the proceeds of contributions given at coffee after the 9.30am service and is used for charitable donations to good causes.
- **Screen and AV Fund** – established in 2018 to raise funds for the installation of a permanent display screen and in 2019 the scope was extended to include the sound system.
- **Youth Club Fund** – holds funds for the Youth Club which is currently in recess.
- **Ukraine Donations Fund** – established in 2022 to allow donations to support Ukrainian conflict victims.
- **Action Aid Fund** – established in 2018 to support, by monthly donation, the education of a child in Guatemala.
- **Window Appeal Fund** – established in 2019 to raise funds to repair and maintain the church windows.
- **Childrens Work** – established during 2021 due to the fund raising and donations specifically supporting the children's activities and groups in Church.
- **Clergy Housing** – established in 2020 from the proceeds of the sale of the Curates house at 7 Parkview Road, Uckfield.
- **Flower Fund** – established in 2021 to maintain the funds relating to floral tributes in Church.
- **Children's Society** – used in 2021 to restrict funds from collections not dispersed by the close of the year.
- **In Memory of D Youngman** – established in 2022 from a donation in memory of the Late Mr D Youngman.

Unrestricted funds are not subject to any donor restrictions and can be spent as the P.C.C. decides.

18 Summary of all funds

Fund income and expenditure and final balances are as follows:

	Balances b/fwd 1 Jan 2022	Income	Expenditure	Transfers, other gains and losses	Balances c/fwd 31 Dec 2022
	£	£	£	£	£
Organ Repairs	4,015	659	238	10	4,446
Sunday Refreshments	1,237	713	600	3	1,353
AV and Screen Fund	4,341	-	-	9	4,350
Youth Club	341	-	-	1	342
Ukraine Donations	-	2,720	2,710	-	10
Action Aid (Guatemala Child)	-	234	234	-	-
Window Appeal Fund	1,510	-	-	3	1,513
Children's Work	2,320	1,824	1,110	6	3,040
7 Park View Road Proceeds	183,111	-	-	379	183,490
Flower Fund	227	1,178	830	1	576
Children's Society	14	-	-	-	14
In Mem. D Youngman	-	4,000	-	8	4,008
Total of all restricted funds	197,116	11,327	(5,721)	420	203,142
Revaluation of fixed assets	-	-	-	-	-
General fund	1,443,547	144,810	(147,227)	-	1,441,130
Total of all unrestricted funds	1,443,547	144,810	(147,227)	-	1,441,130
Total funds	£1,640,663	£156,137	(£152,948)	£420	£1,644,272

Independent Examiner's Report

to the P.C.C. of The Church of the Holy Cross, Uckfield

for the Year Ended 31st December, 2022

This is my report to the Parochial Church Council of the Ecclesiastical Parish (P.C.C.) of the Church of the Holy Cross, Uckfield, on the annual report for the year ended 31st December 2022 set out within this document.

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

The P.C.C. members are responsible for the preparation of the annual reports. The P.C.C. members 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. to 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. to 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.

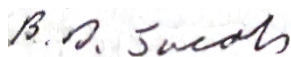
Independent examiner's statement

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention (other than that disclosed below in Section B *)

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 accounting 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.

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

Examiner's signature



Examiner's name CAPITALS

BRIAN DAVID JACOBS

Date

30 March 2023

Relevant professional qualification(s) or body if any

Institute of Chartered Accountants in England & Wales

Examiner's address

12 Silverdale
Keymer
Hassocks, BN6 8RD

- Only complete if the examiner needs to highlight material problems** *for example:*
- accounting records have not been kept in accordance with s132 of the Charities’ Act 2011 and those accounts do not comply with the requirements of the 2008 Regulations setting out the form and content of charity accounts;
 - any material expenditure or action which appears not to be in accordance with the trusts of the charity;
 - any failure to be provided with information and explanations by any past or present trustee, officer or employee; and
 - any material inconsistency between the accounts and the trustees’ annual report.

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

None

Accounts

Trustees Annual Report and Financial Report of The Parochial Church Council of the Ecclesiastical Parish of The Church of the Holy Cross, Uckfield

The Church of the Holy Cross, Church St/Belmont Rd, Uckfield, East Sussex TN22 1BP
Registered Charity no. 1137746

For the year ended 31 December 2021

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Administrative information

Incumbent: The Revd John Wall, The Rectory, 1 Sand Ridge, Ridgewood, Uckfield TN22 5ET

Independent examiner: Mr J Carvey, 23 Farriers Way, Uckfield TN22 5BY (appointed 2020)

Bankers: National Westminster Bank, 49 High Street, Uckfield TN22 1AN

Parish Office: holycrossuckfield@gmail.com

Website: Churchoftheholycrossuckfield.co.uk

Advisers to the PCC

Mrs AD Johnson – Churchwarden

Mr J Pontefract – Churchwarden and Health & Safety Officer

Mr P Ireland – PCC Treasurer

Mrs G Youngman – PCC Secretary

Mrs L Ireland – Parish Administrator

Mr P Kennedy – Major Works Project Manager

Thank you to the following people for permission to use their photos:
Sarah Widdowson, Gillian Youngman, Amy Fieldhouse (Community Fridge Director), Lisa Williamson (Diocesan Communications and Engagement Officer) and Mike Skinner.

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INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

2021 was another roller coaster year with COVID-19 restrictions largely dictating everyone's lives and therefore the life of Holy Cross Church. Having decided locally to close the Church from just before Christmas 2021, in mid-January the Diocese passed on a request from the Head of Environmental Health for Rother and Wealden Councils, that places of public worship voluntarily close until cases are in decline across all East Sussex districts. The Church Times reported on 20th January 2021 that "more than half the 12,500 Anglican parishes in England have closed their churches to public worship, despite permission to remain open under current COVID-19 lockdown rules."

From 1st February, in response to reaching the milestone of 100,000 deaths from COVID-19, the three Archbishops invited people to call on God in Prayer by praying for the nation. The pandemic had had, and continued to have, a huge effect on communities including here in Uckfield with sometimes the loss of life. In the April 2021 edition of the Parish Magazine, the Rector, Fr. John, wrote: *'I have, looking back, done some 40 funerals since Coronavirus started, about a third being due to the virus. In church, in crematoria, by the graveside'*.

This voluntary closure of churches remained in place until 14th February but Holy Cross Church chose to stay closed until Easter Day (4th April) and, for that first service, bookings were taken. The Church then remained open for services for the rest of the year, following the relevant Government and Diocesan guidelines as well as local precautions as appropriate (the Church of England gradually introduced the onus on clergy saying that "the responsibility for making decisions about how to proceed lies with the incumbent").

In June the Wednesday morning 11am Eucharist service was reinstated and from the end of November the Sunday 8am Holy Communion service started again as well as Sunday evening worship.

With regards combatting COVID-19, throughout the year a first and second vaccination was offered to adults (initially), followed by a booster vaccination. These were rolled out according to age/vulnerability and took place at local surgeries or mass vaccine centres.

Lateral flow tests were introduced and encouraged to try and control the spread of the virus, especially as some people did not display symptoms. Employers required staff to take them regularly and anyone else could take them (twice a week was suggested) and report the result so that the bigger picture could be captured. The tests were freely available from pharmacies or could be ordered online or by phone.

With the vaccine and tests gathering pace, the COVID-19 situation began to look more hopeful and following an easing up of some restrictions nationally from 19th July, from the following week Holy Cross Church reduced the distance between pews from two metres to just one

metre, communal singing returned (through masks) and hymn books were used again. Meanwhile, although no longer compulsory, the wearing of masks and sanitising continued to be encouraged. However, Omicron, a new variant of COVID-19, (first announced by South Africa on November 24), took a grip around the world in the run up to Christmas and it became law to wear masks again in certain settings from 10th December. In church alternate pews were taped off again and for the Christmas Eve Crib Service (the busiest service of the year) bookings were taken and also from, then, although not mandatory, people attending services were invited to take a lateral flow test before attending a church service in order to protect themselves and others.

By November, Coronavirus infections in Uckfield reached a new recorded high. The big difference between the spike in cases this winter from the previous one was that a high proportion of the population has been vaccinated, testing had become widespread and those who had COVID-19 found the symptoms were often less severe.

The increase throughout the year of the rate of infection per 100,000 population was as follows:

	Uckfield Town and North	Uckfield South (New Town and Ridgewood)
January	509.1	757.8
June	46.3	108.3
August	117.7	170.1
November	1010.10	770.2
December	1184.30	1956.30

The boundary between the two Uckfield areas is roughly the River Uck. Each of these areas has a population of roughly 7,200.

In June the rate of infection for England as a whole was 532.1 cases per 100,000 people.

By December, the following vaccinations had taken place to those over 12 years of age:

	Uckfield Town and North	Uckfield South (New Town and Ridgewood)
First	88.9%	89.2%
Second	83.4%	83.6%
Booster	65.8%	65.8%

This compares nationally to 89.9% of UK population aged 12+ having received their first dose vaccination, 82.2% their second dose vaccination and 56.1% their booster (third) vaccination by 26th December.

To set the scene at the close of the year, the Office for National Statistics data showed an estimated 2.3million people in the UK had COVID-19 in the week ending December 23rd. This was up from 1.4million in the week to December 16th and the highest number since comparable

figures began in autumn 2020. The estimated percentage of people in private residences in England that had COVID-19 at this time was 3.71% in England (1 in 25 people). The number of COVID-19 patients in hospital in England had climbed to 11,452 on 29th December (the highest since February 26).

A total of 174,000 deaths were registered in the UK in 2020 and 2021 where COVID-19 was mentioned on the death certificate. Putting this in perspective for Uckfield, at the end of the year there were more than 200 people in Sussex hospitals with COVID-19 and the total deaths in Sussex for 2021 where there was any mention of COVID-19 on the death certificate was 296.

However, despite fears over the rapidly spreading Omicron variant, England escaped lockdown measures over the Christmas and New Year period (while Wales, Scotland, and Northern Ireland all imposed restrictions after Christmas Day). An estimate by NHS England said that between 600,000 and 750,000 Britons spent Christmas Day self-isolating.

Increasingly throughout the year with the effects on the economy, mental health etc, it became apparent to the nation that to a certain extent we needed to get on with our lives. Holy Cross Church gradually introduced some social/fundraising events, all following the appropriate restrictions at the time and with numerous Risk Assessments being written as the need arose or when there were any changes in circumstances. The Health Secretary, Sajid Javid, said further restrictions in England must be a “last resort” and that the UK must prepare to “live alongside” coronavirus in 2022.

Throughout the year the following main health precautions continued to be in place/encouraged in Holy Cross Church:

- The wearing of masks and sanitising of hands even when not mandatory.
- Communion in one kind only, with the host not being touched by hand by the priest.
- The Peace taking place in a socially distanced manner.
- The church was fogged (professionally sanitised) at least once a week.

The report which follows needs to be read bearing the above background in mind. Whilst there were nothing like the usual number of social and fundraising events pre the pandemic, a good number did go ahead in 2021 which played an important part in the life of the church from the perspective of giving both the congregation and community a sense of purpose, opportunities to socialise as well as helping raise much needed income. The Financial Review (from page 29) addresses how the year panned out with regards income and expenditure.

Sources include: Uckfield News, Sussex Live, Daily Mail, Mail on Sunday, The Guardian.

Here is a brief oversight to how the year looked at Holy Cross Church showing various milestones.

2021	Summary of the year
6 th Jan	3 rd total lockdown imposed but Churches allowed to remain open. Holy Cross remained closed
17 th Feb	Ash Wednesday service held via Zoom
25 th Feb	Diocesan Lent course "Cracked Wide Open" started (via Zoom)
7 th March	Poppy Widdowson took on a 10K challenge. Raised £2082
13 th March	180 Mothering Sunday posies were delivered to ladies in the Plurality
29 th March	Some Covid measures lifted including 'stay at home'
4 th April	Easter Day – Church open again for services (bookings taken)
9 th April	Prince Philip died. Church open for private prayer Friday 5-7pm and 2-3 hours Saturday
11 th April	Church bell tolled 99 times following the death of Prince Philip
18 th April	Annual Parochial Church Meeting originally planned for this date then postponed to 23 rd May
22 nd April	Children's Choir weekly sessions returned
June	The Reverend Martha Mutikani joined the Plurality as Associate Vicar.
9 th June	First Wednesday 11am Communion Service since first lockdown
13 th June	Open Doors held outside – first family service since the pandemic started
21 st June	Wedding and funeral numbers can increase to capacity of church
22 nd June	Holiday Club cancelled
10 th July	Holy Cross Church had a stall at the annual town 'Big Day' event
18 th July	The Children's Choir took part in the annual town event 'Proms on the Pitch'
19 th July	The Government relaxed some rules including: No limits on how many people can meet, 1m-plus guidance removed, face coverings no longer required by law, although the government still "expects and recommends" them in crowded and enclosed spaces, no limits on guests at weddings and funerals, No restrictions on communal worship
25 th July	Social distancing in church went from 2 metres to 1. Singing in church allowed (with masks on)
4 th Aug	Community Leader's Lunches at the Rectory restarted
7 th Aug	Crafty Ladies Coffee morning
8 th Aug	Open Doors back in church for first time
22 nd Aug	The Mass setting (Gloria/Benedictus/Agnus Dei) reinstated
2 nd Sept	The Standing Committee cleaned the church and put the pew cushions and kneelers back
5 th Sept	The Parish Eucharist service reverted back to 9.30am (from 10am since COVID-19 started) Coffee available in The Belmont Centre for the first time since pre Covid (in disposable cups)
11 th Sept	Jumble sale on Dee's driveway raised £242
10 th Oct	Harvest Lunch held in The Belmont Centre
13 th Oct	Bible Study started again at St Saviour's led by Canon Hugh
14 th Nov	Remembrance Sunday - the 9.30am service was live streamed – first service to be streamed
20 th Nov	Christmas Bazaar in The Belmont Centre
21 st Nov	First evening service since the pandemic started - Churches Together evening service
28 th Nov	8am service started again (first time since lockdown) and evening services Hymnbooks again, meters and greeters, no signing in, gospel processed
3-5 th Dec	Festival of Christmas Trees held in the Church and The Belmont Centre again
10 th Dec	The Government's Plan B – 'face coverings will become compulsory in and places of worship'
11 th Dec	Carols by Candlelight with Uckfield Concert Brass took place and was live streamed
12 th Dec	Open Doors Christingle Service and the Bonfire Society Carol Service took place
19 th Dec	Nine Lessons and Carols took place and was live streamed
24 th Dec	Crib Service took place and was live streamed (bookings taken). Midnight Mass took place.
25 th Dec	Christmas Day Eucharist took place

OUR AIMS AND PURPOSES AS A CHARITY

'The Parochial Church Council of the Ecclesiastical Parish of the Church of the Holy Cross, Uckfield' is a Charity registered with the Charity Commission in England and Wales as charity number 1137746. It is commonly known by its working name of 'Holy Cross Church, Uckfield'.

Holy Cross Church is set just off the High Street in Uckfield and is part of the Diocese of Chichester. It is part of a Plurality with St Michael and All Angels at Little Horsted and St Margaret of Antioch at Isfield, overseen by the Rector, Father John. The Parochial Church Council (PCC) is a corporate body established by the Church of England and operates under the Parochial Church Council (Powers) Measure 1956, Church Representation Rules 2006 which states that its principal function is "promoting in the parish the whole mission of the Church".

The PCC has the responsibility of co-operating with the incumbent, Revd John Wall, in:

- The promotion of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ according to the doctrines and practices of the Church of England.
- Promoting in the parish the whole mission of the church: pastoral, social, evangelistic and ecumenical.
- Getting to know Jesus better and make Him better known.
- Practical support and care for people in the parish, from the youngest to the eldest, irrespective of level of need or ability to pay.
- Providing financial support to those in need and to other organisations with similar objectives.
- Demonstrating that our aims are for the public benefit, including charities advancing education or religion or relieving poverty.
- Following the Chichester Diocese Strategy 2020-2025 'Vision for Growth' (More Open; More Converted to Jesus Christ; More Generous; More Engaged).

OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

When planning our activities for the year the PCC and clergy have considered the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit and, in particular, the specific guidance on 'charities for the advancement of religion'.

We enable as many people as possible to worship at our church:

- Enabling as many people as possible to become part of our parish community.
- Teaching, baptising and nurturing new and existing believers.

We offer services of worship to God:

- Maintaining an overview of worship throughout the parish.
- Considering how services can involve the many groups that live within the parish.
- Putting faith into practice, through prayer and scripture, music and sacrament.
- Providing services and opportunities to worship (other than the regular Sunday services) which reach out to the wider community.

We promote the Gospel and pray that the unchurched may find life in Jesus Christ:

- Assisting people from all walks of life to develop their knowledge of, and trust in, Jesus.
- Holding courses to advance religion and providing educational courses, such as safeguarding.
- Offering worship and prayer, learning about the Gospel, in small group situations.

We engage in evangelism and outreach to the parish in various ways:

- Reaching out to the unchurched through provision of a stall at the 'Big Day' fete, a Christmas Bazaar, a Festival of Christmas Trees, Messy Church sessions and a Crib Service.
- Community Leaders' Lunches.
- Chaplaincy of Uckfield Bonfire & Carnival Society and the Uckfield Rugby Club.
- Outreach to local schools through assemblies, talks and worship.

We provide a building for people to enjoy:

- Maintaining the fabric of the church building as a historic centre and focus of life in the town: developing its flexibility and wider use; also maintaining the fabric of The Belmont Centre (Church hall).
- Enabling an appreciation of the Church building in the history and archaeology of the area.

We provide tangible pastoral and financial support to the poor and needy:

- Providing pastoral care for people whether part of the Holy Cross Church family or not.
- Providing financial assistance to the poor and needy of the parish.
- Spending the income of our parish trusts according to the wishes of their donors.

We consider the needs of people served by other charities and overseas:

- Giving grants to wider Christian charities.
- Giving grants to missionary organisations.
- Responding to emergencies and crisis by arranging adhoc appeals and retiring collections.
- Providing assistance to the poor and needy of the parish, including the relief of poverty through support to local charities such as Uckfield Foodbank, the Community Fridge and the Edward Holmes Baldock Charity.

We consider protecting the needs of those entering our church buildings:

- Ensuring all members and visitors to the church are kept safe and that all Safeguarding procedure and policy is followed.
- Ensuring all members and visitors to the church are protected as much as possible from COVID-19 by following Government guidelines and having safety procedures in place including doing appropriate Risk Assessments, while respecting people's own sense of responsibility.
- Supporting the National Church's initiative "Living in Love and Faith" on sexuality.

WHAT WE PLANNED TO DO TO ACHIEVE OUR CHARITABLE OBJECTIVES

One of our main objectives was to try and get things back to 'how they were' in order to give a sense of normality which so many people were missing and to be able to achieve our responsibilities to the congregation and local community. This meant considering what we could reintroduce, when and how (services, events etc) in order to keep people safe from the pandemic. Any plans had to be made within the Government and Diocesan guidelines which changed throughout the year, as well as using local discretion as many of the congregation were vulnerable. To this end, numerous Risk Assessments were done as well as ongoing evaluations. The gradual return of usual things happening meant a lot not only to church members but to the wider community of the town and meant that we could start relaxing many of the COVID-19 changes and continue to meet our objectives in a more familiar way.

These positive signs of returning to normal helped a lot of people who had been isolated and lonely and it also started to help redress the financial situation of the Church as we had had to resort to using some of our reserves as explained further on. Both the weekly pewsheets and monthly intercessions sheets and the monthly magazine continued to be emailed/posted to over 180 people/households which we knew were appreciated as a way of keeping people in touch, especially those who were not comfortable to return to church services yet. Many also viewed the mini online services which meant they did not feel so isolated and were able to continue putting their faith into practice from home. These publications and video clips kept parishioners informed of important matters affecting our Church and contain Bible readings and articles that help develop our knowledge and trust in Jesus.

Prior to the pandemic, the PCC had been planning the long term vision for Holy Cross Church which all went on hold in 2020 but started to be picked up again this year although in a slightly different way. As part of the Chichester Diocese Strategy 2020-2025 'Vision for Growth' (More Open; More Converted to Jesus Christ; More Generous; More Engaged), each parish was asked to undertake a Parish Audit and develop a Mission Action Plan (MAP) to help continue its mission to the local community post COVID-19. The Revd Canon Rob Dillingham (Parish Development Officer and Deputy Director for Apostolic Life) was invited to a PCC Standing Committee meeting in April and he gave us the background and advice on how to complete the Parish Audit and MAP.

A fuller account of the MAP for Holy Cross Church can be read in the separate report containing Activities of the Church Family. In summary, part of it includes practical improvements which had been previously identified in our Statement of Needs and were being considered before the pandemic. We had been wanting to build on our increased community profile by improving the flexibility of our worship space which would enable more people to use our facilities, therefore giving public benefit. Initial plans included putting a toilet and kitchenette in the church as well as installing retractable screens and upgrading the sound system.

However it became apparent as church services recommenced with social distancing and the gallery in constant use, that our focus/priorities had changed and improved visual aid resources and a larger loop system area became increasingly more important.

Other priorities in the MAP we drew up included: outreach via a leaflet drop to the new housing estates currently being built in and around Uckfield, addressing the needs of the older children in Junior Church, linking more with people with specific needs in the community, increasing our profile at town events and exploring and revisiting Prayer Workshop Sessions and Quiet Days.

At the end of the year, these were all upper most in our minds; and once other priorities brought about by COVID-19 have subsided we can consider moving forward with them.

There was a problem of reverberation in the main hall of The Belmont Centre (owned by the church) and during 2021 this was addressed by having some panels suspended from the ceiling which has greatly improved the sound/noise issue and made the facilities even more desirable for public benefit. The Mission Action Plan also includes in due course installing a Loop system for the hard of hearing in the building.



We see the above aspects of planning for the future of Church life as part of our response to the themes of More Engaged (A sign of being Apostolic) and More Open (A sign of being one) which are part of the Diocesan Strategy 2020-2025.

PERFORMANCE REVIEW OF ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE YEAR

Worship and Prayer

Holy Cross Church was closed for services at the start of 2021 but was open for worship for 75% of all Sundays as opposed to only 58% the previous year.

All are welcome to attend our regular services. The church family welcomes visitors from within as well as outside the parish boundary and now, via online services, 'virtual' visitors from further afield (the Nine Lessons and Carols service had people viewing from Canada, Holland and Sweden). Visitors attend by personal choice (especially while COVID-19 is still prevalent and there are restrictions in place) and we welcome people from all walks of life to take part in the life of the church. We contend that voluntary attendance to worship the Lord Jesus Christ is a major demonstration of the public benefit of our activities.

Holy Cross Church chose to open again for services from 4th April which was Easter Day. As this was the first opportunity for people to attend a service in person since before Christmas, and being such a significant religious festival, bookings were required to enable effective social distancing to take place and to avoid disappointment for people just turning up. Half the places were taken up within just over a day and soon after bookings were full to a safe capacity of 50. However, the weather was kind and an additional 55 people worshipped outside (in the church yard) in family groups. There were more children and families present than our older congregation. It is a positive sign of the future of Holy Cross.

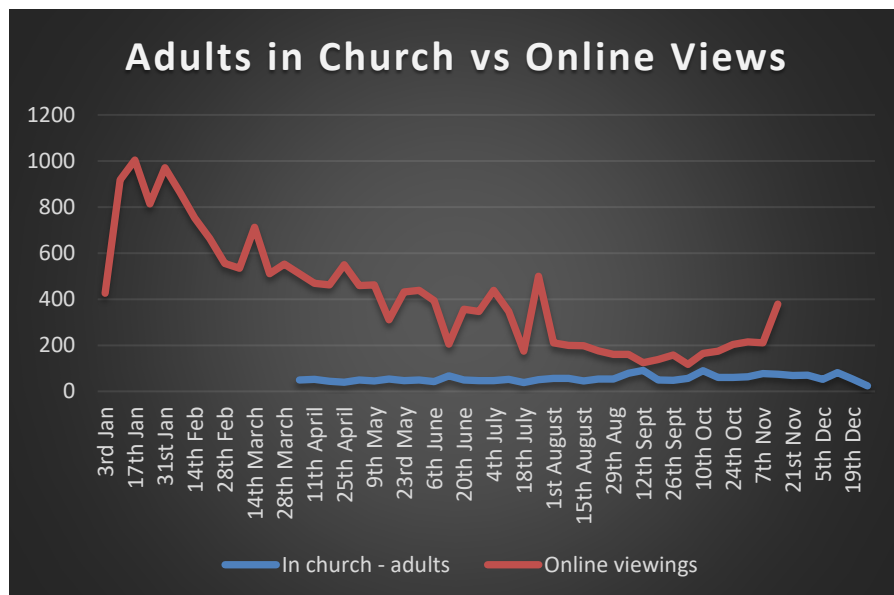


A short pre-recorded Sunday service (employing the help of a local company 'Off The Wall') had been produced from the start of the pandemic and these podcasts continued until 7th November. This year as our buildings were open, the recordings were able to be filmed on rotation in the three Churches in the plurality, reverting to The Rectory for the last four recordings. Accessible via Facebook and YouTube, these weekly services had an average of 425 viewings (fluctuating greatly for no specific reason from 117 to 1004) with numbers generally dropping off once the Church was open again for services from Easter. The average number of viewings from January till then was 713 and after was 295 which is still a very good number (in 2020 the number viewing online services also varied greatly between 120 and over 3000) and far higher than those previously attending Church services. These recordings enabled those unable to come to Church for whatever reason to watch/participate as well as those who were not part of the immediate Church family and we consider this part of our outreach.

The number of adults attending a Sunday morning service in person in 2021 ranged from 90 at the Harvest service to 24 on 26th December (when COVID-19 rates were very high) and averaged 56. The Harvest service was the monthly Open Doors service so this number includes adults who on other weeks may be helping in Junior Church. This average attendance compares to 47 in the 18 services held in Church in 2020 (during which no Open Doors services were held).

Traditionally, the Diocese asks parishes to monitor attendance during Sundays in October. In 2020, the average attendance for the four 10am Eucharist services was 48 (bearing in mind the Church could then only accommodate 50 so some people may have stayed away knowing that) while the average online viewing figures that year were 279 for the same period. In October 2021 the average attendance in Church for the 9.30am Eucharist was 68 with 175 views of the mini online service. This included one 10am Open Doors service (unlike last year).

This graph shows online viewings vs adults at the Sunday services (9.30am Parish Communion and 10am Open Doors services). Note that worship in Church started in April and pre-recorded podcasts finished on 7th November and the chart does not include the 55 young family members worshipping outside on Easter Day.



From the last Sunday in November the 8am Sunday Holy Communion service started again with an average attendance of eight compared to about twelve pre the pandemic.

Evening services also recommenced from the end of November although until the end of the year these were mainly special services i.e. an Uckfield Churches Together service, the end of Festival of Christmas Trees Service and Nine Lessons and Carols. There was one Sunday evening (12th December) though when Plain Evensong took place and this was attended by 25 adults and three children.

However, these statistics are only a snapshot indication of the size of congregation and various factors must be taken into account. The 22 months of the pandemic have seen various changes in people's habits of worship. Many of the congregation are vulnerable so have been self-isolating and/or their personal circumstances have changed while others prefer not to come while COVID-19 is still prevalent and restrictions are in place like wearing masks. Others now attend a different service to the one they did previously.

For four weeks in June and July the Children's Choir returned to feature in the online service, then from July the adult Church Choir sang hymns they had pre-recorded in Church. The Choir also started to sing again at the 9.30am service about this time and from July the congregation were allowed to sing in church but keeping their masks on. Sandie Boniface compiled beautiful and relevant prayers for the online services and also the Open Doors services (where the children read them) which many people appreciated and commented on.

'After the first service when the choir returned, there were people in tears with emotion at having this dimension of our worshipping life again'

An Ash Wednesday service was pre-recorded and made available online (and had 418 viewings) while twelve people participated in a live service via Zoom, with ashes (and instructions) being delivered by the Rector beforehand along with a thoughtful spray of flowers. The five week Diocesan Lent Course “Cracked Wide Open” was also held via Zoom with a group of five people participating. Throughout Holy Week Fr. John recorded a daily online message which received an average of 49 viewings.

Early in the year, the Church of England launched a national course, “Living in Love and Faith”, about sexuality, following the heated debate about sexuality in the early 2000s. There was an obligatory Zoom Meeting attended by over 300 clergy in the Chichester Diocese, followed by this course which was obligatory in every Deanery. A small group of people from Holy Cross Church participated in this five week course via Zoom which was a series of testimonies from individuals from a whole range of sexualities and life experiences and included looking at Biblical references. As Fr. John explained *“The whole point is not to change people’s minds, but to take the toxicity out of the situation, to get people to listen to each other, to make us all realise this is not just a theological issue, but a question of real people’s lives, spiritual journeys and what it means to be fully human”*.

In October the twice monthly Bible Study group led by Canon Hugh Moseley recommenced at St Saviours.

There are usually many services that take place during the year in Holy Cross Church other than the regular Sunday services. These reach out to the far wider community and this year we were pleased to bring back some of these acts of worship which had not been able to take place last year due to the pandemic, namely: All Souls, Remembrance Day, a closing service at the end of the Festival of Christmas Trees, the Sussex Bonfire Societies Carol Service, Carols by Candlelight and the Christmas Eve Crib Service.



The Christmas Eve Crib Service is the most popular service of the year and usually attracts about 600 people but as COVID-19 rates were on the increase again, numbers were limited and it was necessary to take bookings which were full within four days - 200 adults and 50 children attended. Children were invited to dress up and participate in the Nativity story.

The pre-recorded online services stopped early November because the number of people returning to church services had increased, as well as the ongoing cost and work involved to have them professionally made. The Rector did however ask for feedback from viewers and it was clear that there was a need for an ongoing online presence in some shape or form. It was

therefore decided, going forward, to live stream certain key services which meant people could view an entire service, either at the same time as it took place, meaning they felt part of the service, or later at their convenience.

The following services were streamed live (with their viewing figures):

14 th November	Remembrance Service (9.30am Eucharist)	379
11 th December	Carols and Candlelight with Uckfield Brass	722
19 th December	Nine Lessons and Carols	425
24 th December	Crib Service	574

All online viewing figures represent one or more people watching the service so the number of people watching will in reality be higher.

This year the annual St Wilfrid's Hospice 'Lights of Love' Services were held in the Hospice garden in Eastbourne and made available online (usually these services are held in various venues, including Holy Cross Church).

We see the above aspects of Church life as part of our response to More Converted to Jesus Christ (A sign of being Holy) aspect of the Diocesan Strategy 2020-2025 'Vision for Growth'.

Children's work and attendance

Holy Cross Church has a lot to offer young families and outreach activities made a comeback and children's work continued to thrive. That was evident in the number of young families who came back to church, starting on Easter Sunday when 55 children and parents held an outdoor worship session in the churchyard.

In June the monthly Open Doors family service returned and was held in the churchyard and being outside, singing was allowed for the first time. Fr. John later commented that they were lucky with the weather that day and that there was lots of positive response with some people even in tears at being able to sing again. Whilst the church could only accommodate 50 people safely at the time, there were 84 present (68 adults and 16 children) which included five or six people in the nearby houses who came to listen. Fr. John thought about two thirds of the congregation were there for Open Doors. This was encouraging because at the end of January, the Church of England warned that it may cut the number of paid clergy by up to 20 per cent amid fears that a fifth of worshippers may never return after the coronavirus pandemic.

A couple of Junior Church sessions also took place in the churchyard then they returned to meeting in The Belmont Centre from July, coming into Church at the end of the service for a blessing/communion as before and to share with the congregation what they had been doing.



'It is so joyful to see the children coming in and enjoying themselves. We take delight in seeing them take part and wanting to be involved.'

Those attending Junior Church ranged from babies to 12 years old with the older children seeing their roles as 'helpers'.

The average number of children attending the six Open Doors services held in 2021 was 20 while the average attendance of children at Junior Church was 17 with an average of 10 Junior Church leaders and parents helping.

Unfortunately the planned Holiday Club had to be cancelled due to COVID-19 concerns, and only one Messy Church session was able to be held in October 2021 with a Harvest theme (numbers were limited to 35 for health and safety reasons).

The Children's Choir grew with over 20 children participating by the end of the year. Apart from singing for the online services and at Open Doors, they performed again at the annual town event 'Proms on the Pitch'.



Since Church services recommenced after the pandemic began, they had all started at the later time of 10am. This made it difficult for some families who had other commitments also on a Sunday so from 5th September the Parish Eucharist reverted to 9.30am but Open Doors remained at 10am as it always had done.

'In recent years Holy Cross has been noticeably more-active in the community, reaching out to a wider variety of community groupings. The work with young children particularly stands out.'

Life Events

Our church continues to be appreciated by our parishioners and many others, as a space where life events are celebrated with joy and thanksgiving. There were seven Baptisms held during the year and three Weddings (including one blessing).

There were 10 Funerals in the church, three Memorial Services, six Graveside Services and 29 Crematoria Services. In addition, the interment of ashes of two people took place in the graveyard.

A Confirmation Service led by Bishop Will was held in July at Little Horsted Church, the candidates (six children and two adults) attended classes which were all held in person.

Pastoral ministry/care

We are very grateful for the support and continuing assistance of the Honorary Assistant Curates especially during these difficult times; the Revd. David Ashton, the Revd. Canon Hugh Moseley, Revd. Dr Mike Blanch and Readers Gill Comber and Sheila Fordham. Gill Comber, having been a Reader for 20 years, decided not to renew her Reader's Licence in September. However, she is continuing her pastoral work and throughout this year she has been invaluable, offering to take people for their vaccinations or to hospital appointments and numerous people gratefully took up her kind offer.

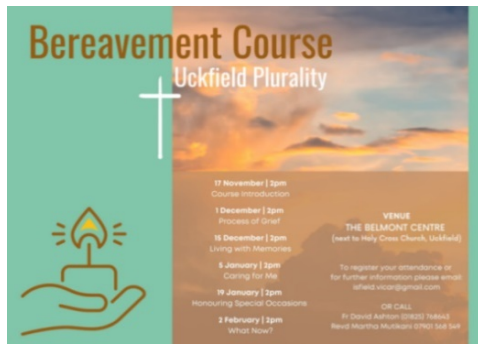
The telephone pastoral system of the congregation being phoned by a small core of people (clergy, PCC members etc) which was set up when the pandemic started, continued to a certain degree though some people did not find this necessary unlike when they had been in lockdown with tighter restrictions. However social media continued to be an important method of communication especially for up to date information and last minute changes which was part of the nature of the pandemic. Our Facebook page followers increased by 16% from last year to 1340 and is maintained by Sarah Widdowson with regular updates of what services/events are coming up and posting photographs after something has happened. The Church website continues to be heavily used with the average number of views per day 290 compared to 215 in the last five months of 2020 since its inception of the new website.

Visits to nursing homes and hospitals remained very limited during 2021 making it hard for family members even to visit. There were a number of home visits by clergy both for those who were sick and bereaved.

In June we were delighted to welcome the Revd Martha Mutikani as Associate-Vicar of St. Margaret's, Isfield, to serve here and in the wider Uckfield Plurality of St. Michael's, Little Horsted and Holy Cross, Uckfield on Sundays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays. Whilst based in Isfield, Revd Martha has participated in leading services and events at Holy Cross Church like Open Doors and she entered into the spirit at the Bonfire Society Carol Service (see photograph of her dressed as Princess Leia from the film Star Wars) and has many ideas and new initiatives such as the six session Bereavement

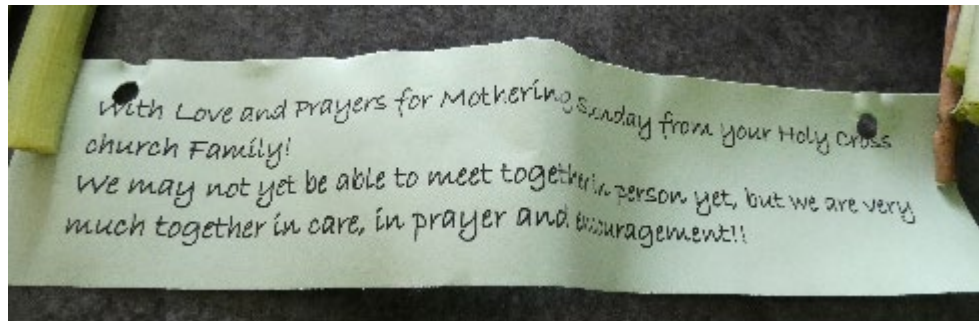


Course, running alternate weeks in The Belmont Centre from the end of the year. This course



was led by the Revd David Ashton and the Revd Martha Mutikani with Carol Ashton kindly providing refreshments. A core of about ten people (not only from churches in the Plurality) attended the socially distanced course and found it very beneficial listening to clergy talk about the grieving process as well as an opportunity for those present to share experiences and find some comfort and reassurance.

As the Church was not open for any services before Easter, for Mothering Sunday posies were made up and given out prior to the day by a small band of volunteers delivering over 175 bunches throughout the Plurality to ladies with church connections (normally on Mothering Sunday about 80 would be distributed at Holy Cross Church).



Many people took the trouble to say thank you expressing their gratitude at this gesture saying things like '*it's made my day*', '*touching*' and '*much appreciated at this difficult time*'.

Social events and fundraising

Unfortunately it was not possible to hold events for the first part of the year which is always a good way to communicate with the congregation and community, alleviate loneliness and help mental health which was an increasing concern especially during and after COVID-19 lockdowns. The first social gathering was a Coffee Morning in The Belmont Centre hosted by the Crafty Ladies in August in aid of both 'Mustard Seed' and Holy Cross Church and it raised the amazing sum of £577.00. It was a welcome opportunity for people to meet others they had not seen for many months for the first time. In September coffee was served in The Belmont Centre after the morning service which meant people could socialise instead of having to go straight home after worship.



The fundraising events which were able to take place this year also played an important role not only in the life of the parish but in the community as an event



to go to, a way of meeting others and avoiding loneliness. We welcomed back on the calendar, Uckfield's "Big Day", Harvest Lunch, Christmas Bazaar, Festival of Christmas Trees and a Jumble Sale.

We had a food stall on the Luxford Field for the Big Day in July (and the Crafty Ladies also had a stall), a Harvest lunch organised by Dee in which over 90 people and young families participated and she held a Jumble Sale in her driveway (thankfully it was a dry day).

They were also important from the fundraising aspect as hardly anything had been able to take place last year and such events are vital for the church financially. It felt like a bit of normality had come back to church life which was vital for people's health and wellbeing.

The Christmas Bazaar in The Belmont Centre had stalls adequately spaced, doors open and sanitising stations and was incredibly well received. People were delighted to be back and the event raised a significant amount of money. The Christmas Tree Festival was also back in its original format but with extra COVID-19 safety precautions in place and received positive and thankful feedback. With just under 100 sponsored trees there was more space between the trees, entry was staggered, a one-way system used and sanitising stations at the entrance and throughout the church. Other factors were reviewed to ensure volunteers, visitors and organisers were kept safe. The Catering team did brilliantly, as did the Crafty Ladies and left over Bazaar sales.



The Festival of Christmas Trees, now in its 12th year is a fixture on many people's calendar and attracts visitors from neighbouring counties as well as all areas of Sussex. Uckfield now arranges the Christmas late night shopping to coincide with the first day of the Festival and for many of the 4000 plus people who visit the Church in its splendour over the weekend, it is the start of Christmas for them.



This year has seen a real transition regarding online giving. A lot of younger people do not carry cash and at the end of 2019 a card machine was purchased to allow us to use contactless and chip and pin cards for donations. The pandemic then encouraged people to not use cash but to use contactless methods so in addition a Giving Station card machine (left) was purchased this year just before the Festival of Christmas Trees where it raised over £300 of donations and has been used at a few services since. A total of £475 was donated in December using it.

As last year, the December grand draw tickets were available online and this year nearly £900 of the sales were via this method (those unable to pay online had other opportunities to purchase tickets).

One of our Junior Church members, Poppy Widdowson, took it upon herself to do some fundraising and her efforts in March were inspirational and greatly appreciated as evidenced with over 150 people sponsoring her and an amazing £2,072.00 being raised for children's work at Holy Cross Church.



Further fundraising by individuals took the form of a Sponsored Slim by Fr. John and Churchwarden Dee Johnson with monies raised being shared between Holy Cross Church Window Appeal and Kids for Kids (helping children struggling to survive in remote villages in Darfur, Sudan). The wonderful total of £872.50 was given.

Our witness to the community

Unfortunately it has not been possible to have the Church open throughout the week for private prayer or visitors wishing to look inside the building other than short periods on two days immediately following the death of Prince Philip. Due to COVID-19, the Church was regularly fogged on a Monday then kept closed until the following Sunday in order to keep everyone safe. The Church was however open for special events like weddings and funerals and was fogged after any such service.

However, the community knew the Church was there and its place in the locality is evident in the tolling of a church bell 99 times by Chris and Maureen MacVe on 11th April in memory of HRH Prince Philip (along with many other churches throughout the nation) was put online and totalled 3,200 views, by far the most for a single event in this Church year.

The bi-monthly Community Leaders Lunches held at the Rectory had become established and they were able to restart from August with around 30 people attending and networking. After a cooked lunch provided by the Rector and Gillian Youngman, a short talk is given by someone about the group or organisation that they represent. At this first gathering for over a year, people were asked to share how the pandemic had been for them in their official capacity as well as personally and some heartrending experiences were shared. At the October meeting, Fr.





John addressed those present about the Parish Audit/Mission Action Plan and later sent out a questionnaire asking questions about how Holy Cross Church could serve the local community better. The answers reflected that even if people did not come regularly to the services, they recognised and appreciated the significance of having a parish church in the town and supported the work that they did.

Bishop Will came to the December lunch where a representative from Linden Cottage spoke about their work in the care home.

The following quote is from a community leader commenting after one of the community lunches.

'Holy Cross is very much the heart of the Town. Christmas Tree festival, Uckfield college carol service, Bonfire Society service, prayers for carnival, Remembrance service, Churches together celebrations, rectory community lunches, supporting Outreach box service, mens breakfast club, holiday clubs, ladies fellowship and a mixture of traditional and modern services - the ultimate bringing together young and old at the crib service on Christmas Eve. All of these reached all ages of our community, at the heart of which is a church that reaches out to the community and isn't just there for Christmas, weddings and christenings. It is a church that continually strived to reach a diverse community audience and the challenges that life pre- covid brought.'

Holy Cross School attended the church occasionally and other schools visited during the year for services and events such as Harvest, Christmas and the Festival of Christmas Trees. Fr. John recorded four School Assemblies for the town's Primary schools, and he and Revd Martha will restart assemblies in person next year.

In September Fr. John read Carnival prayers for the town even though the event was necessarily scaled down because of COVID-19.

Holy Cross Church continued to support the local Foodbank with a regular appeal in the weekly pewsheet. The produce presented at the Harvest service also went to the Foodbank.

A new town initiative which the Church is keen to support is the Community Fridge which opened in the autumn just off the main town car park. Anyone can donate surplus food which would otherwise go to waste and anyone can take it free of charge during the two hour sessions it is open on three days of the week. Holy Cross Church has supported it financially by giving £2,097 from the Inspire Project Fund (money donated from a group of Uckfield's District Nurses to benefit the community).



Mission, outreach and evangelism

A small group was appointed by the PCC to look at away giving and make recommendations back to them: these are detailed in the accounts. In addition, retiring collections after services raised £365 for Afghan Refugees and £472 for UNICEF's Give the Work a Shot (vaccination) appeal at our Harvest service.

Donations for coffee after the morning Eucharist go towards the Chichester Diocese Children and Families work and the Goodwill Children's Homes. This charity has been supporting the care and education of destitute and orphaned children in southern India since 1976. It supports three children's homes, a primary school and a Tribal Outreach programme (TORP). In 2021 the coffee mornings were only reinstated towards the end of the year so funds have been carried over to be donated in 2022.

Other regular charitable giving throughout the year has included Action Aid (Sponsoring of Maria Luisa Cucul Yat in Guatemala), Christian Aid, Uckfield Foodbank and The Children's Society.

The Churchwardens are also trustees of the "Edward Holmes Baldock Charity" which is three charities rolled into one. It incorporates the Henry Gardener and Dorothy Ellis charities, and all three of them were established to relieve poverty in the town of Uckfield. Dorothy Ellis died in 1731 and some of the money she left enabled 12 fourpenny loaves to be provided to 12 poor families at Holy Cross Church every Sunday. This is now invested in the COIF Charities Investment Fund which provides a quarterly income which is used to provide a fund for an annual donation to three families selected by a sub-committee each year. The fund from 2020 was carried forward and as no suitable recipients could be identified in 2021 due to the ongoing COVID-19 restrictions it will be carried forward once again to be allocated in 2022.

Some of the congregation belong to Caring and Sharing which is a scheme which raises money by sacrificial giving by people who try to: 'Live more simply than others may simply live'.

It is based on two ideas: the first is that by making a small sacrifice members can turn away from the material values of the western world; the second is that they can share their comparative wealth by sending the savings from this small sacrifice to projects in poorer countries to provide the basic needs of life. Money saved by making a small change in lifestyles is given to one or more of 14 overseas projects which provide basic necessities for very poor people.

Deanery Synod

Holy Cross Church currently has four representatives on the Uckfield Deanery Synod which met 3 times in 2021 (twice on Zoom and once in person) and who report back to the PCC. The Deanery Synod considers matters concerning the Church of England, brings together the views of member parishes on common problems, fosters a sense of community and interdependence among those parishes, and generally to promote in the deanery the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical. The Deanery Synod elects clergy and laity

Diocesan Synod representatives and has a General Synod representative allocated to it. A report of 2021 can be seen in the separate report containing Activities of the Church Family.

Ecumenical Relationships

The Rector and John Pontefract (churchwarden) represent Holy Cross Church on 'Churches in Uckfield' which meets 3-4 times a year and usually organises the Good Friday Walk of Witness and Christian Unity Week and "Sunday Funday" (part of the annual Uckfield Festival) none of which, sadly, took place this year because of COVID-19.

Property

The Belmont Centre



A very short walk from the church is the Belmont Centre which the Church owns. The PCC is responsible for this building which has a Maintenance Group overseen by one of the Churchwardens, and the Major Works Project Manager who report back to the PCC. As well as housing the Parish Office, there is a good well stocked kitchen as well as toilet facilities, a hall and a small meeting room. This wonderful facility is used for both Church fundraising and social

events as well as being hired out and bringing in income for the Church. An additional part of The Belmont Centre is on permanent loan to a Pre-school Group.

The maintenance and development of The Belmont Centre is planned to support the needs of the Church but also for it to remain as an asset for use by the wider community. Due to the COVID-19 restrictions bookings were not allowed at the start of 2021 but gradually throughout the year some of the regular groups came back and there were enquiries about new bookings.

St Saviours

St Saviour's is in the south of the town: it was formerly a chapel and now comprises 16 flatlets and a worship area with seating which also doubles up as a community space for events. It is now managed by Uckfield & District Housing Association Ltd. Ray Pilson continues to be Deputy Churchwarden there for his second year. It was with great sadness that his predecessor Pam Morris died in September; she is greatly missed. Although regular weekly services at St Saviours have been stopped, it was used this year for the 11am Wednesday morning communion when the Festival of Christmas Trees was being prepared, for Bible Study which restarted fortnightly in mid October (led by Canon Hugh Moseley) and for a PCC meeting. A Carol Service was also held in December, also taken by Canon Hugh.

Curate's House

As reported last year, the parish had part owned a property, 7 Parkview Road, which was bought as a home for a curate in training in 1989. When we no longer had a curate the Church Commissioners allowed us to rent the house out for a limited period then repay what we owed or sell it. A parish no longer has to provide a house for a training post and therefore the PCC took the decision to sell it. The net proceeds of £183,086 were allocated as a restricted fund for the PCC to decide how best to invest the proceeds for the Church. Due to COVID-19 there was not an opportunity this year to discuss what to use this money for so that will be carried forward to 2022.

Volunteers

We would like to thank the many people who volunteer in any way to make Holy Cross Church so vibrant and at the heart of the community. Special mention should be given to Mike and Doreen Dawson who moved away in April – we thank them for their faith and commitment over the past years with their involvement and following roles: Leader of the Ladies Fellowship, Christian Aid, The Children's Society and Fairtrade representatives, Intercessor and Lectors.

We continue to seek to extend the opportunities for the exercise of ministry and gifts within the life of the community. A greater number of the church family are involved in the many roles within the Church, lending great encouragement to those involved, as well as the whole congregation. Towards the end of the year when some roles were re-introduced in services, a number of people who had previously fulfilled these positions had to stand down temporarily or permanently and we are very grateful to them for their past faithful service. Appeals were put out and new people have offered their service and time which is most encouraging.

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

The appointment of Parochial Church Council members is governed by and set out in the Church Representation Rules. It is made up of the following people:

PCC members: Ex Officio: the Revd John Wall (Rector); Gill Comber (Reader), until September, Sheila Fordham (Reader); Dee Johnson, John Pontefract (Churchwardens): Dee Johnson, Jill Thornton, Sandie Boniface, Francis Wallace (Members of Deanery Synod).

PCC members: Representatives of the Laity: Paul Cuerden, Jacqueline Davies, Terry Hall, Paul Ireland, Ann Kennedy, Angela Noel, Edna Osborne, Barbara Poole, Sister Sarah, Sister Mary Paul, Sarah Widdowson and Gillian Youngman.

All those who attend our services /members of the congregation are encouraged to register on the Electoral Roll and stand for election to the PCC. The number of people on the Electoral Roll as of 14th April 2022 was 187 which is an increase of 3 from last year. There are 18 (just under 10%) people who are not resident in the parish (which is the same number as last year).

The PCC meetings are chaired by the Rector and Dee Johnson is Vice-Chair. The PCC Secretary is Gillian Youngman and the PCC Treasurer is Paul Ireland.

New PCC members are signposted to the following:

- The Charity Commission Trustee Eligibility Declaration
- The Fit and proper persons' declaration
- The Charity Commission guidance "The essential trustee: what you need to know, what you need to do"
- The Church of England booklet "Trusteeship"
- The Chichester Diocese booklet "Being a PCC member"
- Attending training as appropriate (e.g. Safeguarding)
- Obtaining a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check if appropriate.

The full Parochial Church Council met five times during the year – via Zoom in February and March and "physically" in June, August and November. Two of the physical meetings were held in the Cardale Hall in The Belmont Centre in order for social distancing to be maintained, and the last one at St Saviour's as the Hall was in use. Face masks were worn at all these meetings. The average attendance of PCC members at these meetings was 75%.

At each PCC meeting the Rector and Churchwardens guide the PCC through work and decisions required on what is needed in order to carry out our ongoing aims and objectives. Standing items on each agenda are approving the minutes of the last meeting, safeguarding, health and safety, finance and Deanery Synod. This year has also included updates on COVID-19 guidelines and relaxing of restrictions in church. Reports are circulated in advance where possible then at each meeting, following discussion a motion is proposed, seconded and a vote taken and minuted.

Paul Kennedy (Major Works Project Manager for Holy Cross Church) oversaw several projects this year (see Property Maintenance report on page 27). Paul Kennedy sent a written report to each PCC meeting and in between liaised with John Pontefract (Health and Safety Officer), the PCC and Standing Committee on projects and issues as required.

One of our Safeguarding Officers, Karen Smith, also sent a report for each PCC meeting and she joined us at the August meeting. The Holy Cross Parochial Church Council has complied with the duty under section 5 of the Safeguarding and Clergy Discipline Measure 2016, fully recognising its duty to have due regard to House of Bishops' guidance on safeguarding children and vulnerable adults. We continue to work within the guidelines in the most recently published Parish Safeguarding Handbook (approved by the House of Bishops).

The PCC Standing Committee comprises the Rector, Dee Johnson and John Pontefract (Churchwardens), Paul Ireland (PCC Treasurer), Gillian Youngman (PCC Secretary), Angela Noel (PCC representative) and Lynne Ireland (Parish Administrator). During 2021 the Standing

Committee met 10 times (another meeting in February was cancelled). These were all via Zoom with the exception of one; although physical meetings were permitted at times, an online meeting is more convenient for those working who are able to join in when they otherwise may not have been able to and other than one apology for three meetings, there was a full attendance throughout the year. There were two meetings in July, one being solely to discuss possible changes post the planned COVID-19 'Freedom Day'. The physical meeting was in April when a guest speaker was invited, the Revd Canon Rob Dillingham (Parish Development Officer and Deputy Director for Apostolic Life) to give us the background and way forward to completing the Parish Audit which each church had been asked to fill out.

In September the Revd Andrew Smith, the Diocesan Generous Giving Adviser, joined the virtual Standing Committee Meeting to explain what he can do for us and he then came to the November PCC meeting where he gave a presentation about how generosity works. He has been booked for a sermon slot next Spring. We see this aspect of Church life along with a purchase of a Giving Station as part of our response to being More Generous (a sign of being catholic) part of the Diocesan Strategy 2020-2025.

The purpose of the Standing Committee is to conduct PCC business in between meetings or in an emergency, including addressing day to day matters and ensuring the smooth running of the Church and the Belmont Centre, making sure that they were as COVID-19 compliant as could be by keeping to the relevant Government and Church of England guidelines.

Sometimes an urgent matter has cropped up between PCC meetings where a decision is needed and in these instances the PCC Secretary conducts an email/phone vote which is recorded at the next meeting, for example the Harvest Appeal for 2021.

Lynne Ireland, the Parish Administrator, did a combination of working from home and her office in the Belmont Centre during the year in accordance with pandemic guidelines. Her hours are Monday, Wednesday and Thursday 9.15am - 12.15pm but she is very flexible and continues to be a most efficient and valuable asset.

SAFEGUARDING REPORT

Firstly I would like to welcome Rhian Cottrell as an additional Safeguarding Officer.

DBS checks* – I have notified those who need to renew their clearance. People newly volunteering need to be referred to Rhian or me, by those recruiting them, for DBS checks. This covers provision of the application form, validation of documents, induction and information regarding training. We have latterly been able to meet volunteers in person for the validation and induction process.

We have received notification that DBS clearance certificates issued from January 2022 will be valid for 3 years instead of the current 5 years, thus bringing them into line with 3 yearly training updates.

SAFEGUARDING – All procedures were followed as required in line with Covid-19 restrictions.

SQP** – Due to the adjustments needed to comply with ensuring the safety of all the congregation, including those who are more vulnerable, our SQP response has been based on these requirements. As activities have recommenced so, in addition to the above, have the appropriate SQP requirements regarding -: Safer Places; Safer People; Safer Activities; Safer Practice.

TRAINING - Many people's trainings and updated trainings are either due or very overdue. As they can all be done online (and face to face trainings will not be available for a while) it is important, for the needs of the children and to comply with SQP, that we all get ourselves up to date. It is only necessary to redo the highest level of training that you need.

C0, now Basic Training - This online training is actively encouraged and open to all members of the congregation and parents of children who attend Holy Cross Church activities on the basis that -"safeguarding is everyone's responsibility". It is a pre-requisite to Foundation Training.

C1, now Foundation Training - This training is required by anyone who has safeguarding responsibilities or has contact in their church role with children or vulnerable adults. It is a pre-requisite for Leadership Training.

C2, now Safeguarding Leadership Training/Module - This is a more rigorous, and (at present) online, training required for anyone who has safeguarding leadership responsibilities or for leading activities with children or vulnerable adults.

The Diocese has set this as a model standard for all parishes. We have achieved Level 1 and must maintain standards to that level. Level 2 will follow!

**DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) A national service to ensure that no one with a criminal background who could present a danger whilst working or volunteering in the area of children and vulnerable adults.*

***SQP (Simple Quality Protects) A national system for the Third (i.e. voluntary) Sector to maintain standards in the area of which they are working.*

Karen Smith, Safeguarding Officer Email: safeguardingholycrossuckfield@gmail.com

PROPERTY MAINTENANCE REPORT

After a quiet 2020 in terms of works and maintenance, 2021 has seen many projects undertaken including one major works to improve the sound reverberation in the Belmont Centre. These projects have had an impact on Church funds in a period still affected by the COVID pandemic. There were other projects that have been identified to be undertaken during 2022 and beyond once we have funding. I am indebted to Paul Kennedy for his management of completed and pending projects and for his solid advice. Lists of completed and pending works follows below:-

Completed Work

- Lightning Conductor Testing Done and passed Oct 2021 £165 + VAT. Will need testing again by November 2022.
- Hedley Visick fitted boiler protection valves. Protects against boiler having over pressure water.
- Reverberation reduction panels were fitted on 16th March 2021. This has made the use of the Cardale Hall in the Belmont Centre much more pleasant to use as people can hear each other. This year has been the first time we have been able to hear the benefit of it as we have not been able to have meetings previously due to COVID restrictions.
- Belmont Centre Roof issues:- Done by Alex Stenning in December 2021
- Belmont Centre Kitchen Window repair done by Ollie Brown.
- Belmont Centre Spire Preschool Back Door repair done by Ollie Brown.
- Belmont Centre Spire Preschool Internal Doors and locks replaced.
- Belmont Centre Spire Preschool Rear Gatepost. Has been supported by a truss to the building wall.
- Damp was showing in the church upstairs on the North East internal wall. This is thought to be remedied by the removal of accumulated leaves from the roof gutter by contractor Paul James.

Pending work/ to do list

- Belmont Centre Spire area metal window repair. We have delayed getting this done due to the high cost. It can wait till warmer weather as the 2 small opening windows will have to be removed and then boarded up. It may have to wait longer due to funding issues.
Two quotes:-
 - Steel Window Service:- £9015.98 plus VAT:- £10819.18
 - Clifford Durrant:- £5255 plus VAT:- £6303
- Belmont Centre Exterior Repaint after kitchen window repair and back door. The state of the exterior paint needs to be checked; Paul Kennedy has obtained 3 quotes (To be discussed). All three contractors cannot do till Summer 2022.
- Belmont Centre Alarm System issues. We should consider who we should get to maintain this. The annual maintenance cost was high last year and there are issues with the actual system. This should be reviewed before the August maintenance time.
- The state of the internal paintwork of the main church building is in need of some work. The existing paint is peeling as it is not porous and not really suitable for stone. As this would require stripping off the old paint and repainting with a breathable paint suitable for stone, this is very time consuming and consequently expensive. Paul Kennedy has

suggested that due to this, it would be better to do a section at a time starting with the entrance halls and north balcony wall as a first tranche.

Most of the management of the above work has been done by Paul Kennedy to whom we give our heartfelt thanks, and in consultation with myself.

John Pontefract, Churchwarden

FINANCIAL REVIEW

As the trustees report details 2021 has been a mixed year with the effects of the pandemic decreasing but still having a fairly significant impact on our work and activities. This is reflected in the finances for the year. After a slow start there have been many areas that have returned to pre-pandemic levels of income but we have also started to see the effect of increase in costs for energy and maintenance activities. The result has been a deficit detailed in the 2021 accounts of £16,386, which would have been closer to £10,000 had it not been for major works required during the year. This compares to a deficit of £23,500 for 2020 so the signs are positive but careful planning of expenditure and creative fund raising must be at the core of our strategy so we can return quickly to generating a surplus.

The firm foundation of our reserves, built up over many years, have meant we have been able to maintain and support our own Church family and our financial commitment to the Diocese and away giving during the 2021 financial year.

Incoming and outgoing resources

Total receipts on general unrestricted funds, which are detailed in the Financial Statements, were £130,228. This is a 21% (£22,991) increase on 2020 but still £26,146 less than 2019. The continuing impact of COVID closure in the first quarter of the year was the main factor in this shortfall against 2019 but the signs for the remainder of the year were positive and largely matched the levels of income seen in 2019.

Thanks to the efforts of the Event Committee and their band of supporters the return to fund raising activities was fantastic and brought much needed income in the second half of the year. Over the year, once expenses were deducted, the Events team generated £14,916 which was a wonderful performance given restrictions were still in place for a significant part of the year.

During 2021 we have maintained a similar level of Planned Giving to 2020. There have been losses due to people passing to higher service but we have also seen some new regular givers and some increases in generosity which have helped to a total Planned Giving figure of £52,123 for 2021. Cash collections for the year totalled £5,398 which is up on 2020 but still 42% down on the £9,351 figure from 2019. This again was due to the Church remaining closed for services until April.

Receipts from hiring fees for the Belmont Centre were £17,870 which is an increase of 25% on 2020 but still short of the 2019 receipts due to on-going COVID restrictions for the first quarter of the year. Post restrictions our Bookings Manager has done a great job in gaining new regular bookings and at the end of 2021 the monthly income had increased significantly showing very positive signs for 2022.

Expenditure for the Belmont Centre during 2021 was £13,943 which included a number of essential maintenance jobs and cost increases. The energy crisis started to affect the Gas and Electricity pricing towards the end of the year and our long term gas supplier, CNG, ceased trading. This resulted in a near 3 fold increase in Gas costs for the final two months of the year. This is thought to be a long term issue so we are expecting the running costs for 2022 to be significantly higher. The net result was a surplus of £3,927 for Church funds.

Sharing the ministry costs of the Diocese of Chichester

The largest expenditure of the PCC was the sum of £64,500 paid to the Diocese to cover ministry costs. The parish contribution in 2021 was used towards the stipend, pension and housing costs of the clergy, and a standard sum for diocesan costs, clergy training and a contribution to national church funds. As a parish we have the aim to achieve 100% contribution towards the Parish Ministry Costs [PMC] and in 2020, after credits applied, we achieved this aim. For 2021 we agreed an above recommended increase of 5% to maintain this but the appointment of Rev Martha at Isfield has now added additional costs to the Parish so we have dropped below the 100% for 2021.

Staff costs

Since April 2016 a part-time Parish Administrator has been employed to run the Parish Office. From 2020 the Director of Music and Assistant Director of Music payments are now recorded as salary having previously been recorded as upkeep of services. This is following guidance that these roles do not have the autonomy required to be classed as self-employed.

Due to the on-going COVID impacts it was agreed that no salary increases would be made during 2021 so the staff costs remained at the same level as 2020 at £16,153.

Missionary and Charitable giving

The Giving sub-committee were reconvened in 2021 and recommended the following missionary and charitable giving totalling £6,836 to home and overseas which was agreed by the PCC.

Overseas

- | | |
|--------------------------------|-------|
| • Water Aid | £ 225 |
| • Kids 4 Kids | £ 225 |
| • Tear Fund | £ 200 |
| • Medecins san Frontiers | £ 225 |
| • UK Afghan Refugees | £ 365 |
| • UNICEF Give the World a Shot | £ 472 |
| • Action Aid | £ 234 |

Home

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|--------|
| • Holy Cross School Governors | £1,500 |
| • Holy Cross School Other Support | £ 750 |

- Malt House (Kenwood Trust) £ 123
- Children's Society £ 295
- Uckfield Community Fridge £2 197
- Sussex Church Bell Restoration £ 25

Fixed Assets

The Belmont Centre remains at the previous valuation of £1,370,000.

Reserves Policy

During 2021 the minimum balance on the general unrestricted funds (excluding property) which equates to approximately 6 month's worth of unrestricted payments as a contingency against unforeseen situations was maintained despite the need to transfer funds to meet the day to day expenditure.

It is PCC policy to retain any funds not required for day to day transactions on deposit at the bank.

Funds held as custodian trustees on behalf of others

The PCC acts as a custodian trustee for the assets of the Edward Holmes Baldock Charity which was established in 1845 for the benefit of poor persons in the parish. Its sole asset is 36.38 income units invested in the COIF Charities Investment Fund.

As at 31 August 2021, its latest valuation date, the value of the investment was £693.07. The income in its financial year was £19.24 which is normally topped up by the PCC and distributed to suitable recipients. The charity is administered by the PCC with the Churchwardens acting as trustees of the charity and is segregated from the assets of the PCC.

The normal annual donations to local deserving individuals encountering hardship was once again deferred as confirmation of suitable recipients was not possible given the on-going restrictions. The PCC will ensure the 2022 awards are topped up with the deferred 2020 and 2021 income.

During the 2020 COVID lockdown the PCC supported the Uckfield Coronavirus Volunteers and allowed the use of the online and electronic payment facilities of the Belmont Centre bank account. During the 2021 financial year the carried forward balance of £3,282 held on account was passed to the Ridgewood Village Hall Committee to establish a monthly lunch club to continue the support of the community.

Statement of Financial Activities

The financial effect of our activities during the year can be summarised as follows

	Unrestricted Fund	Restricted Fund/s	Endowed Fund/s	Total Funds 2021	Total Funds 2020	Notes
	£	£	£	£	£	
Income and endowments from:						
Donations and legacies	95,649	3,784	-	99,433	80,499	
Charitable activities	10,867	-	-	10,867	8,998	
Other trading activities	22,795	-	-	22,795	17,635	
Investments	-	27	-	27	188,981	
Other receipts	917	-	-	917	2,554	
Total income	130,228	3,811	-	134,039	298,667	2
Expenditure on:						
Raising funds	4,043	-	-	4,043	939	
Charitable activities	128,417	3,733	-	132,150	126,191	
Other trading activities	14,233	-	-	14,233	(2,193)	
Other expenditure	-	-	-	-	-	
Total expenditure	146,693	3,733	-	150,426	124,936	3
Net gains (or losses) on investments	-	-	-	-	-	8
Net income or (net expenditure)	(16,465)	78	-	(16,387)	173,731	
Transfers between funds	-	-	-	-	-	10
	(16,465)	78	-	(16,387)	173,731	
Other recognised gains/(losses):						
Gains/(losses) on revaluation of fixed assets	-	-	-	-	(190,776)	11
Other gains/(losses)	-	-	-	-	-	
<i>Reconciliation of funds:</i>						
Net movement in funds	(16,465)	78	-	(16,387)	(17,045)	
Total funds brought forward	1,460,012	197,038	-	1,657,050	1,674,094	
Total funds carried forward	1,443,547	197,116	-	1,640,663	1,657,049	

Balance Sheet

Our financial position and summary of funds at the year end were

	Total Funds 2021	<i>Total Funds 2020</i>	Notes
	£	£	
Intangible assets	-	-	
Tangible assets	1,370,000	<i>1,370,000</i>	
Heritage assets	-	-	
Endowed investments	-	-	
Total fixed assets	1,370,000	<i>1,370,000</i>	11
Stocks	-	-	
Debtors	4,034	<i>4,561</i>	14
Investments	-	-	
Cash at bank and in hand	276,355	<i>296,066</i>	
Total current assets	280,389	<i>300,627</i>	
Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year	(4,950)	<i>(13,577)</i>	15
Correction for Unrealised Debtors in 2020	(4,776)		
Net current assets or (liabilities)	270,663	<i>287,050</i>	
Total assets less current liabilities	1,645,439	<i>1,657,050</i>	
Creditors: Amounts falling due after more than one year	-	-	16
Provisions for liabilities	-	-	
Total net assets or (liabilities)	1,640,663	<i>1,657,050</i>	
The funds of the charity:			
Restricted income funds	197,116	<i>197,038</i>	
Unrestricted funds	1,460,012	<i>1,460,012</i>	
Revaluation reserve			
Total unrestricted funds	1,460,012	<i>1,460,012</i>	
Total charity funds	1,640,663	<i>1,657,050</i>	18

This Financial Report for the year ended 31st December 2021, including the notes following, was approved by the PCC and signed on its behalf by Paul Ireland, Treasurer:


.....

Date **24 APRIL 2022**
.....

Notes to the Financial Report

1 Accounting policies

Basis of preparation

The PCC is a public benefit entity within the meaning of FRS102. The financial statements have been prepared under the Charities Act 2011 and the Church Accounting Regulations 2006, in accordance with applicable accounting standards and the current Statement of Recommended Practice, Accounting and Reporting by Charities, (SORP (FRS 102)).

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention as modified by the inclusion of investments at market value and the revaluation of fixed assets. The financial statements include all transactions, assets and liabilities for which the PCC is responsible in law. They do not include the accounts of church groups that owe their affiliation to another body, nor those which are informal gatherings of church members

Funds accounting

Funds held by the PCC are:

Unrestricted funds - general funds which can be used for PCC ordinary purposes

Restricted funds - a) income from trusts or endowments which may be expended only on those restricted objects provided in the terms of the trust or bequest; b) donations or grants received for a specific object or invited by the PCC for a specific object. The funds may only be expended on the specific object for which they were given. Any balance remaining unspent at the end of the year is carried forward as a balance on that fund

Income and endowments

All income and endowments, accounted for without deduction for any costs of receivability, are recognised when there is evidence of entitlement, receipt is probable, and the amount can be measured reliably

Donations and legacies

Collections are recognised when received.

Planned giving receivable is recognised when there is evidence of entitlement, receipt is probable, and the amount accords with the Gift Aid declaration or other record of intention to donate

Gift aid recovered is recognised when the income to which it is attached is recognised

Grants and legacies are recognised when the formal offer in writing of the funding, is received by the PCC

Charitable activities

Statutory fees for weddings and funerals are recognised when the office occurs

Other trading activities

Trading activities are where income is receivable in return for selling goods or providing services. Income from trading is recognised either: a - when received, or b - in the case of concerts: for the year in which the event occurs, irrespective of date of receipt. Advance bookings are included in creditors until the concert has taken place

Sales of magazines are recognised when received

Rents from property are recognised in accordance with the rental agreements, when receipt is probable

Investment income

Dividends are accounted for when due and payable. Interest entitlements are accounted for as they accrue

Notes to the Financial Report

All other income

All other income is recognised in accordance with the above overall policy

Gains and losses on investments

Realised gains are recognised when the investments are sold

Unrealised gains and losses are accounted for on revaluation at 31 December

Expenditure

Expenditure is recognised when there is evidence of entitlement, payment is probable, and the amount can be measured reliably

Grants

Grants and donations are accounted for when paid over, or when awarded where the award creates a binding obligation on the PCC

Church activities

The diocesan parish contribution is accounted for on an annual basis, reflecting the allocation set by our Deanery. Any parish contribution unpaid at 31 December is provided for in these accounts as an operational (though not a legal) liability and is shown as a creditor in the balance sheet

Fixed assets

Tangible fixed assets

Consecrated and beneficed property of any kind is excluded from the accounts by s.10(2) of the Charities Act 2011.

Movable church furnishing held by the Vicar and Churchwardens on special trust for the PCC and which require a faculty for disposal, are accounted as inalienable property unless consecrated. They are listed in the church's inventory which can be inspected but are not included in the financial statements

All expenditure on consecrated or beneficed buildings and individual items costing under £1,000 are written off in the year they were incurred

Depreciation

Depreciation is calculated to write down the cost of tangible fixed assets, excluding freehold properties, over their expected useful lives. The rates generally applicable are:

Fixtures and fittings	20%
Audio visual	33%
Office equipment	25%

No depreciation is provided on freehold buildings as the useful economic life of these assets exceeds 50 years and residual values so high that potential depreciation would be immaterial. It is the PCC's policy to maintain these assets in a continual state of sound repair. Resulting from regular impairment reviews, provision will be made if there has been any permanent diminution in value

Investments

Investments are stated at market value at the balance sheet date

Current Assets

Amounts owing to the PCC at 31 December in respect of fees, rents or other income are shown as debtors, less provision for amounts that may prove uncollectible

Short-term deposits include cash held on deposit either with the CBF Church of England Funds, or at the bank

Notes to the Financial Report

2 Analysis of income and endowments

	Unrestricted Fund	Restricted Fund/s	Endowed Fund/s	Total Funds 2021	Total Funds 2020	Notes
	£	£	£	£	£	
Planned giving (via standing order)	44,955	-	-	44,955	44,464	
Planned giving (via weekly envelopes)	7,168	-	-	7,168	6,907	
Loose cash collections	5,398	543	-	5,941	3,116	
Christmas Tree Festival	8,387	-	-	8,387	2,765	
Other Fund Raising Activities	5,638	623	-	5,991	2,859	
Other donations	11,602	2,618	-	14,220	7,738	
Gift Aid recoverable	12,501	-	-	12,501	11,111	
Legacies	-	-	-	-	-	
Grants	-	-	-	-	1,539	
Donations and legacies	£95,649	£3,784	-	£99,433	£80,499	
Fees for weddings & funerals - PCC	3,726	-	-	3,726	2,263	
Fees for weddings & funerals - Clergy	1,226	-	-	1,226	943	
Fees for weddings & funerals - DBF	5,822	-	-	5,822	5,732	
Fees for weddings & funerals - Other Wedding	93	-	-	93	60	
Charitable activities	£10,867	-	-	£10,867	£8,998	
Big Day, Xmas Fair & Festival of Christmas Trees	4,257	-	-	4,257	2,294	
Other fund raising activities	130	-	-	130	750	
Parish magazine	538	-	-	538	221	
Belmont Centre hiring fees	17,870	-	-	17,870	14,370	
Other trading activities	£22,795	-	-	£22,795	£17,635	
Bank deposit interest	-	27	-	27	106	
Rent from letting of investment property	-	-	-	-	-	
Proceeds from Sale of Assets	-	-	-	-	188,875	
Investments	-	£27	-	£27	£188,981	
Other receipts	917	-	-	917	2,554	
Total income and endowments on all funds	£130,228	£3,811	-	£134,039	£298,667	

Notes to the Financial Report

3 Analysis of expenditure

	Unrestricted Fund	Restricted Fund/s	Endowed Fund/s	Total Funds 2021	Total Funds 2020	Notes
	£	£	£	£	£	
Uckfield Festival Big Day	30	-	-	30	-	
Festival of Christmas Trees	3,206	-	-	3,206	919	
Stewardship costs (printing etc)	86	-	-	86	-	
Other fundraising (non-trading) costs	721	-	-	721	20	
Cost of raising funds	£4,043	-	-	£4,043	£939	
Missionary and charitable giving	3,461	2,626	-	6,087	3,978	4
Ministry: Diocesan Parish Share	64,500	-	-	64,500	61,500	
Ministry: Other Clergy costs	6,031	-	-	6,031	5,699	6
Staff: Admin	16,153	-	-	16,153	16,142	5
Upkeep of services	6,470	505	-	6,975	3,668	
Church running costs	12,242	-	-	12,242	9,610	
Junior Church and Clubs (e.g. Choir)	-	602	-	602	329	
Church maintenance and repair	3,369	-	-	3,369	7,245	
Piano	916	-	-	916	130	
Holy Cross School Support	750	-	-	750	225	
Major Works	5,652	-	-	5,652	9,238	
Miscellaneous	849	-	-	849	526	
Bank charges	857	-	-	857	754	
Messy Church/Holiday Club/Outreach	201	-	-	201	328	8
Fees - Paid to Clergy	1,584	-	-	1,584	1,721	
Fees - Paid to DBF	5,332	-	-	5,332	5,097	
Fees - Paid for Wedding Extras	50	-	-	50	-	
Cost of charitable activities	£128,417	£3,733	-	£132,150	£126,190	
Uckfield Festival Big Day	-	-	-	-	-	
Festival of Christmas Trees	290	-	-	290	369	
Other events	-	-	-	-	-	
Church Commissioners - 7PVR Equity Loan and Rent	-	-	-	-	1,894	
Belmont Centre running costs	13,943	-	-	13,943	10,655	
Parish magazine costs	-	-	-	-	-	
Other trading costs	-	-	-	-	(13,524)	
Cost of other trading activities	£14,233	-	-	£14,233	(£2,194)	
Total expended on all funds	£146,693	£3,733	-	£150,426	£124,936	

Notes to the Financial Report

4 Missionary and charitable giving

	Unrestricted Fund	Restricted Fund/s	Endowed Fund/s	Total Funds 2021	Total Funds 2020	Notes
	£	£	£	£	£	
Overseas:						
<i>Total</i>	1,712	234	-	1,946	734	
Home:						
<i>Total</i>	248	2,392	-	2,640	1,244	
<i>Accrued amount (HX School Governors)</i>	1,500	-	-	1,500	2,000	
	3,460	2,626	-	6,086	3,978	

5 Staff costs

	Unrestricted Fund	Restricted Fund/s	Endowed Fund/s	Total Funds 2021	Total Funds 2020	Notes
	£	£	£	£	£	
Remuneration						
<i>Wages and salaries</i>	16,153	-	-	16,153	16,142	
	16,153	-	-	16,153	16,142	

6 Payments to PCC members

Trustee payments and expenses

The PCC support the clergy by paying Council Tax of £3,691, water and environmental charges amounting to £547 for the Rectory plus other costs towards travel, hospitality, telephone, internet and postage totalling £6,031 in 2021.

7 Transactions with persons related to PCC members

Since the appointment of a new Treasurer in June 2019, all payments to the Parish Administrator are connected to the trustees as the Treasurer is married to the Parish Administrator. PCC procedures are in place to ensure at least two others are aware of expenditure, other than regular commitments and pre-agreed works, before payment is made. Financial reporting to the PCC and the PCC Standing Committee contains financial detail to ensure transparency.

No other payments have been made to persons related to or connected to the trustees.

8 Transactions with related charities

The Holy Cross Church of England Primary School is supported by the Clergy and financial assistance is provided in agreement with the PCC. The incumbent is an ex-officio member of the Board of Governors.

Financial support has been given to Holy Cross School during 2021 for a Music tutor for Choir and Assemblies - £750 and Governors - £1,500.

Notes to the Financial Report

9 Governance

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Fund/s	Endowed Fund/s	Total Funds 2021	<i>Total Funds 2020</i>	Notes
	£	£	£	£	£	
<i>Accounts production</i>	-	-	-	-	-	
	-	-	-	-	-	

10 Transfers between funds

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Fund/s	Endowed Fund/s	Total Funds 2021	<i>Total Funds 2020</i>	Notes
	£	£	£	£	£	
	-	-	-	-	-	
	-	-	-	-	-	

11 Fixed assets

a Investments

	Unrestricted Fund	Restricted Fund/s	Endowed Fund/s	Total Funds 2021	Notes
	£	£	£	£	
Market value 1 January 2021	-	-	-	-	
Disposals at carrying value	-	-	-	-	
Purchases at cost	-	-	-	-	
Net gains and revaluation	-	-	-	-	
Market value 31 December 2021	-	-	-	-	

Notes to the Financial Report

11 Fixed assets (contd.)

b Tangible fixed assets

	Freehold land and buildings	Audio visual equipment	Office equipment	Total fixed assets	Notes
	£	£	£	£	
Cost or valuation					
At 1 January 2021	1,370,000	-	-	1,370,000	
Additions	-	-	-	-	
Disposals	-	-	-	-	
Revaluation	-	-	-	-	
At 31 December 2021	1,370,000	-	-	1,370,000	
Charge for impairment					
At 1 January 2021	-	-	-	-	
At 31 December 2021	-	-	-	-	
Net book amounts					
At 31 December 2021	1,370,000	-	-	1,370,000	
<i>At 31 December 2020</i>	<i>1,370,000</i>	-	-	<i>1,370,000</i>	

The freehold land and buildings comprise the Belmont Centre, Belmont Road. The Belmont Centre remains valued at £1,370,000 as at 31 Dec 2021.

13 Net assets by fund

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Fund/s	Endowed Fund/s	Total Funds 2021	<i>Total Funds 2020</i>	Notes
	£	£	£	£	£	
Fixed assets for church use	1,370,000	-	-	1,370,000	<i>1,370,00</i>	
Current assets (except cash)	4,034	-	-	4,034	<i>4,472</i>	
Cash at bank and on deposit	74,462	197,116	-	271,578	<i>296,066</i>	
Current liabilities	(4,950)	-	-	(4,950)	<i>(13,377)</i>	
Long term liabilities	-	-	-	-	-	
	£1,443,546	£197,116	£-	£1,640,662	<i>£1,656,961</i>	

Notes to the Financial Report

14 Debtors

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Fund/s	Endowed Fund/s	Total Funds 2021	<i>Total Funds 2020</i>	<i>Notes</i>
	£	£	£	£	£	
Income tax recoverable	2,926	-	-	2,926	2,822	
Prepayments and accrued income	1,108	-	-	1,108	1,650	
Other debtors	-	-	-	-	-	
	£4,034	-	-	£4,034	£4,472	

15 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Fund/s	Endowed Fund/s	Total Funds 2021	<i>Total Funds 2020</i>	<i>Notes</i>
	£	£	£	£	£	
Deferred income	-	-	-	-	-	
Accruals for utilities and other costs	4,630	-	-	4,630	13,317	
Other creditors	320	-	-	320	260	
	£4,950	-	-	£4,950	£13,577	

16 Creditors: amounts falling due after one year

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Fund/s	Endowed Fund/s	Total Funds 2021	<i>Total Funds 2020</i>	<i>Notes</i>
	£	£	£	£	£	
Deferred income	-	-	-	-	-	
Accruals for utilities and other costs	-	-	-	-	-	
Other creditors	-	-	-	-	-	
	-	-	-	-	-	

Notes to the Financial Report

17 Statement of funds

Restricted Funds - The purpose of the restricted funds are as follows:

- **Organ Repair Fund** – holds funds for repairing and maintaining the Church Organ.
- **Sunday Refreshment Fund** – holds the proceeds of contributions given at coffee after the 9.30am service and is used for charitable donations to good causes.
- **Screen and AV Fund** – established in 2018 to raise funds for the installation of a permanent display screen and in 2019 the scope was extended to include the sound system.
- **Youth Club Fund** – holds funds for the Youth Club which is currently in recess.
- **Inspire Project Fund** – established in 2015 following the receipt of a donation from Uckfield District Nurses Welfare Committee and was donated to the Uckfield Community Fridge in 2021.
- **Action Aid Fund** – established in 2018 to support, by monthly donation, the education of a child in Guatemala.
- **Window Appeal Fund** – established in 2019 to raise funds to repair and maintain the church windows.
- **Childrens Work** – established during 2021 due to the fund raising and donations specifically supporting the children's activities and groups in Church.
- **Clergy Housing** – established in 2020 from the proceeds of the sale of the Curate's house at 7 Parkview Road, Uckfield.
- **Flower Fund** – established in 2021 to maintain the funds relating to floral tributes in Church.
- **The Children's Society** – used in 2021 to restrict funds from collections not disbursed by the close of the year.

Unrestricted funds are not subject to any donor restrictions and can be spent as the PCC decides.

18 Summary of all funds

Fund income and expenditure and final balances are as follows:

	Balances b/fwd 1 Jan 2021	Income	Expenditure	Transfers, other gains and losses	Balances c/fwd 31 Dec 2021
	£	£	£	£	£
Organ Repairs	4,014	-	-	1	4,015
Sunday Refreshments	614	623	-	-	1,237
AV and Screen Fund	4,340	-	-	1	4,341
Youth Club	341	-	-	-	341
Inspire Project	2,097	-	2,097	-	-
Action Aid (Guatemala Child)	-	234	234	-	-
Window Appeal Fund	1,510	-	-	-	1,510
Children's Work	656	2,266	602	-	2,320
Clergy Housing	183,086	-	-	25	183,111
Flower Fund	380	352	505	-	227
The Children's Society	-	309	295	-	14
Total of all restricted funds	197,038	3,784	(3,733)	27	197,116
Revaluation of fixed assets	-	-	-	-	-
General fund	1,460,012	130,228	(146,693)	-	1,443,547
Total of all unrestricted funds	1,460,012	130,228	(146,693)	-	1,443,547
Total funds	£1,657,050	£134,012	(£150,426)	£27	£1,640,663

Independent Examiner's Report

to the PCC of The Church of the Holy Cross, Uckfield for the Year Ended 31st December, 2021

This is my report to the Parochial Church Council of the Ecclesiastical Parish (PCC) of the Church of the Holy Cross, Uckfield, on the annual report for the year ended 31st December 2021 set out on pages 3 to 42.

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

The PCC members are responsible for the preparation of the annual reports. The PCC members 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. to 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. to 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 (other than that disclosed below in Section B *)

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 accounting requirements of the Charities Act have 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.

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

Examiner's signature

Examiner's name

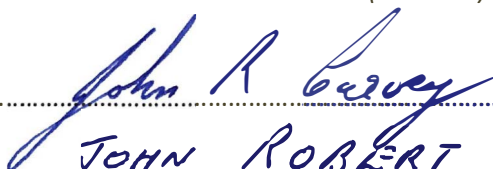
CAPITALS

Date

Relevant professional
qualification(s) or body

if any

Examiner's address


JOHN ROBERT CARVEY
25th April 2022

23 FARRIERS WAY UCKFIELD TN22 5BX

Only complete if the examiner needs to highlight material problems *for example:*

- accounting records have not been kept in accordance with s132 of the Charities' Act 2011 and those accounts do not comply with the requirements of the 2008 Regulations setting out the form and content of charity accounts;
- any material expenditure or action which appears not to be in accordance with the trusts of the charity;
- any failure to be provided with information and explanations by any past or present trustee, officer or employee; and
- any material inconsistency between the accounts and the trustees' annual report.

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

Accounts

Trustees Annual Report and Financial Report

of

The Parochial Church Council of the Ecclesiastical Parish of The Church of the Holy Cross, Uckfield

The Church of the Holy Cross, Church St/Belmont Rd, Uckfield, East Sussex TN22 1BP

Registered Charity no. 1137746

For the year ended 31 December 2020

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Administrative information

Incumbent: The Revd John Wall, The Rectory, 1 Sand Ridge, Ridgewood, Uckfield TN22 5ET

Independent examiner: Mr J Carvey, 23 Farriers Way, Uckfield TN22 5BY (appointed 2019)

Bankers: National Westminster Bank, 49 High Street, Uckfield TN22 1AN

Parish Office: holycrossuckfield@gmail.com

Website: Churchoftheholycrossuckfield.co.uk

Advisers to the PCC

Mrs AD Johnson – Churchwarden

Mr J Pontefract – Churchwarden

Mr P Ireland – PCC Treasurer

Mrs G Youngman – PCC Secretary

Mrs L Ireland – Parish Administrator

Mr P Kennedy – Health & Safety Officer and Works Project Manager

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The Trustees Annual Report – Year Ended 31 December 2020

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

The past year was largely taken over by the COVID pandemic which from March affected every single person and had devastating consequences on various levels for many people countrywide including the loss of loved ones along with concerns over employment, finance and access to food. There were two national lockdowns leading also to health and wellbeing concerns, isolation and fear, mental health issues and delays of medical treatment.

Throughout the year many groups could only meet online if that and the phone and internet became a lifeline for many people, some of whom did not go out at all for many months and therefore did not see anyone. Hospitals and nursing homes were unable to let loved ones visit. The restrictions had a huge impact on Churches too and in mid March public worship was suspended when the nation was put into its first lockdown. Weddings were initially banned altogether and then, like funerals, permitted with restricted numbers at services and receptions. People who were used to greeting others each Sunday suddenly did not see them for months on end.

Holy Cross Church, like all Churches had to adapt how it offered public worship and pastoral care. An indication of how drastically Church life changed can be seen in two articles written by the Rector which can be found later in this report. The first is an extract from one of his Diary entries in The Church Times dated 1st May 2020, the second is the Rector's Report to the Parochial Church Council on 6th October, this being the first full Parochial Church Council Meeting since January.

Church social events, many of which were also fundraisers were cancelled or adapted with imagination to comply with the appropriate guidelines at the time. The financial impact of the disruption to the usually full and active life of Holy Cross Church is explained in the Financial Review on page 27.

The following statistics show the extent of the pandemic: at the end of the year the total number of UK COVID cases was 2,542,065 and the total number of deaths within 28 days of a positive test was 74,125. Overall there were 608,002 deaths in England and Wales in 2020, the highest annual total since 1918 (due to the Spanish flu pandemic). In the Wealden area (which Uckfield is part of), from when the pandemic started up until Christmas Day, there were 169 COVID deaths, nine of which were in Uckfield/Ridgewood. We were comparatively fortunate as at the end of the year Wealden was 35th, on a list of 380 local councils when No 1 is the council area with the fewest cases per 100,000 population since the pandemic began (sources: Uckfield News and Office for National Statistics).

In late December, a vaccine had been developed and given to some of the more vulnerable people in Uckfield and a second vaccine was about to be rolled out, giving everyone hope. In his 2021 New Year message, the Archbishop of Canterbury said: 'This year has seen tremendous pain and sadness. Many of us have lost family members or friends, often without being able to say goodbye...' Here at the hospital (St Thomas's), hope is there in every hand that's held, and every comforting word that's spoken. Up and down the country, it's there in every phone call. Every food parcel or thoughtful card. Every time we wear our masks."

This is an overview of how Sunday services were affected in 2020:

5 th January to 15 th March	Sunday services as normal but from 23 rd February not allowed to shake hands during the Peace and Communion only in one kind (wafer)
22 nd March to 12 th July	First national lockdown – public worship not allowed
19 th July to 1 st November	Sunday services were allowed to resume but following strict guidelines
8 th to 29 th November	Second national lockdown – public worship not allowed
6 th and 13 th December	Sunday services were allowed to resume but following strict guidelines
20 th to 27 th December	Local decision taken to not hold public worship due to rising number of local cases and vulnerability of the congregation

Out of the 52 Sundays in 2020, Holy Cross Church was closed for Sunday services for 42% of the year.

Initially Churches were only allowed to open for private prayer in June and in Holy Cross Church a side chapel was used for this purpose and only three people allowed to visit the building at once. A short video was available online where Fr John showed parishioners what to expect if they visited the Church for private prayer and this had 3,500 viewings. The Church remained open for parts of the week for this purpose until November when it could not be adequately monitored and there was no evidence of anyone visiting.

When Churches were allowed to open for public worship in July, Holy Cross Church offered a weekly Sunday Eucharist at 10am and there were stringent COVID health and safety guidelines to follow:

- Entering/leaving Enter by the main door and leave by the side door.
- Social distancing Two-metre rule. Only those from the same household or “bubble” can sit together.
- Face masks Bring your own mask to wear. (The Crafty Ladies had been making and selling non surgical face masks since May with profits going to the Friends of Uckfield Hospital).
- Hand sanitiser Wash your hands on entry for at least 20 seconds.
- Track and Trace You will be asked for personal details on arrival which will be kept for 21 days.
- Pew cushions These have been removed – bring your own cushion if you need one.
- Orders of service On the pews and to be taken home and disposed of by the worshipper.
- Speakers The celebrant is to avoid voice projection. Lapel microphones only to be used.
- No singing No communal singing permitted.
- Communion Communicants must receive communion standing, one at a time in a single file, And respect social distancing as they come forward. The host must be placed in the hand, avoiding physical contact and no words are to be spoken.
- Collection No cash collecting - use online or contactless giving.
- Cleaning The Church is closed on Mondays for professional cleaning (along with the Belmont Centre).

The above restrictions were implemented under the guidance of Paul Kennedy, our Health and Safety Officer, who kept his finger on the pulse with the ever-changing situation, and risk assessments were carried out where appropriate. For Sunday services, Churches could allow in as many people as they could

safely accommodate with social distancing. This meant that the gallery (which tends to only be used for special large services) was in constant use enabling in all a maximum of 50 people to be seated. Some Churches took bookings for all their Sunday services but Holy Cross felt that with their capacity and knowing many of the congregation were shielding, it was not necessary other than for Midnight Mass on 24th December and Christmas Day (both of which were subsequently cancelled).

A flier was distributed to the congregation explaining the changes to Sunday services in Holy Cross Church from July 2020 and another video put online showing what to expect on arrival at Church and this was viewed by 2,200 people.

Angela (our Verger) offered to be on the door to welcome people with Dee (Churchwarden) and sometimes Lynne (Parish Administrator) helping with the obligatory track and trace registration and this team did these for all the weeks there was a Sunday service. There were some teething problems with the arrangements for the first week when the service sheets were only displayed on the screen at the front of Church. The hearing loop system does not work upstairs and visibility is very poor in places so service sheets were also put on pews after that but had to be taken home for disposal. Also direction was needed for people going to communion from the gallery and Terry Hall stepped in to do this each week. A cleaning company was called in to professionally sanitise the Church each Monday after a Sunday service.

Many people chose not to attend for a variety of reasons and a form of pre-recorded online service was available each week as an alternative since the end of March.



Hand sanitiser on arrival and social distancing

This is how things evolved and panned out over the year:

Date	Event	Things cancelled or resumed	Notes
23 rd Feb		Not allowed to shake hands during the Peace and	

Date	Event	Things cancelled or resumed	Notes
		Communion to be received only in one kind (wafer)	
17 th March	1 st Emergency Standing Committee meeting	As the meeting ended, found out that all public services are suspended	Press releases sent out that Churches were closed.
18 th March	Congregation asked if they would like to receive the Grapevine etc via email or post and a regular phonecall		
20 th March	2 nd Emergency Standing Committee meeting		
21 st March	Church deep cleaned		
21 st March	Crafty Ladies Easter Table	Cancelled	Orders taken which Sarah delivered
	The following had been planned: Confirmation classes, Countrymen's Lunches, Ladies Fellowship, rest of the Lent Lunch Group, Crafty Play Café, Messy Easter & all children's work, The Choral Society Passiontide Concert	All cancelled	
23 rd March		First national lockdown started	
3 rd April	Annual Parochial Church Meeting	Postponed	Took place 18 th October
15 th June		Non-essential shops could reopen	
21 st June		Opened Church for private prayer	Sun to Thurs 11-12
4 th July		'Super Saturday', restaurants, pubs and hairdressers allowed to reopen	
19 th July		Sunday services in Church restarted with restrictions	
6 th September		First Junior Church outdoor Storytime session	
13 th September		Second Junior Church outdoor Storytime session 2	
1 st October		Children's Choir resumed	Safely distanced or in school class 'bubbles'

Date	Event	Things cancelled or resumed	Notes
4 th November	3 rd Emergency Standing Committee meeting re Remembrance Services		
5 th November		Start of second national lockdown All Sunday Church services banned	
21 st November	Christmas Bazaar	A brochure sent out of hampers, chutneys, jams, Crafty Ladies produce and items pre - ordered and collected	£1,536.68 raised
2 nd December		End of national lockdown Uckfield entered Tier 2 "High Alert"	
5 th December	Virtual Festival of Christmas Trees	Over 50 sponsors - available online	£2878.36 (including Festival Lunches and Tree of Angels)
6 th December		Services in Church resumed following lockdown	
6 th December	Festival Lunches	149 orders taken and collected or delivered	
7 th December	Christmas Draw	Tickets sold online	£836.63 raised
19 th December		No services in Church from 20th to end of year due to rise of local COVID cases	
26 th December		Uckfield entered Tier 4 "Stay at Home"	

The following report needs to be read bearing in mind the different and difficult year outlined above.

OUR AIMS AND PURPOSES AS A CHARITY

The Parochial Church Council (PCC) 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 (Charity number: 1137746).

The PCC has the responsibility of co-operating with the incumbent, The Revd John Wall, in:

- The promotion of the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ according to the doctrines and practices of the Church of England.
- Promoting in the parish the whole mission of the Church: pastoral, social, evangelistic and ecumenical.
- Getting to know Jesus better and make Him better known.

- Practical support and care for people in the parish, from the youngest to the eldest, irrespective of level of need or ability to pay.
- Providing financial support to those in need and to other organisations with similar objectives.
- Demonstrating that our aims are for the public benefit, including charities advancing education or religion or relieving poverty.
- Following the Diocesan Strategy 2015-2020 to Know Love Follow Jesus: growth in number and depth, re-imagining ministry and contribution to the common good.
- Developing a Statement of Needs for Holy Cross to continue its mission to the local community.

OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

When planning our activities for the year, the PCC and clergy have considered the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit and, in particular, the specific guidance on 'charities for the advancement of religion'.

For 2020 the following objectives and activities were discussed and planned to fulfil our aims:

- Enabling as many people as possible to worship at our Church (in the building or online) while maintaining the appropriate government health and safety guidelines.
- Teaching, baptising and nurturing new and existing believers.
- Maintaining an overview of worship throughout the parish.
- Considering how services can involve the many groups that live within the parish.
- Putting faith into practice, through prayer and scripture, music and sacrament.
- Offering worship and prayer, learning about the Gospel, in small group situations.
- Assisting people from all walks of life to develop their knowledge of, and trust in, Jesus.
- Provision of pastoral care for people living in the parish and beyond.
- Providing assistance to the poor and needy of the parish, including the relief of poverty through support to local charities such as the Uckfield Foodbank and the Edward Holmes Baldock Charity.
- Giving grants to overseas and home organisations. A small group appointed by the PCC look at "away giving" and make recommendations to the PCC. These are detailed in the accounts.
- Providing services other than the regular Sunday services which reach out to the wider community
- Reaching out to the community through social and fundraising events.
- Ensuring all members and visitors to the Church are kept safe and all Safeguarding procedure and policy is followed.
- Maintaining the fabric of the Church building as a historical centre and developing its flexibility as the focus of life in the town.

While doing the above, we have also borne in mind that we have been working towards being compliant with the Diocesan Strategy 2015-2020 "to Know Love Follow Jesus: growth in number and depth, re-imagining ministry and contribution to the common good".

Planning for the future

As well as the above objectives, the PCC has been planning the long term vision for Holy Cross Church. The Statement of Needs (formerly the Mission Action Plan) sets out what we need to do for our Church

community to grow and develop. With the different kinds of Church services and children's work we had been offering, and would like to develop further, we need more flexibility, improved audio visual facilities and the need to be a Church in the 21st century which will enable other people to use our lovely facilities, therefore giving public benefit. In 2019 we had been considering installing a toilet and kitchenette in Church as well as installing retractable screens and upgrading the sound system. However the pandemic this year has had a huge impact on our income and in addition, with the change of way we use the Church building and therefore our priorities changed. When Churches were allowed to reopen and accommodate as many as they could taking into account social distancing guidelines, Holy Cross Church had the advantage of having a gallery. This is usually only needed for occasional services with large numbers but it became obvious that those people sitting upstairs often had trouble hearing and seeing a screen. This problem, along with a potential COVID related grant (which we have since learnt we would not be eligible for) led the focus to change to the sound system and screens, as well as extending the loop system for those with hearing aids. Some companies were contacted with regards this work for a quote but due to COVID were unable to do a site visit so this will be pursued in early 2021.

A very short walk from the Church is the Belmont Centre which the Church owns. It is a wonderful facility for the Church and its maintenance and development is planned to support the needs of the Church but also for it to remain as an asset for use by the wider community. While part of The Belmont Centre is on permanent loan to a Pre-school Group, there is also a hall and a small meeting room which are hired out and usually give the Church extra regular income as well as providing a good facility for Church fundraising and social occasions. The Pre-school Group continued to meet during most of the year as they opened for some children whose parents were keyworkers. During the first lockdown all use of the rest of the Belmont Centre (and subsequently any income) ceased. The Treasurer looked into whether we were entitled to apply for any grant for loss of income but we were not. A couple of regular groups who hire The Belmont Centre eventually started back in September only to have to close again in December with the second lockdown. The Belmont Centre did however provide a very useful resource earlier in the year when a small group of volunteers from Uckfield quickly set it up as a base to issue food boxes of essential items to those in need and unable to get out. Lynne Ireland, our Parish Administrator was one of these volunteers and the Uckfield Food Outreach Box Service was later recognised for its work by being highlighted in the community awards made by the chair of Wealden Council for "outstanding help, neighbourliness, contribution and service to individuals and the community throughout the COVID lockdown period and beyond". The Church did not charge for this use and were pleased to be able to facilitate this essential service to the local community.

ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE

Attendance at worship

The Church family welcomes visitors from both within and outside the parish boundary. Visitors attend services in Holy Cross Church by personal choice (including the more recent socially distanced and online services) and it is our great pleasure to welcome people from all walks of life to take part in the life of the Church.

The Church is usually open during the day in term time for people to visit but unfortunately this had to stop from March with the first national lockdown. From June, Churches were allowed to open for private prayer. It was felt important that the building was open especially as some other Churches in the area and

other local worshipping communities do not have permanent buildings. The Rector was in attendance for these periods initially (which were publicised to parishioners in the weekly pewsheets and to others via the internet) in case anyone needed to see a member of clergy, then from July the Church was unstaffed. The demand was not great (the most was five people in one day) and then the Parish Administrator oversaw the use of the building but there were no signs of any visitors and as it could not be adequately monitored the Church was eventually closed again in November, other than for the Sunday services.

Immediately the first lockdown was introduced, weekly online Sunday services were produced which around 85% of the congregation had access to. Typically they comprised Prayer of the Day, a Song by the Children's Choir, Reading, Talk, Prayers, Song, Blessing, Hymn and tended to last 15-20 minutes. People from all three Churches in the Plurality and of all ages contributed to the services by reading the Lesson, writing the prayers, singing or playing the organ. One of our Churchwardens, John Pontefract, wrote numerous religious songs during the year which he recorded to be used in the services, they were usually based on the Bible reading for that Sunday. Sometimes visual aids were included in the service like children and adults holding up pictures they had coloured in as part of The Holy Cross Colouring Challenge. This was during a June service where Fr John tried to make the service more like "Open Doors" which is the all age service usually held monthly. He undertook planting herbs during the podcast to provide a visual element. This service received 33 comments on Facebook which included:

Your voice is always so reassuring to hear Father John especially in these changing times. Such beautiful singing by the Church choir and what beautiful prayers.

Another lovely, lively service from HC. Enhanced by the charming singing and prayers from the children and a rousing hymn to end!

Really lovely to see everyone. Very impressed with everyone's huge effort and participation.

Beautiful service this morning thank you.

The pre-recorded online services were made available via Facebook, YouTube. During the first lockdown these had to be filmed at The Rectory but as the months went on and guidelines were relaxed, Fr John also recorded services in the Churches of Little Horsted and Isfield. They were also accessible via the Church website and thanks go to Michael Frost for maintaining it until June when it was overhauled and has since been maintained by John Pontefract. We are very grateful to Sarah Widdowson for helping to produce the weekly service podcasts and Off The Wall Entertainment, a local company who helped film/edit them as well as other services and virtual events.

Other online services received comments such as:

The service was very uplifting and it is a blessing that we can see it every week when we are unable to come to Church.

Thank you all for these Services so we can worship and pray together.

Thank you for a beautiful and uplifting service today. So comforting to feel part of our lovely Church family at Holy Cross.

Thank you for the lovely service and well done to the children your prayers were beautiful.

Thank you Father John. Really uplifting reading, prayers, singing and words from you at these testing times.

Thank you fathers John for a lovely service For bringing peace and hope.

Well done everyone. Thank you children for singing one of my favourite hymns so beautifully. Well done JP for composing the hymn and singing it at the end of the prayers. Thank you Fr John for your words and Fr David for your thought provoking sermon

Once again it was wonderful to experience this relaxed and peaceful service. Thanks to all of you and especially the youngsters. It's a joy to see them all doing their part to keep us going

My goodness what a beautiful service from start to finish

Wonderful singing from our amazing children



It was not only the children's participation which was appreciated- the Rectory dog also received compliments:

Sophie is an absolute scene stealer!

Thank you again all of you - I really appreciate this time spent with you (and Sophie of course)

People were invited to put a photo on Facebook having coffee after the service

When people were able to attend Sunday services again the feedback the first week was encouraging:

It was lovely to be back in our Church family surroundings

Thanks and congratulations to you and all who helped stage yesterday's Communion service in such an imaginative way. Good and appropriate atmosphere, spot on.

However, the need was still there to provide the religious elements online not only for those congregation members unable to attend Church but also others who had started to join in with the online service. However, as the services were labour intensive to produce by a few people, they were pared back a bit to a shorter "mini" service of about 12 minutes. At the same time, the orders of service being used that Sunday in Church were distributed with the weekly pewsheets so that everyone felt included. Thanks must be given to Sandie Boniface who composed the majority of intercessions since September and Sarah who did the voice overs.

During the second lockdown clergy were allowed to go into Churches to pre-record services.



Fr John pre-recording a Sunday service with Off The Wall Entertainment

Although singing in Church was not allowed, the playing of the organ was and people enjoyed hearing music from various organists. In July Tim Guntrip became our Director of Music and Anthony Roberts the Assistant Director of Music which was a reversal of roles.

In 2019, the average attendance at the 9.30am Eucharist and 10am Open Doors service over the four Sundays in October had been 140. In October 2020, the average attendance for the four 10am Eucharist services was 48 (bearing in mind the Church could then only accommodate 50) while the average online viewing figures were 279 for the same month. An estimation of the age profile of our congregation last year showed that 43% were over 70 (with a considerable number in their 80's and 90's) and some of these, as well as others, have underlying health conditions and were considered vulnerable and advised to self-isolate or were doing so for other reasons. The introduction of an online Sunday service from late March was much appreciated by those who could access them.

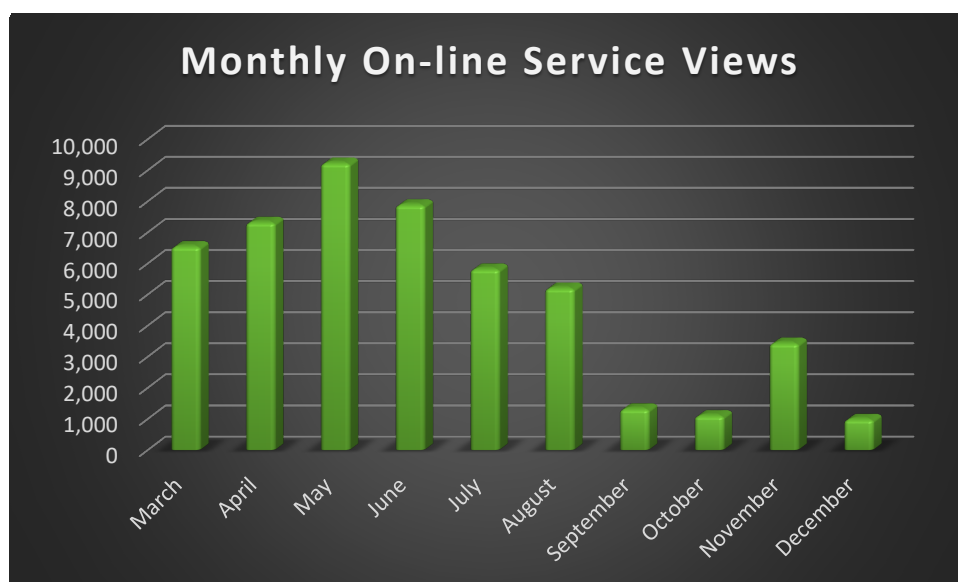
Those attending Holy Cross Church for a Sunday Eucharist service on the 18 services held with restrictions averaged 47 a week. The number viewing online services on Facebook and YouTube varied greatly between 120 and over 3000. We know that many were viewed by couples or families in a sitting, so in terms of people watching the numbers would have been higher. There were also many benefits to online services in that they can be watched when and where people choose and we know members of our Church community were sharing them with family and friends as well as others finding them for themselves. However all online figures quoted in this report may be slightly inflated as we know some people were opening the service in order to forward the link to those who either had trouble finding the service or wanted to forward it to family and friends who were not always local, nor regular Church attenders.

In July, one of the congregation shared this insight into the impact our online services were having on her mother:

'On visiting my Mother at the weekend, she is an elderly lady living on her own with a medical condition which means she is unable to attend her local Church ...like many others she has had to shield...for the foreseeable future. She is not unusual in this respect but has found the whole ordeal very lonely and frightening despite the many telephone calls and food parcels she receives from family, friends and neighbours. Her own Church has been putting online their Sunday services which even under the strictest

lock-down, was always a full Said Mass/Communion service in one of the Churches in the plurality. She has found this difficult to follow. I directed her to our lovely Holy Cross services which have been taking place and the feedback I got from her was so heartfelt, that I thought the Team should know how much their hard work has been really appreciated. Mum made a number of comments. She found the format uplifting and supportive whatever her mood at the time. She enjoyed the beautiful sound and excitement of the Children's choir and prayers. She liked listening to the readings and prayers especially those personal prayers written by various parishioners which in many respects voiced her own feelings. She enjoyed taking a little sneaky peek into the three Church buildings. Her main comments however, were reserved for the Clergy Team. She found their talks calming and interesting. Fr John and Sophie came in for the highest praise. She said his wonderfully personal, calm and relaxing way of presenting the theme of the day and talks were as if she were in the room (or garden) with him and he was talking to her personally. It made her feel as if she was not forgotten but part of a Church of love and support that was all around her rather than locked in a cold building and only available to those who could attend. Mum has enjoyed the services so much that she quite often goes back and views them again later in the week. Although she understand that it may not be possible, Mum said that she hoped these services would continue in some sort of format even after the restrictions are lifted (even if it was only once a month). As someone who is unable to go out, even under normal circumstances, she found these services of immense benefit. Her message was a huge THANK YOU to the Holy Cross Clergy, Fr John and the Team who has made these short services possible'.

Numbers tailed off after the Church reopened then increased again in November during the second lockdown which also included Remembrance Sunday. This trend is illustrated in the following graph.



Viewings of online services from mid March

Some of the many other services that usually take place in Holy Cross Church and reach out to the wider community as well as carol concerts from outside organisations using the building were unable to be held in their usual format this year, if at all.

The period when public worship was not allowed in Church included some of the main religious festivals - Mothering Sunday, Holy Week and Easter. It was not possible to hold a carol concert not the Crib Service on Christmas Eve (our most popular service with over 600 attending in 2019). However, a service of Nine Lessons and Carols was pre-recorded and made available online on 20th December as was the Crib Service and were enjoyed by many (2,309 and 3,049 viewers respectively) while the Christmas morning service had 308 viewings. Although Churches were allowed to be open during the Christmas period, Holy Cross Church made a local decision to close from 20th December due to local cases of COVID increasing.

This meant there was no Midnight Mass or Christmas Day Eucharist although an online Christmas Day service attracted 308 viewings which is a large increase to the usual congregation. One advantage of a pre-recorded service is that it can be watched when and where people choose to which could suit those not well or who have other commitments when the service takes place. Around 85% of the congregation have access to the online services.

The ringing of bells which had been banned from March was to be allowed with restrictions over the five day proposed Christmas relaxation of rules (which then changed anyway) but in the meantime it had been agreed that bell ringing would not take place at Holy Cross Church. The sounds of bells is significant to many in the community and has been missed.

The Remembrance Day Service in Church and two shorter services at the War Memorial had minimum representatives from the organisations who usually attend. St Wilfrid's Hospice produced their own online Lights of Love service instead of holding them in Holy Cross and other Churches as usual. There was no All Souls Service this year.



In the meantime Sarah kept in touch with most families from the various children's activities and improvised various initiatives to involve the children and help with fundraising too. She delivered Easter items which The Crafty Ladies had made to sell after the Church services and, with her children, she distributed bags of chocolate eggs which had been donated by the congregation for Messy Easter which had to be cancelled.

The first two Sundays in September Sarah organised a Junior outdoor Storytime session which were attended by 21 children and 14 parents the first week and 14 children and 10 parents the next week. The weather was kind and the congregation commented how lovely it was to see the children as they went approached Church for the service. Unfortunately this could not be continued as Coronavirus figures were rising locally.



One of the outdoor Junior Storytime sessions

With the help of Off The Wall Entertainment, the Children's Choir sang during the early online services and their contribution was greatly appreciated by others watching the service.

They also put on a performance of "One Little Voice" at the end of March while in the comfort of their own homes and this had 13,300 viewings. The Children's Choir could also be seen (albeit a snapshot) in a video created by Chichester Diocese in October of Faith in Action Around the Diocese which illustrated what positive and creative things were taking place during this difficult year.



Holy Cross Church Children's Choir recording from their homes

The Children's choir started to meet again in October (in their class bubbles from school) until the second lockdown meant sessions had to stop. They recorded (remotely) some songs for the virtual Festival of Christmas Trees and the Crib Service.

In December Sarah put together some 'make your own Christingle at home' packs for children to collect from Church with a little card about the meaning and process of putting it together.



Our Church continues to be appreciated by our parishioners and many others, as a space where life events are celebrated with joy and thanksgiving. However, as of January 2021, several families are still waiting to hold memorial services for their loved ones and seven weddings were postponed or cancelled in 2020 due to COVID.

During the year Holy Cross Church was used for the following life events: three Baptisms, three weddings (including one blessing), eleven funeral or memorial services, seven graveside services with burials at Snatts Road and two ashes interment in the Churchyard. In addition, the clergy provided twenty five services at local crematoria.

One of the weddings was two of our faithful Church members in August (postponed from June due to COVID) when restrictions had been introduced.



Photos of Julie's wedding with face masks

The number of people on the Electoral Roll as of 30th April 2020 was 184 which is an increase of 8 from last year. There are 18 (just under 10%) people who are not resident in the parish (which is the same number as last year).

We see the above aspects of Church life as part of our response to “growing in number and depth” – one of the three goals of the Diocesan Strategy “Know Love Follow Jesus” launched in 2015.

Pastoral ministry and mission outreach

We are very grateful for the support and continuing assistance of the Honorary Assistant Curates; the Revd. David Ashton and the Revd. Canon Hugh Moseley, Revd. Dr Mike Blanch and Readers Gill Comber and Sheila Fordham. We were due to have a part time curate join us in the summer but unfortunately she withdrew due to personal reasons.

During 2020 any visiting of the sick in nursing homes, hospitals and their own homes which would usually have taken place had to cease along with bereavement visits. The only exception was the Rector taking communion to the dying.

Whereas we usually have several occasions throughout the year to meet and share food and fellowship together, this was only able take place in the first three months of the year during which an “All comers party” was held at the Rectory to celebrate Epiphany, a Countryman’s Lunch, Burns Lunch, a Festival of Christmas Trees helpers “thank you party”, and the annual Fairtrade Feast. These social events were open

to anyone and most of them had people attend who were not regular worshippers at Holy Cross Church. In addition one Messy Church session was held in early February which attracted 61 children.

Such events play an important role in the life of the parish as a way of meeting others, avoiding loneliness and learning to live together and have been much missed during the pandemic.

Only one of the bi-monthly Community Leaders Lunch was able to be held at the Rectory (in February) which was well attended and Margaret Dode Angel from Sussex Support Services gave an enlightening talk about dementia care.

At the beginning of March, Fr John organised a weekly Lent lunch at The Rectory following the Diocesan Lent Course Inspiring Vision. These were attended by an average of 12 people but only three out of six took place before the first lockdown was imposed. Confirmation classes in May were also arranged by Fr John but these had to be cancelled before they began. Two adults and one child had signed up for these.

Events such as the Big Day on Luxford Field and Sunday Funday which are part of the Uckfield Festival and a large part of our outreach were cancelled and no social or fundraising events could be held during this period.

As soon as the lockdown and a ban on public worship was imposed, in order for everyone to keep in touch with each other, as well as introducing pre-recorded services, two other things happened. Gillian (in her role as Data Protection Officer) asked if people would like to receive the weekly pewsheets, Parish and Diocesan intercessions sheets, the monthly Church magazine and a written copy of the online services. At the end of the year 140 people with connections to Holy Cross Church were being sent the pewsheets each week via email while Lynne, the Parish Administrator, was posting it to another 24 people. Other documents have also been sent out during the year, including local and national helpline numbers, the Church of England Daily Hope phone line for those without the internet and relevant prayers and services. People were also signposted to other online resources including The Church of England and Diocesan websites for special services as well as events like the Consecration of Bishop Will (the new Bishop of Lewes), the Archbishop's Call to Prayer, Comfort and Joy (the Church of England Christmas campaign) etc.

At the start of the pandemic Fr John rang round the whole congregation and set up a phone network whereby clergy, Parochial Church Council members and others undertook to phone people on a weekly basis to see how they were and if they needed help of any kind or just wanted someone to talk to. Initially there were 24 people phoning 145 others on a regular basis. This became tailored over a period of time because while some people did not need the phone call as often as weekly, others required more contact.

With the pandemic unemployment and financial insecurity was of great concern to many. The Church continued to have their weekly collection for the local Foodbank at the start of the year with a basket for contributions at the back of Church at the 9.30 / 10am services which Norman and Ginnie Fryett oversaw. In the autumn when services in Church had settled down, Dee Johnson (in a COVID safe way) looked after donations brought to the Sunday services. Most weeks there was an appeal in the weekly pewsheets for donations to be given to the Foodbank, via Church or the two supermarkets in town. Some people brought produce to the Harvest Service in October and this was donated to the Foodbank who were thrilled with it and put it on their Facebook page.



Following a lot of articles in the media about children going hungry in school holidays, in the October half term, Dee Johnson, Sarah Widdowson and helpers served 81 free meals to school children over three days (one third of children in schools in Uckfield are receiving free meals). People and businesses and organisations generously donated food and money and the surplus funds were passed on to the Uckfield Coronavirus volunteers.

In late November Sarah Widdowson and Dee Johnson, with the help of others, organised an online Christmas Bazaar whereby a brochure featuring hampers, jams, pickles and a variety of items made by The Crafty Ladies was distributed to the congregation and orders taken and the items picked up in The Belmont Centre on the day, with the appropriate COVID precautions taken. This was well supported and raised £1,536.68. Usually tickets for a Christmas Draw are sold at the Bazaar and then over the three day Festival of Christmas Trees and last year this raised £800). Sarah Widdowson and Paul Ireland, our Treasurer, worked out how to sell these online this year and in the six days that tickets were available raised £836.63.



Holy Cross Church has a wonderful reputation for its Festival of Christmas Trees, now in its 13th year. It is a real community event attracting several thousand visitors from far and wide. It coincides with late night shopping in the town and many people regard this weekend as their start to Christmas. It is also the Church's biggest fundraiser. Sarah enthusiastically adapted this to a virtual event and published the Festival online. Over 50 local organisations/people sponsored a tree and it was viewed by 8,200 people with 93 comments made on Facebook which reflects the meaning of this event to people. Here are some of them:

Beautiful to watch this - superbly produced too. Makes me proud to live in Uckfield and be part of our wonderful community.

What a beautiful and spirit lifting video.

Well done Team Holy Cross, Uckfield community & Off the Wall,- a beautiful video show casing so much brilliance within our town.

Wow, well done and a Merry Christmas to you all at Holy Cross Church, as always you are there and a huge part of Uckfield's community. To the children that took part talking and singing, I hope each and every one of you have a beautiful Christmas, you have all touched so many hearts.

The Virtual Festival of Christmas Trees was mentioned on the Diocese of Chichester e-news letter: "Holy Cross Uckfield has produced a very special video to share their Virtual Festival of Christmas Tree. Introduced by Fr John Wall this excellent video takes you on a special journey celebrating Christmas and community."



There was also a "Tree of Angels" in Church whereby people left a message regarding a loved one no longer with us via a Just Giving link which was written on an angel and put on the tree. Half of all donations were given to "The Friends of Uckfield Hospital".

On December Dee, Sarah and a team prepared Festival Lunches which could be collected or delivered. This was a huge success with 149 meals being booked and served with all the Christmas trimmings and many compliments received.

This, the Festival of Christmas Trees and Tree of Angels raised the amazing sum of £2878.36 for the Church.

We see the above aspects of Church life as part of our response to the Diocesan Strategy for "reimagining ministry".

Social media has been the main method of communication this year, and our Facebook page now has 1154 people following it and 1042 likes which is an increase of 19% from last year. We are very grateful to Sarah Widdowson for continually updating our Facebook page as the situation changed and making it relevant. The revamped Church website continues to be heavily used and our thanks to John Pontefract for maintaining it. The average number of views per day over the last five months was 215.

We see the above aspects of Church life as part of our response to the third part of the Diocesan strategy "contribution to the common good", as in our Statement of Needs. We wish to build on our increased community profile by improving the sound system and hearing loop as a step towards making our worship space more flexible.

St Saviour's is in the south of the town: it was formerly a chapel and now comprises 16 flatlets and a worship area with seating which also doubles up as a community space for events. It is now managed by Uckfield & District Housing Association Ltd. Regular weekly services had been held there which had to stop during the lockdown. Sadly, at the request of the few residents who were attending, it was decided

not to resume them (worship is at the discretion of the Rector of Uckfield, who fully supporting them in this decision). Some of the residents attend Holy Cross Church. It will however still serve as an alternative venue for worship (as it has in the past) for example, Evensong when the Church has been set up for Holiday Club). This year Ray Pilson took over from Pam Morris as the Deputy Churchwarden for St Saviour's and we thank Pam for her dedication in her seven years in this role.

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

The appointment of the Parochial Church Council PCC members is governed by and set out in the Church Representation Rules. It is made up of the following people:

PCC members: Ex Officio: the Revd John Wall (Rector); Gill Comber, Sheila Fordham (Readers); Dee Johnson, John Pontefract (Churchwardens); Dee Johnson, Jill Thornton, Sandie Boniface (Members of Deanery Synod).

PCC members: Representatives of the Laity: Paul Cuerden, Terry Hall, Paul Ireland, Ann Kennedy, Angela Noel, Edna Osborne, Barbara Poole, Sister Sarah, Sister Mary Paul, Sarah Widdowson, Francis Wallace and Gillian Youngman.

The PCC meetings are chaired by the Rector and Dee Johnson is Vice-Chair. The PCC Secretary is Gillian Youngman and the PCC Treasurer is Paul Ireland.

New PCC members are signposted to the following:

- The Charity Commission Trustee Eligibility Declaration
- The Fit and proper persons' declaration
- The Charity Commission guidance "The essential trustee: what you need to know, what you need to do"
- The Church of England booklet "Trusteeship"
- The Chichester Diocese booklet "Being a PCC member"
- Attending training as appropriate (e.g. Safeguarding)
- Obtaining a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check if appropriate.

The full Parochial Church Council only met three times during the year – once "physically" in January and then virtually via Zoom in October and November (following a social evening as a trial for those not familiar with online meetings). The average attendance at these meetings was 73%.

At each PCC meeting the Rector and Churchwardens guide the PCC through work and decisions required on what is needed in order to carry out our ongoing aims and objectives. Standing items on each agenda were approving the minutes of the last meeting, safeguarding, health and safety and finance. This year has also included updates on the Church being open for services. Decisions are made following discussion and then a motion proposed, seconded and a vote taken and minuted. New legislation has also made possible making decisions on urgent matters via email, which are recorded in the minutes at the next PCC meeting, and this has happened several times during the year and enabled the Church to move forward when physical meetings have not been possible. The Trustees Report for the Annual Meeting was one example which was approved via email and phone.

Paul Kennedy (Project Manager to the Church of the Holy Cross, PCC and Health and Safety Officer) oversaw several large projects this year (see Fabric report on page 26). Paul Kennedy sent a written report to each PCC meeting and in between liaises with the PCC and Standing Committee on projects and issues as required.

Our Safeguarding Officer, Karen Smith, sends a report for each PCC meeting. The Parochial Church Council has complied with the duty under 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). We are working within the guidelines in the newly published Parish Safeguarding Handbook (approved by the House of Bishops). Our SQP was assessed by the Diocesan Safeguarding team on Ash Wednesday 2020 and we were awarded Level 1 Certificate.

The PCC Standing Committee comprises the Rector, Churchwardens, PCC Treasurer, PCC Secretary, a PCC representative and Parish Administrator. The Standing Committee met twice within four days in March then once monthly from May to December with additional meetings in September and November. The extra one in September was to discuss the Statement of Needs and a change of priorities due to a COVID grant that might have been available, and the second was to discuss the ramifications of Remembrance Day services as a second national lockdown had been announced from 5th November. After each Standing Committee meeting a summary of what was discussed was communicated to the PCC and other clergy.

The purpose of the Standing Committee is to conduct PCC business in between meetings or in an emergency, including addressing day to day matters and ensuring the smooth running of the Church. During 2020 this involved making sure that the Church and Belmont Centre were as COVID compliant as could be by keeping to the current government and Church of England guidelines. This involved creating various risk assessments and we are very grateful to Paul Kennedy, our Health and Safety Officer who continuously kept up updated with the current legislation and gave his advice. Also at the Standing Committee meetings, the health, welfare and pastoral needs of parishioners were discussed and extra support given where possible via phonecalls or offering advice.

Lynne Ireland, the Parish Administrator, usually works from her office in the Belmont Centre on Monday, Wednesday and Thursday 9.15am - 12.15pm and continues to be a most valuable asset, freeing up clergy time doing administrative tasks. We are very grateful to her for her flexibility especially during this difficult year when she has had to work from home at times and has assisted, along with other Standing Committee members and Paul Kennedy, in ensuring Holy Cross Church has maintained COVID safety standards.

The Churchwardens are also trustees of the "Edward Holmes Baldock Charity" which is three charities rolled into one. It incorporates the Henry Gardener and Dorothy Ellis charities, and all three of them were established to relieve poverty in the town of Uckfield. Dorothy Ellis died in 1731 and some of the money she left enabled 12 fourpenny loaves to be provided to 12 poor families at Holy Cross Church every Sunday. This is now invested in the COIF Charities Investment Fund which provides a quarterly income which is used to provide a fund for an annual donation to three families selected by a sub-committee each year. The fund from 2020 was not used and is carried forward to be donated during 2021.

The parish part owned a property, 7 Parkview Road, which was bought as a home for a curate in training in 1989. When we no longer had a curate the Church Commissioners allowed us to rent the house out for

a limited period. We then had to repay what we owed or sell it. A parish no longer has to provide a house for a training post and the PCC took the decision to sell it. The house had been bought for £86,000 and sold for in November 2020 for £290,000 which is a 337% increase. Costs involved in the sale of the property amounted to £5,789 and the net proceeds of £183,086 has been allocated as a restricted fund for the PCC to decide how best to invest the proceeds for the Church and clergy.

Diary: John Wall (Church Times 1st May 2020)

Phone friends

“WEIRD, isn’t it?” was my opening gambit for many of the 200-plus phone calls I made at the beginning of the pandemic. It was, I felt, one of the most authentically priestly things that I’ve ever done: touching base with everyone in my scattered Church communities.

Like many, I was setting up telephone groups among the congregations, dividing them up into teams with a lead telephoner so that no one, though isolated, would feel alone. Out of all those calls, only two people didn’t want contact; all the others enthusiastically joined in, and the groups have thrived.

In addition, our weekly pew and readings sheets, now transformed into information and internet prayer-resource lists, are being emailed or posted to all, as required. As Gillian, my PCC secretary and information-disseminating guru, pointed out, we’d spent ages talking in the PCC about how to improve pastoral care for the congregations, and — pretty much by accident — we’ve now achieved it.

When we finally get back into Church, one of the first things we will do is invite members of the groups to stand up and wave at each other; for, although now good friends, some have never actually met.

Liturgical variations

AFTER a steep IT learning curve, many of my fellow clergy (including many of my former curates and other colleagues) have enthusiastically embraced the idea of streaming, and live services and daily Offices are now legion.

We took a slightly different route: seeing how things were going, before the shutters came down, we recorded four services in Church — for Mothering Sunday to Easter Day, with organ, reading, homily, and hymn — uploading them weekly to YouTube and Facebook.

For the first of these (I think it still had novelty value), we had more than 3000 viewings — roughly 20 times the number of people we would normally engage with on a Sunday. Then, encouraged by our Facebook guru, for Holy Week, I recorded a series of short meditations, sitting on my sofa with my iPhone propped precariously on a dining chair.

My black Labrador, Sophie, dressed in liturgically appropriate bandanas, joined in patiently, yawning sporadically and looking bored. She stole the show. Generally, there were between 1000 and 2000 viewings for each.

Subsequently, we have collated and edited services comprising individuals recording (by phone) songs, prayers, and readings in their own homes, so that Sunday worship is no longer just me spouting, but a real reflection of our Church communities. As the splendid *Church Times* cartoon that has been doing the rounds puts it, the Church building may be closed, but the Church is very much open for business.

Role reversal

ALL this busy-ness, though, has come with a personal sense of passivity and almost inertia.

We have in the parish a hugely enthusiastic and effective band of volunteers — the “Uckfield Coronavirus Volunteers” — supplying hundreds of boxes of essential groceries to the isolated. Based in our Church centre, some of the Holy Cross congregation (including our parish administrator and Church treasurer) are industriously supporting the isolated in the wider community — of whom I am one. Normally, I would have expected to be one of the doers, but, as a diabetic, I am — apart from exercise and food shopping — self-isolating.

After more than 30 years of asking people how they are and if there’s anything they need, I’m gradually getting used to being on the receiving end of the same questions. Another learning curve, salutary and necessary.

Cloud of witnesses

PRAYER and worship have become far more internalised: from being at the sharp end of public — and often very bouncy — services, in which I have to be a combination of theologian, performer, and children’s entertainer, now (podcasts apart) services are just me and the dog, and God.

Although I was praying simultaneously with others (who had received the order of service by email), Good Friday, especially, was a strange and solitary experience. For the past 20 years or so, I’ve led a semi-staged dramatisation of the Passion, sometimes through the streets of the community, ending in Church with the enactment of the crucifixion on a scaffolding stage with dry ice (effective, yes; subtle, no).

This year, it was just the two of us, sitting on a bench in the garden listening to birdsong, while I went through the readings and prayers, and remembered all those who had participated in the enactment over the decades. Tellingly, four of those who played Jesus and two who played the maidservant are now ordained or in training for the priesthood. I touched base with them all in my mind as I looked back and remembered, patting Sophie in the sunshine.

Plus ça change

...As I take pleasure in little things, amid the weirdness of it all — in all the busy-ness and passivity, in the telephoning and podcasting, in sitting in a garden listening to birdsong, and remembering and giving thanks for the many people who have touched my life — maybe these minutes can be my steps to heaven, too.

Rector’s Report for a PCC meeting Thursday 8th October

Well. What a seven months this has been!

In March the Standing Committee met to sort out what to do about Easter, only to find at the end of our meeting that **all Churches were to be shut, by order of the Archbishops!** Luckily, before lockdown, we had recorded **four Services to be sent out online**, so we had breathing space. March was quiet & reflective: I recorded a series of **Videos** to go out on Facebook, **marking Holy Week and Easter** which were well received. We then began to record our **weekly Services** with the children singing in their own homes, John Pontefract writing and performing his own songs, different readers from all three Churches, children and adults writing and reading prayers – all co-ordinated by Sarah and edited by “Off the Wall”. They were hugely popular, with **some 2000-3000 views**.

On a pastoral level, I phoned up everyone on our Church Rolls (some 300+ calls) and sorted the congregation into **‘Phone Groups** so that pastoral care and contact could be maintained. I have tried to care for those doing the phoning. **Thank you P.C.C. Members for being the primary ‘phoners!** For some

time in P.C.C. Meetings we had been talking about how to improve care, and by accident I think we've done it. The Belmont Centre was used as a base by the **"Uckfield Coronavirus Volunteers"** who included members of our Church such as Lynne & Paul Ireland and Karen Bedwell, who sent out hundreds of boxes of groceries to the vulnerable in our community.

"Grapevine" turned into an information sheet, and the **weekly "Link" sheet** became an on-line Order of Service and Prayer Resource: all were sent out either by e-mail or, for those who didn't do e-mail, by post, which has continued. Thanks to Gillian and Lynne for faithfully continuing with this all these months.

All **Weddings & Baptisms** were cancelled, but funerals carried on in Crematoria, notably Tom O'Donnell, Martin Eastwood and John Hope from our congregation. All socially distanced and strange. I have taken a number of COVID related funerals, one of which was for a suicide through depression from Lockdown. I have been involved in quite a lot of pastoral support by 'phone and online. As I am in one of the "at risk" groups (Diabetes) I have restricted Home Visits to essentials, such as Jim Dame for Communion and Last Rights.

A memorable highlight for me was my **30th Anniversary of Priesting**, for which I was expecting to do nothing: I was surprised and deeply moved by the 60-70 people who turned up from all three Churches to wish me well in a suitably socially distanced way on 27th June: again, thank you!

Sadly, **Catherine Murphy, our prospective curate**, withdrew from Ordained Ministry, so we remain without a curate. She was very sad about this, as we are: she would have been excellent.

Sadly, **St. Saviour's Services** have finished, at the request of the few residents who were coming. Worship is at the discretion of the Rector of Uckfield, and I am fully supporting them in this decision.

Since Lockdown was eased, we **began Services again at Holy Cross**. Thanks to Lynne & Paul Ireland & Angela Noel, who, with support and back up by Paul Kennedy as our Health and Safety Officer, prepared the Church, taping pews off safely so allowing c 45-50 to sit socially distanced. **We began again on Trinity VI, 26th July**. It felt very strange and muted at first, but we are getting used to them, with an average congregation of c45. It was lovely that **our new Bishop of Lewes, Bishop Will Hazlewood** and his family have attended Holy Cross twice. We have had two **Weddings** since re-opening, and a number of **Funerals**: thank you to Angela Noel for her invaluable work as Verger at them. There have been no **Baptisms**, and none yet booked in for this year.

The **on-line Services have been scaled down** since the Church was reopened, but we still have a faithful following of some **200-300 viewers**, so will continue for the foreseeable future.

The A.P.C.M. is booked for 18th October. Next Sunday 11th October will be **Harvest**, with a focus on the Foodbank. We are in contact with the Town Council about how a restricted and social distanced **Remembrance Service** will go ahead at 3.00 p.m. on Remembrance Sunday. We are now working towards Advent and Christmas, with an on-line Christmas Tree Festival, a recorded Crib Service and (hopefully!) a streamed Service of Nine Lessons & Carols. Midnight Mass will go ahead but will need to be a ticketed event.

We will, I feel, emerge from this crisis stronger and a closer community. Holy Cross will thrive!

With much love and many thanks

Fr. John 6th October 2020

SAFEGUARDING REPORT

DBS CHECKS

I have notified those who need to renew their clearance. In spite of current COVID restrictions validation can still be achieved by documents being scanned and sent to me when an application has been done on line. When we can all meet again I will need to see the documents themselves. The same applies to new DBS applications.

SAFEGUARDING

All procedures followed as/when necessary and arranged in line with COVID restrictions.

Good News - we now have a Safeguarding assistant – Rhian Cottrell.

SQP

GOOD NEWS – our efforts to complete part one of the SQP requirements were successful and after our February inspection we got our certificate. Thank you all who worked so hard to comply with the paperwork mountain.

Due to the reduction/ cessation/ adjustment of activities through the pandemic the need has been mostly around re ordering of the Church for a socially distanced small congregation (when allowed) and the use of face masks and hand sanitising as per government instructions.

TRAINING

C0 Training - This online training is open to all members of the congregation and parents of children who attend Holy Cross activities on the basis that “Safeguarding is everyone’s responsibility”.

C1 Training - Unfortunately most people last did this training in February 2017 and as it should be renewed every three years it is now out of date. Due to the pandemic it was not possible to arrange a training session in the Belmont Centre as planned. It is available on line and maybe the rest of lockdown would be a good time to complete it? Please! If you have any problems, are unable to do it online or are unsure whether you need it, do contact me.

C2 Training - This has now been developed into a more rigorous and (at present) online - Safeguarding Leadership Training. A current C2 training certificate remains valid until renewal is required (ie.3 years from date on certificate), when it will be the Safeguarding Leadership Module.

Karen Smith, Safeguarding Officer

FABRIC COMMITTEE REPORT

The COVID pandemic didn't have quite the same impact on the maintenance of the Church and the Belmont Centre. From March the closure of the buildings for normal use meant that general day to day issues reduced and opportunity for having works done was improved.

All of the following works detailed here have been carried out in consultation with the Rector, the Churchwarden's and our Health & Safety/Major Projects Officer. Others from the Church community, the Diocese and other experts have been involved as required to ensure all relevant conditions and regulations are adhered to.

The year started with the refurbishment of the 2 W-9 Lancet windows during January which included the replacement of the protective grills. A major item which has ensured that those windows are now good for many years to come.

In February, the annual Re-pointing of the Stonework was carried out by Rother Stone. This involves 2 to 3 days per year to gradually work around and ensure the stonework is maintained for the future, to quote Paul Kennedy 'it's a bit like maintaining the Forth Bridge'. This is part of the recommendations on general Church building upkeep following the last Quinquennial inspection.

Early in March a storm damaged the large wooden sign on the Belmont Road side of the Church yard. This highlighted the deterioration of the sign and meant that it was not repairable. With part funding from the Church Insurance policy the sign was replaced with a longer lasting non-wood version.

The annual test of the Lightning Conductor on the Church failed and identified a significant repair needed to ensure the continuity of the connection from the roof to the ground. This work was performed by Southern Lightning Engineers Ltd of Maidstone and following the work a Certificate of Safety was issued on 22 December.

The annual boiler maintenance of the Church and Belmont Centre systems was undertaken by Hedley Visick. Other works during the year on the heating systems included the replacement of 3 control valves for the underfloor heating system in the Belmont Centre.

Investigation work for a major sound reverberation reduction project for the Cardale Hall in the Belmont Centre was started with the plan to complete installation in early 2021.

John Pontefract, Church Warden

FINANCIAL REVIEW

2020 will be remembered as the year the COVID pandemic affected all areas of life as detailed in the pages that precede this part of the annual report. The financial aspects of Holy Cross were not exempt and this report details a challenging year but one full of positivity and flexibility as we found new ways to collect and raise money as detailed in this annual report.

The firm foundation of our reserves, built up over many years, have meant we have been able to maintain and support our own Church family and our financial commitment to the Diocese and away giving. These reserves have also meant that as well as new expenditure in producing video services we have been able to carry out any essential works needed to maintain the Church and plan for improvements. In total £23,500 of our reserves was needed to balance the accounts during 2020.

Incoming and outgoing resources

Total receipts on general unrestricted funds, which are detailed in the Financial Statements, were £107,237. This is 31% (£49,137) less than 2019. The main areas which had the biggest financial impact were events, fund raising, cash collections and the Belmont Centre.

With the main fund raising events like the Festival of Christmas Trees, the Christmas Bazaar and the Christmas raffle being affected some very creative re-planning generated income despite people not being able to attend events. The use of the internet to take donations, order items for click and collect from the bazaar and on-line raffle ticket sales meant that total fund raising income at £5,624, although 70% (£13,570) down on 2019, was a fantastic figure to raise given the circumstances.

A total of £51,371 Planned Giving was received in 2020, this was down 6% (£3,327) on 2019 and was due to Planned Giving being reduced by £225 per month by the end of the year as people either left the area or passed to higher service. Cash collections totalled £3,116, a reduction of 75% (£9,351) on 2019 due to the Church having reduced capacity due to COVID restrictions or being closed since March.

Receipts from hiring fees for the Belmont Centre were £14,370 which is a decrease of 50% (£14,366) on 2019 due to the lockdown closures from March to July and on-going restrictions for the remainder of the year. A rent reduction was also given to Spire Pre-school from March till the end of the year to assist them with the impact of lockdown.

The Belmont Centre was also used during lockdown by the Uckfield Coronavirus Volunteers for co-ordinating food box deliveries for those isolating due to COVID. With the COVID related refund to Spire the Belmont Centre income covered the running costs with a surplus of around £100. A further £1,273 was expended to provide signage and sanitisers in preparation for re-opening in August.

As the Church and Belmont Centre were closed for significant periods of time throughout the year the running costs were also reduced.

When normality starts to return campaigns will be undertaken to replace the funds taken from reserves and to recruit additional planned giving.

7 Parkview Road was sold with completion in November. After costs and the repayment of the Church Commissioners Equity Sharing Loan the net proceeds in a restricted fund are £183,086.

Sharing the ministry costs of the Diocese of Chichester

The largest expenditure of the PCC was the sum of £61,500 paid to the Diocese to cover ministry costs. The parish contribution in 2020 was used towards the stipend, pension and housing costs of the clergy, and a standard sum for diocesan costs, clergy training and a contribution to national Church funds.

The Church House Finance Team published the draft budget for 2021 during September 2020. Following this, a joint meeting of the Uckfield and Dallington Deaneries was held virtually on Zoom, on 21st September 2020, at which all PCC Treasurers were invited to attend. A recording of that meeting was subsequently made available, so that anybody unable to join that meeting would be able to follow the proceedings.

The Diocese budget for 2021 has been prepared under the shadow of the COVID pandemic, resulting in a forecast deficit for the 2020 financial year and the consequent reduction in reserves. The Diocese has budgeted for significant falls in the levels of the majority of income lines due to uncertainty over the levels of recovery from the effects of the pandemic.

It is recognised that parishes will recover from the impact of the pandemic at different rates and for this reason, the Diocese have budgeted for a reduction of 5.2% on the 2020 figure for Parish Share. That said, the Uckfield Deanery Budget Allocation for 2021 has been circulated with an increase in the Parish Share of 0.09% which is the amount by which the Uckfield Deanery budget for 2021 has increased from 2020.

The Holy Cross Uckfield PCC met on 25th November 2020 and confirmed that the Parish Share previously pledged for 2020 of £61,500 would be increased to £64,500 in 2021. This is an increase of 4.88% and the plurality as a whole will pay £79,823 which is 118.22% of the net Parish Costs of £67,521.

Staff costs

Since April 2016 a part-time Parish Administrator has been employed to run the Parish Office. From 2020 the Director of Music and Assistant Director of Music payments are now recorded as salary having previously been recorded as upkeep of services. This is following guidance that these roles do not have the autonomy required to be classed as self-employed.

At the beginning of 2020 an increase of 5% on salaries was agreed and back dated to 1 Jan 2020.

Due to no employees being registered with HMRC before the qualifying dates we were unable to benefit from the Government Furlough scheme.

Missionary and Charitable giving

The planned reconstituting of a Giving sub-committee of the PCC was delayed due to the COVID pandemic. Therefore, missionary and charitable giving for 2020 of £3,750 is over £2,700 down on 2019. £2,000 has been accrued to allow the Giving sub-committee a fund to ensure that our Away Giving recorded for the year can be maintained despite the disruption caused by COVID.

During 2020 the missionary and charitable giving being donations to home and overseas was:

Overseas

- Goodwill Children's Homes £ 500
- Action Aid £ 234

Home

- Holy Cross School Governors £1,500
- Holy Cross School Other Support £ 585
- Chichester Diocese Family Services £ 500
- The Children's Society £ 231
- Holy Cross Charities (Baldock) £ 0 (funds carried forward to 2021)
- Uckfield Hospital League of Friends £ 313
- Local deserving causes £ 200

Accrued amounts are for the following:

- Giving sub-committee fund £2,000

Fixed Assets

Due to the sale of 7 Parkview Road the Fixed Asset value has been reduced by the 2019 valuation of the 66.785% share which was £190,776.

As part of the sale process the Church Commissioners 34.215% equity share loan was settled so the long term liabilities on the accounts have reverted to £0.

Reserves Policy

During 2020 the minimum balance on the general unrestricted funds (excluding property) which equates to approximately 6 month's of unrestricted payments as a contingency against unforeseen situations was maintained despite the need to transfer funds to meet the day to day expenditure.

It is PCC policy to retain any funds not required for day to day transactions on deposit at the bank.

Funds held as custodian trustees on behalf of others

The PCC acts as a custodian trustee for the assets of the Edward Holmes Baldock Charity which was established in 1845 for the benefit of poor persons in the parish. Its sole asset is 38.38 income units invested in the COIF Charities Investment Fund.

As at 31 August 2020, its latest valuation date, the value of the investment was £610.40. The income in its financial year was £18.68 which is normally topped up by the PCC and distributed to suitable recipients. The charity is administered by the PCC with the Churchwardens acting as trustees of the charity and is segregated from the assets of the PCC.

The normal annual donations to local deserving individuals encountering hardship was deferred as confirmation of the recipients was not possible during the lockdown. The PCC will ensure the 2021 awards are topped up with the deferred 2020 income.

During the 2020 COVID lockdown the PCC supported the Uckfield Coronavirus Volunteers and allowed the use of the online and electronic payment facilities of the Belmont Centre bank account. As at the 31 December 2020 a total of £3,282 of funds are held on account for the continuing need for their service during the pandemic.

Statement of Financial Activities

The financial effect of our activities during the year can be summarised as follows

	Unrestricted Fund	Restricted Fund/s	Endowed Fund/s	Total Funds 2020	Total Funds 2019	Notes
	£	£	£	£	£	
Income and endowments from:						
Donations and legacies	77,630	2,869	-	80,499	101,409	
Charitable activities	8,998	-	-	8,998	11,060	
Other trading activities	17,635	-	-	17,635	39,234	
Investments	96	188,885	-	188,981	7,451	
Other receipts	2,554	-	-	2,554	108	
Total income	106,913	191,754	-	298,667	159,262	2
Expenditure on:				-		
Raising funds	939	-	-	939	4,494	
Charitable activities	124,725	1,465	-	126,190	128,599	
Other trading activities	(7,983)	5,789	-	(2,194)	23,506	
Other expenditure	-	-	-	-	-	
Total expenditure	117,681	7,254	-	124,935	156,599	3
Net gains (or losses) on investments	-	-	-	-	-	8
Net income or (net expenditure)	(10,768)	184,500	-	173,732	2,663	
Transfers between funds	-	-	-	-	-	10
	(10,768)	184,500	-	173,732	2,663	
Other recognised gains/(losses):						
Gains/(losses) on revaluation of fixed assets	(190,776)	-	-	(190,776)	3,854	11
Other gains/(losses)	-	-	-	-	-	
<i>Reconciliation of funds:</i>						
Net movement in funds	(201,544)	184,500	-	(17,044)	6,517	
Total funds brought forward	1,661,556	12,538	-	1,674,094	1,667,577	
Total funds carried forward	1,460,012	197,038	-	1,657,050	1,674,094	

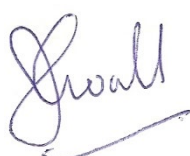
Balance Sheet

Our financial position and summary of funds at the year end were

	Total Funds <u>2020</u>	Total Funds <u>2019</u>	Notes
	£	£	
Intangible assets	-	-	
Tangible assets	1,370,000	1,560,776	
Heritage assets	-	-	
Endowed investments	-	-	
Total fixed assets	1,370,000	1,560,776	11
Stocks	-	-	
Debtors	4,561	14,582	14
Investments	-	-	
Cash at bank and in hand	296,066	137,552	
Total current assets	300,627	152,134	
Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year	(13,577)	(9,391)	15
Net current assets or (liabilities)	287,050	142,743	
Total assets less current liabilities	1,657,050	1,703,519	
Creditors: Amounts falling due after more than one year	-	(29,425)	16
Provisions for liabilities	-	-	
Total net assets or (liabilities)	1,657,050	1,674,094	
The funds of the charity:			
Restricted income funds	197,038	12,538	
Unrestricted funds	1,460,012	1,661,556	
Revaluation reserve			
Total unrestricted funds	1,460,012	1,661,556	
Total charity funds	1,657,050	1,674,094	18

This Financial Report for the year ended 31st December 2020, including the notes following, was approved by the PCC and signed on its behalf by The Revd. John Wall, PCC Chairman:

Signed:



Date 20th April 2021

Notes to the Financial Report

1 Accounting policies

Basis of preparation

The PCC is a public benefit entity within the meaning of FRS102. The financial statements have been prepared under the Charities Act 2011 and the Church Accounting Regulations 2006, in accordance with applicable accounting standards and the current Statement of Recommended Practice, Accounting and Reporting by Charities, (SORP (FRS 102)).

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention as modified by the inclusion of investments at market value and the revaluation of fixed assets. The financial statements include all transactions, assets and liabilities for which the PCC is responsible in law. They do not include the accounts of Church groups that owe their affiliation to another body, nor those which are informal gatherings of Church members

Funds accounting

Funds held by the PCC are:

Unrestricted funds - general funds which can be used for PCC ordinary purposes

Restricted funds - a) income from trusts or endowments which may be expended only on those restricted objects provided in the terms of the trust or bequest; b) donations or grants received for a specific object or invited by the PCC for a specific object. The funds may only be expended on the specific object for which they were given. Any balance remaining unspent at the end of the year is carried forward as a balance on that fund

Income and endowments

All income and endowments, accounted for without deduction for any costs of receivability, are recognised when there is evidence of entitlement, receipt is probable, and the amount can be measured reliably

Donations and legacies

Collections are recognised when received.

Planned giving receivable is recognised when there is evidence of entitlement, receipt is probable, and the amount accords with the Gift Aid declaration or other record of intention to donate

Gift aid recovered is recognised when the income to which it is attached is recognised

Grants and legacies are recognised when the formal offer in writing of the funding, is received by the PCC

Charitable activities

Statutory fees for weddings and funerals are recognised when the office occurs

Other trading activities

Trading activities are where income is receivable in return for selling goods or providing services. Income from trading is recognised either: a - when received, or b - in the case of concerts: for the year in which the event occurs, irrespective of date of receipt. Advance bookings are included in creditors until the concert has taken place

Sales of magazines are recognised when received

Rents from property are recognised in accordance with the rental agreements, when receipt is probable

Investment income

Dividends are accounted for when due and payable. Interest entitlements are accounted for as they accrue

All other income

All other income is recognised in accordance with the above overall policy

Gains and losses on investments

Realised gains are recognised when the investments are sold

Unrealised gains and losses are accounted for on revaluation at 31 December

Expenditure

Expenditure is recognised when there is evidence of entitlement, payment is probable, and the amount can be measured reliably

Grants

Grants and donations are accounted for when paid over, or when awarded where the award creates a binding obligation on the PCC

Church activities

The diocesan parish contribution is accounted for on an annual basis, reflecting the allocation set by our Deanery. Any parish contribution unpaid at 31 December is provided for in these accounts as an operational (though not a legal) liability and is shown as a creditor in the balance sheet

Fixed assets

Tangible fixed assets

Consecrated and beneficed property of any kind is excluded from the accounts by s.10(2) of the Charities Act 2011.

Movable Church furnishing held by the Vicar and Churchwardens on special trust for the PCC and which require a faculty for disposal, are accounted as inalienable property unless consecrated. They are listed in the Church's inventory which can be inspected but are not included in the financial statements

All expenditure on consecrated or beneficed buildings and individual items costing under £1,000 are written off in the year they were incurred

Depreciation

Depreciation is calculated to write down the cost of tangible fixed assets, excluding freehold properties, over their expected useful lives. The rates generally applicable are:

Fixtures and fittings	20%
Audio visual	33%
Office equipment	25%

No depreciation is provided on freehold buildings as the useful economic life of these assets exceeds 50 years and residual values so high that potential depreciation would be immaterial. It is the PCC's policy to maintain these assets in a continual state of sound repair. Resulting from regular impairment reviews, provision will be made if there has been any permanent diminution in value

Investments

Investments are stated at market value at the balance sheet date

Current Assets

Amounts owing to the PCC at 31 December in respect of fees, rents or other income are shown as debtors, less provision for amounts that may prove uncollectible

Short-term deposits include cash held on deposit either with the CBF Church of England Funds, or at the bank

Notes to the Financial Report

2 Analysis of income and endowments

	Unrestricted Fund	Restricted Fund/s	Endowed Fund/s	Total Funds 2020	Total Funds 2019	Notes
	£	£	£	£	£	
Planned giving (via standing order)	44,464	-	-	44,464	46,067	
Planned giving (via weekly envelopes)	6,907	-	-	6,907	8,631	
Loose cash collections	2,802	314	-	3,116	12,467	
Christmas Tree Festival	2,765	-	-	2,765	9,560	
Other Fund Raising Activities	2,859	-	-	2,859	5,469	
Other donations	5,183	2,555	-	7,738	5,492	
Gift Aid recoverable	11,111	-	-	11,111	13,723	
Legacies	-	-	-	-	-	
Grants	1,539	-	-	1,539	-	
Donations and legacies	£77,630	£2,869	-	£80,499	£101,409	
Fees for weddings & funerals - PCC	2,263	-	-	2,263	4,354	
Fees for weddings & funerals - Clergy	943	-	-	943	2,445	
Fees for weddings & funerals - DBF	5,732	-	-	5,732	3,260	
Fees for weddings & funerals - Other Wedding	60	-	-	60	1,001	
Charitable activities	£8,998	-	-	£8,998	£11,060	
Big Day, Xmas Fair & Festival of Christmas Trees	2,294	-	-	2,294	7,530	
Other fund raising activities	750	-	-	750	1,086	
Sales of the parish magazine	221	-	-	221	902	
Belmont Centre hiring fees	14,370	-	-	14,370	28,736	
Magazine advertisement fees	-	-	-	-	980	
Other trading activities	£17,635	-	-	£17,635	£39,234	
Bank deposit interest	96	10	-	106	231	
Rent from letting of investment property	-	-	-	-	7,220	
Proceeds from Sale of Assets	-	188,875	-	188,875	-	
Investments	£96	£188,885	-	£188,981	£7,451	
Other receipts	2,554	-	-	2,554	108	
Total income and endowments on all funds	£106,913	£191,754	-	£298,667	£159,262	

Notes to the Financial Report

3 Analysis of expenditure

	Unrestricted Fund	Restricted Fund/s	Endowed Fund/s	Total Funds 2020	Total Funds 2019	Notes
	£	£	£	£	£	
Uckfield Festival Big Day	-	-	-	-	80	
Festival of Christmas Trees	919	-	-	919	3,548	
Stewardship costs (printing etc)	-	-	-	-	83	
Other fundraising (non-trading) costs	20	-	-	20	783	
Cost of raising funds	£939	-	-	£939	£4,494	
Missionary and charitable giving	2,513	1,465	-	3,978	6,517	4
Ministry: Diocesan Parish Share	61,500	-	-	61,500	58,500	
Ministry: Other Clergy costs	5,699	-	-	5,699	8,012	
Staff: Admin	16,142	-	-	16,142	5,148	5
Upkeep of services	3,668	-	-	3,668	14,792	
Church running costs	9,610	-	-	9,610	10,073	
Junior Church and Clubs (e.g. Choir)	329	-	-	329	1,407	
Church maintenance and repair	7,245	-	-	7,245	4,254	
Piano	130	-	-	130	-	
Holy Cross School Support	225	-	-	225	735	
Major Works	9,238	-	-	9,238	8,361	
Miscellaneous	526	-	-	526	2,955	
Bank charges	754	-	-	754	1,144	
Messy Church/Holiday Club/Outreach	328	-	-	328	240	8
Fees - Paid to Clergy	1,721	-	-	1,721	2,456	
Fees - Paid to DBF	5,097	-	-	5,097	3,425	
Fees - Paid for Wedding Extras	-	-	-	-	580	
Governance	-	-	-	-	-	
Cost of charitable activities	£124,725	£1,465	-	£126,190	£128,599	
Uckfield Festival Big Day	-	-	-	-	339	
Festival of Christmas Trees	369	-	-	369	441	
Other events	-	-	-	-	-	
Church Commissioners - 7PVR Equity Loan and Rent	1,894	-	-	1,894	3,491	
Belmont Centre running costs	10,655	-	-	10,655	18,482	
Parish magazine costs	-	-	-	-	416	
Other trading costs	(20,901)	5,789	-	13,524	337	
Cost of other trading activities	(£7,983)	5,789	-	(£2,194)	£23,506	
Total expended on all funds	£117,681	£7,254	-	£124,935	£156,599	

Notes to the Financial Report

4 Missionary and charitable giving

	Unrestricted Fund	Restricted Fund/s	Endowed Fund/s	Total Funds 2020	Total Funds 2019	Notes
	£	£	£	£	£	
Overseas:						
<i>Total</i>	-	734	-	734	2,216	
Home:						
<i>Total</i>	513	731	-	1,244	4,301	
<i>Accrued amount (Finance Sub-Committee)</i>	2,000	-	-	2,000		
	2,513	1,465	-	3,978	6,517	

5 Staff costs

	Unrestricted Fund	Restricted Fund/s	Endowed Fund/s	Total Funds 2020	Total Funds 2019	Notes
	£	£	£	£	£	
Remuneration						
<i>Wages and salaries</i>	16,142	-	-	16,142	5,148	
	16,142	-	-	16,142	5,148	

6 Payments to PCC members

Trustee payments and expenses

The PCC support the clergy by paying Council Tax of £3,571, water and environmental charges amounting to £926 for the Rectory plus other costs totalling £1,240 towards travel, hospitality, telephone, internet and postage.

7 Transactions with persons related to PCC members

Since the appointment of a new Treasurer in June 2019, all payments to the Parish Administrator are connected to the trustees as the Treasurer is married to the Parish Administrator. PCC procedures are in place to ensure at least two others are aware of expenditure, other than regular commitments and pre-agreed works, before payment is made. Financial reporting to the PCC and the PCC Standing Committee contains financial detail to ensure transparency.

No other payments have been made to persons related to or connected to the trustees.

8 Transactions with related charities

The Holy Cross Church of England Primary School is supported by the Clergy and financial assistance is provided in agreement with the PCC. The incumbent is an ex-officio member of the Board of Governors.

Financial support has been given to Holy Cross School during 2020 for a Music tutor for Choir and Assemblies - £225, this is a reduction on previous years due to the lockdown periods.

9 Governance

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Fund/s	Endowed Fund/s	Total Funds 2020	Total Funds 2019	Notes
	£	£	£	£	£	
Accounts production	-	-	-	-	-	
	-	-	-	-	-	

10 Transfers between funds

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Fund/s	Endowed Fund/s	Total Funds 2020	Total Funds 2019	Notes
	£	£	£	£	£	
-	-	-	-	-	-	
	-	-	-	-	-	

11 Fixed assets

a Investments

	Unrestrict ed Fund	Restrict ed Fund/s	Endow ed Fund/s	Total Funds 2020	Notes
	£	£	£	£	
Market value 1 January 2020	-	-	-	-	
Disposals at carrying value	-	-	-	-	
Purchases at cost	-	-	-	-	
Net gains and revaluation	-	-	-	-	
Market value 31 December 2020	-	-	-	-	

Notes to the Financial Report

11 Fixed assets (contd.)

b Tangible fixed assets

	<u>Freehold land and buildings</u>	<u>Audio visual equipment</u>	<u>Office equipment</u>	<u>Total fixed assets</u>	<i>Notes</i>
	£	£	£	£	
Cost or valuation					
At 1 January 2020	1,560,776	-	-	1,560,776	
Additions	-	-	-	-	
Disposals	(190,776)	-	-	(190,776)	
Revaluation	-	-	-	-	
At 31 December 2020	1,370,000	-	-	1,370,000	
Charge for impairment					
At 1 January 2020	-	-	-	-	
At 31 December 2020	-	-	-	-	
Net book amounts					
At 31 December 2020	1,370,000	-	-	1,370,000	
At 31 December 2019	1,560,776	-	-	1,560,776	

The freehold land and buildings are the Belmont Centre, Belmont Road. The Belmont Centre remains valued at £1,370,000.

The former curates house, 7 Park View Road, was sold during 2020 and the 65.785% share owned by the PCC realised £190,776 before costs.

13 Net assets by fund

	<u>Unrestricted Funds</u>	<u>Restricted Fund/s</u>	<u>Endowed Fund/s</u>	<u>Total Funds 2020</u>	<u>Total Funds 2019</u>	<i>Notes</i>
	£	£	£	£	£	
Fixed assets for Church use	1,370,000	-	-	1,370,000	1,560,776	
Current assets (except cash)	4,561	-	-	4,561	14,482	
Cash at bank and on deposit	99,028	197,038	-	296,066	137,552	
Current liabilities	(13,577)	-	-	(13,577)	(9,391)	
Long term liabilities	-	-	-	-	(29,425)	
	£1,460,012	£197,038	£-	£1,657,050	£1,674,094	

Notes to the Financial Report

14 Debtors

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Fund/s	Endowed Fund/s	Total Funds 2020	Total Funds 2019	Notes
	£	£	£	£	£	
Income tax recoverable	2,822	-	-	2,822	13,274	
Prepayments and accrued income	1,739	-	-	1,739	1,275	
Other debtors	-	-	-	-	33	
	£4,561	-	-	£4,561	£14,582	

15 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Fund/s	Endowed Fund/s	Total Funds 2020	Total Funds 2019	Notes
	£	£	£	£	£	
Deferred income	-	-	-	-	-	
Accruals for utilities and other costs	8,086	5,231	-	13,317	8,858	
Other creditors	260	-	-	260	533	
	£8,346	£5,231	-	£13,577	£9,391	

16 Creditors: amounts falling due after one year

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Fund/s	Endowed Fund/s	Total Funds 2020	Total Funds 2019	Notes
	£	£	£	£	£	
Deferred income	-	-	-	-	-	
Accruals for utilities and other costs	-	-	-	-	-	
Value Linked loan - 7 Park View Road	-	-	-	-	29,425	
Other creditors	-	-	-	-	-	
	-	-	-	-	£29,425	

Notes to the Financial Report

17 Statement of funds

Restricted Funds - The purpose of the restricted funds are as follows:

- **Organ Repair Fund** – holds funds for repairing and maintaining the Church Organ.
- **Sunday Refreshment Fund** – holds the proceeds of contributions given at coffee after the 9.30am service and is used for charitable donations to good causes.
- **Screen and AV Fund** – established in 2018 to raise funds for the installation of a permanent display screen and in 2019 the scope was extended to include the sound system.
- **Youth Club Fund** – holds funds for the Youth Club which is currently in recess.
- **Inspire Project Fund** – established in 2015 following the receipt of a donation from Uckfield District Nurses Welfare Committee and will be solely used on a special project.
- **Action Aid Fund** – established in 2018 to support the education of a child in Guatemala.
- **Window Appeal Fund** – established in 2019 to raise funds to repair and maintain the Church windows.
- **Children's Work** – established 2020 and to include Children's Choir, Junior Church and holiday clubs
- **7 Parkview Road** – established 2020 with the proceeds of the sale of the property.
- **Flower Fund** – established 2020 to manage the flower monies previously managed elsewhere.
- **Children's Society** – established 2020 for the funds collected for the Children's Society.

Unrestricted funds are not subject to any donor restrictions and can be spent as the PCC decides.

18 Summary of all funds

Fund income and expenditure and final balances are as follows:

	Balances b/fwd 1 Jan 2020	Income	Expenditure	Transfers, other gains and losses	Balances c/fwd 31 Dec 2020
	£	£	£	£	£
Organ Repairs	4,011	3	-	-	4,014
Sunday Refreshments	366	1,248	1,000	-	614
AV and Screen Fund	4,337	3	-	-	4,340
Youth Club	341	0	-	-	341
Inspire Project	2,095	2	-	-	2,097
Action Aid (Guatemala Child)	151	83	234	-	-
Window Appeal Fund	1,237	273	-	-	1,510
Children's Work	-	656	-	-	656
7 Park View Road Proceeds	-	188,875	5,789	-	183,086
Flower Fund	-	380	-	-	380
Children's Society	-	231	231	-	-
Total of all restricted funds	12,538	191,754	(7,254)	-	197,038
Revaluation of fixed assets	-	-	-	(190,776)	(190,776)
General fund	1,661,556	106,913	(117,681)	-	1,650,788
Total of all unrestricted funds	1,661,556	106,913	(117,681)	(190,776)	1,460,012
Total funds	£1,674,094	£298,667	(£124,935)	(190,776)	£1,657,050

Independent Examiner's Report

to the PCC of The Church of the Holy Cross, Uckfield

for the Year Ended 31st December 2020

This is my report to the Parochial Church Council of the Ecclesiastical Parish (PCC) of the Church of the Holy Cross, Uckfield, on the annual report for the year ended 31st December 2020 set out on pages 27 to 40.

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

The PCC members are responsible for the preparation of the annual reports. The PCC members 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. to 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. to 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 (other than that disclosed below in Section B *)

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 accounting requirements of the Charities Act
 have 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.

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

Examiner's signature

Examiner's name

CAPITALS

Date

Relevant professional qualification(s) or body

if any

Examiner's address

John R Carvey
 JOHN CARVEY
 16th May 2021
 23 FARRIERS WAY
 UCKFIELD EAST SUSSEX TN225BY

Only complete if the examiner needs to highlight material problems *for example:*

- accounting records have not been kept in accordance with s132 of the Charities' Act 2011 and those accounts do not comply with the requirements of the 2008 Regulations setting out the form and content of charity accounts;
- any material expenditure or action which appears not to be in accordance with the trusts of the charity;
- any failure to be provided with information and explanations by any past or present trustee, officer or employee; and
- any material inconsistency between the accounts and the trustees' annual report.

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