

THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF ST NICHOLAS WITH ST MARY, STROOD

England & Wales · Charity number 1138948

Details

Other names	ST NICHOLAS WITH ST MARY, STROOD
Status	Registered
Legal form	Previously excepted
Registered	2010-11-11
Register	View on the Charity Commission register

Contact

Address	St Nicholas Church High Street Strood Rochester Kent ME2 4TR
Phone	01634715964
Email	stnicholasstrood@gmail.com
Website	www.saint-nicholaschurchstrood.btck.co.uk

Activities

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

Activities: We are a Anglican Church which provides regular public worship that is open to all. Our Pastoral work includes visiting the sick and the bereaved. We teach teach Christianity through sermons, confirmation courses and small groups. We have a close connection with the local schools aand occasionly take assemblies. We support various charities with their work in the uk and overseas.

Classification

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

Geography

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

Finances

Period end	Income	Expenditure	Assets	Employees
2024-12-31	£127,114	£175,212	-	-
2023-12-31	£154,887	£467,889	-	-
2022-12-31	£91,830	£125,264	-	-
2021-12-31	£432,299	£114,414	-	-
2020-12-31	£322,709	£133,319	-	-

Trustees

Name	Role	Appointed
ELAINE LESLEY FORD		
Jade Abigail Goodwin		2025-04-27
Kenneth John Boulter		2025-04-25
Lanza Effuah Wilson		2023-04-23
MR JEFF WHITELEY		
MR KEN REYNOLDS		
Max Ernest Keith Russell		2023-04-23
ROBERT LESLIE FOXWELL		2013-07-29
Rev Susan Fiona Vallente-Kerr		2021-05-09
Robert Martin James		2024-05-05
SUSAN MARRABLE B Ed		2012-08-01
Sarah Catherine Wilkinson		2018-04-22
Uberta Casely-Hayford		2023-04-23

Accounts

St Nicholas with St Mary,
Strood

**ANNUAL REPORT
and
ACCOUNTS
For 2024**

St. Nicholas with St. Mary Strood

ANNUAL REPORT 2024

Parochial Name: St. Nicholas with St. Mary, Strood

Postal Address: High Street, Strood, Rochester, Kent
ME2 4TR

Correspondence: The Vicar (Rev Sue Vallente-Kerr)

Address: 3 Central Road, Rochester, Kent **ME2 3HF**

Parochial Church Council Members for 2024

<i>Rev Sue Vallente-Kerr</i>	<i>(Pioneer Minister until December 2024, Vicar from 04.12.2024)</i>
<i>Rob Foxwell</i>	<i>(LLM, Deanery Synod rep for three years from APCM 2023)</i>
<i>Elaine Ford</i>	<i>(Church Warden)</i>
<i>Ken Reynolds</i>	<i>(Church Warden and PCC chair during Interregnum)</i>
<i>Sarah Wilkinson</i>	<i>(From APCM 2022 for three years)</i>
<i>Yvonne Harris</i>	<i>(Stood down APCM 2024)</i>
<i>Jade Goodwin</i>	<i>(Stood down APCM 2024)</i>
<i>Jeff Whiteley</i>	<i>(Stood down APCM 2024)</i>
<i>Olu Odumosa</i>	<i>(From APCM 2022 for three years)</i>
<i>Andy Vince</i>	<i>(From APCM 2022 for three years)</i>
<i>Lanza Wilson</i>	<i>(From APCM 2023 for three years)</i>
<i>Max Russell</i>	<i>(From APCM 2023 for three years)</i>
<i>Ube Casely-Hayford</i>	<i>(From APCM 2023 for three years)</i>
<i>Margaret James</i>	<i>(Deanery Synod rep for three years from APCM 2023)</i>
<i>Robert James</i>	<i>(From APCM 2024 for three years)</i>
<i>Sue Marrable</i>	<i>(From APCM 2024 for three years)</i>
<i>Jeff Whiteley</i>	<i>(Co-opted May 2024)</i>

Number on Electoral Roll: 104

Independent Examiner: Mr G Viggers

Bankers: Barclays Bank, Chatham

Registered charity no.: 1138948

AIMS AND PURPOSES

St Nicholas Church, Strood is a place of worship. We at St. Nicholas with St. Mary seek to fulfil our calling as followers of Jesus Christ. Our primary object is the promotion of the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to the doctrines and practices of the Church of England. The Parochial Church Council cooperates with the minister in promoting in the parish the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social, and ecumenical. We do this in many and varied ways, as the reports below will illustrate. In these ways we witness to the love of God shown to us in our lives and would draw others also into the life of discipleship. This witness is not simply a matter of words but includes practical service to one another and to the wider world, starting from the knowledge that all are loved by God and precious in His sight. We believe that this journey of faith is important for others to find. We also believe that Jesus is in our midst and therefore we seek to serve one another and the Jesus within and amongst us.

OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

We continue to develop a vision of 'welcome'.

In pursuance of this mission during the year we have:

1. Continued to look at the facilities of the church buildings with a view to improving them for future and current users.
2. Enabled the Worship area of the church be made more available for the onward mission of the church.
3. We continue to aim at implementing the Church of England's Five Marks of Mission:
 - 1 Enabling our church to be mission-minded.
 2. Helping children, young people and adults live out everyday faith in Jesus.
 3. Supporting loving service in local communities.
 4. Encouraging and responding to the prophetic voice of justice and peace.
 5. Protecting creation's life for future generations.

ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE

The centre of our church life is the Sunday services. The live-streaming of the 10:30am Service remains a valuable way for people to worship at home, particularly for those who cannot physically attend church. The email group of over 90 people, is a valuable medium for keeping people in contact with the St Nicholas community and the weekly Rochester Diocesan Digest, which the group receives, keeps people linked to the wider Church and provides useful information about the Diocese. It also gives links to courses and seminars to further members' Christian Faith and informs people of issues within the Church of England and beyond. We were also active in keeping in touch with those who were not online.

The Rev David Green retired at the end of 2023 after 23 years with us, we thank him for his leadership and faith. During the Interregnum year, we were thankful to have the Rev Sue Vallente-Kerr, her family, and many wonderful priests leading our worship. Thanks to them we were able to provide the full "normal" schedule of services.

Rev Vallente-Kerr was appointed and licensed as our new incumbent in December.

Our achievements and the ability to continue the mission of the church would not have been possible without The Rev Sue Vallente-Kerr, our Pioneer Minister, for her vision and active service, her initiative and technical help. To Sue Marrable, our Parish Administrator, for her work in maintaining the smooth running of the church, and for her technical expertise; to Ken Reynolds and Elaine Ford as once again being superb Church Wardens, with Ken also leading our music; to Sue Davis, who has been so helpful in steering our finances, and to all the members of the PCC. We have a Ministry Team, which meets monthly, and ensures that the mission of the church remains central to our church life and vision on a regular basis.

Average weekly attendance: 65 plus those who worship
online 20

Baptisms: 11

Confirmations: 0

Reaffirmation of Faith: 0

Financial Review

During the year, PCC general income reduced by £24,806 (2023 £125,437 2023 £150,243) mostly due to a reduction of grants of £26,258. This is slightly offset by an increase in fees of £1,170 due to the interregnum, an increase of hall rental income of £6,460, an increase in gift aid claimed of £6,113, an insurance receipt of £1,268 and an increase in car park income of £578. There was a reduction of interest of £6,883 due to less reserves in the bank.

General expenditure reduced by £291,521 (2024 £174,411, 2023 £465,932) mostly due to reduced project spending of £274,447 due to the reordering project completing. Parish offer paid was £14,013 lower.

Total cash and balances held in bank accounts at the end of 2024 stood at £132,119 (2023 £201,209).

It is the policy of the PCC to spend reserves under its stewardship to deliver its vision for the future and the PCC continues to discuss the best ways to use its funds to meet God's purpose for the parish of Strood and the wider community.

Of the total cash resources of £132,119 at the end of 2024 £20,881, (2023 £17,468) was held in funds designated for the repair of the church, the installation of a lift to the upper hall and the music fund. £10,621 (2023 £12,123) was held in various restricted funds.

This year income has remained stable. In 2024 income from hall rental, car park and fundraising events increased by 17% on 2023 levels. This income contributed to 40% of general income this year.

We thank God that despite the difficult economic climate, St Nicholas is managing to make ends meet and has been able to make significant improvements to the church and grounds in recent years, as a result of the reserves entrusted to it. We pray for guidance in directing resources to best serve His purpose.

Policy Statements

Liquidity

It is the policy of the PCC to generally maintain unrestricted funds, which are the free reserves of the charity, at a level which equates to approximately three months unrestricted expenditure. This provides sufficient funds to cover management, administration and support costs, and to respond to emergency expenditure and applications for grants that arise from time to time.

Risk Management

The church insurance is reviewed on a regular basis.

Cheques are signed by two signatories.

A Safeguarding policy is in place.

Any potential hazards which come to the PCC's attention are dealt with as soon as possible.

SAFEGUARDING

At the first meeting of a new PCC the House of Bishops' 'Promoting a Safer Church: Safeguarding Policy Statement' is read out and formally adopted by the PCC. A Parish Safeguarding Officer is appointed and details of those to contact if there are any concerns are displayed in church. The PCC adopts the Safeguarding Policy of the Church of England.

AWAY GIVING

We gave to the following charities in 2024:
Friends of Kent churches, Friends of Rochester Cathedral, Christian Aid, Crisis, The Children's Society, The Fishermen's Mission & the Poverty & Hope Appeal

CHILDREN AND YOUTH WORK

See Fresh Expressions.

COFFEE SHOP

The coffee shop is on Saturday mornings and is open to all. It has a small number of regular customers who enjoy being able to purchase refreshments at a reasonable price and the chance to socialise.

CHRISTMAS HAMPERS / COMMUNITY LARDER

At Christmas in collaboration with Strood Rotary club who donated £500 and Toys from The Salvation Army, we were able to provide over 50 hampers to help those families most in need. Thank you to all who helped contribute financially, with items, toys, and a special thanks to a great team who came to help wrap boxes, pack and deliver the hampers. We continue to regularly support several families locally with food. Thanks to Medway council for a generous grant enabling this to happen and to Jeff Whiteley and Sue Marrable for assisting with shopping.

DEANERY SYNOD

Deanery Synod Report 2024

awaiting

ELECTORAL ROLL

To be revised by 13th April

Number of people living within the parish

Number of people living outside the parish

Number of women

Number of men

Total

Fabric Report

We moved into our newly reordered church space at the end of last year even though the project was not quite complete. The completed church was finally handed to us in February 2024 and the new chairs arrived in March. At last, we had the flexible space we had long desired and over the course of the year, we have tried various ways of using it. One or two little problems have arisen over the year, but the contractors have dealt with them very quickly. There were also problems with the church heating which took some time to resolve, caused by buildup of sediment in the system and more recently an issue with the thermostat which has also been resolved.

Inevitably in any older building there are ongoing problems caused by age and, also in our case, the weather. We have a lingering problem with roof leaks, but hopefully these are gradually being resolved.

We also had to restore the south porch doors which were badly affected by the weather and difficult to open. These have now been restored, although the surrounding frames need restoration. In addition, the outer doors leading into the lower hall needed urgent attention. A temporary repair was made and we are planning to replace them; but we have been waiting for the necessary permission for this to go ahead since November 2024.

FRESH EXPRESSIONS

Children and families:

Over the last year our contact with children and families has continued to grow.

Sunday school:-

Although children and families are welcome every Sunday, on the first Sunday of the month we have Sunday school. Thanks to the committed help of Janet Hughes, Jade Goodwin, Rob Foxwell and Jean Kerr. We continue to try and follow a similar theme to the main service through age-appropriate activities and have something for the children to take home to remember the theme.

We had another 7 children receiving communion before confirmation after completing a course.

Families@3

On the third Sunday of each month we hold Families@3 in the afternoon. This involves craft activities and games in the hall followed by a Bible story, an interactive song and creative prayers. We conclude our time together with refreshments.

It has been a real joy to welcome families to these events. We held our First Family Good Friday event with 84 people coming to experience the Easter story. A special thank you to Janet Hughes, Jeff Whiteley, Jean and Paul Kerr for their help and support.

Toddler and Chat

The numbers for the Thursday toddler group fluctuated over the year. It continues to be one of the only free places for toddlers to attend locally, which we feel is important.

The group is a safe space for parents, grandparents and carers to come along, meet others and for the children to play. The highlight is the singing at the end. Thanks to Sue Marrable, Jeff Whiteley and Janet Hughes for their great

commitment to the group especially for setting up and tidying up every week!

Schools

We continue to have good contacts with the schools. We held harvest and Christmas assemblies at All Faiths and Gordon school. We also take termly assemblies for both KS1 and KS2 at Gordon school. We've been into the schools to conduct R.E. lessons and Christingle services and all 3 schools had Christmas celebrations in church.

Ken Reynolds, Brian Davies and I continued to take weekly assemblies at St Nicholas Primary School. We have also been invited to several school production performances and assisted with their Christmas services and Christingles too. We also had the pleasure of welcoming Reception class for a mock baptism where they had chosen parents and Godparents, a name for the baby, and even had a baptism party afterwards.

HALL GROUP

The Church has two halls and the Swain Vestry for the use of both the congregation and outside groups, for social and fund-raising events. The Upper Hall was used by a Playgroup on weekdays all year and Rainbows one night a week. It is also used by a Street Dance group weeknights and a Ballet class for young children on Saturday mornings. The Lower Hall was used by GA, AA, The Phoenix Art Group, Garden Club, Compassionate Friends, Friends of Medway Archives, CA, Strood Fellowship and Floral Art. A church run Parent Toddler used the Lower Hall too.

The Swain Vestry was used by the church, Friends of Rede Common, Warblers Close and Kent Family History for meetings. Compassionate Friends held a monthly Sunday afternoon meeting to support bereaved families until mid-year. Raising Youth continued to be based on site, using the Swain Vestry as an office.

MAGAZINE GROUP

The magazine editorial group, comprising of four people, made decisions by email during 2024.

MUSIC REPORT

We were able to get used to the splendid acoustics for music in our new reordered space, with our regular services and the occasional concert. We had wonderful congregational singing, led by our very loyal and able choir. Thanks to them for all that they do in leading our worship.

The organ was really beginning to show its shortcomings with slow and silent notes with strange sounds sometimes emerging. The last major work was done in 1984. After 40 years, there has been an accumulation of dust, splitting of fine leather as well as collapsing rows of pipes, which all affect the sound and playing. We began fundraising to start the process of repairing and restoring our wonderful organ.

Ken Reynolds

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL

The full Council met six times during 2024. The APCM was held in May. The Standing Committee met bi-monthly in person, and the rest of the PCC were consulted, if needed, via email. At the start of 2024 there were three ex-officio members of the Council and ten elected members and one co-opted. Average attendance at meetings was 69%. Our financial advisor, Sue Davis attended the meeting in March to answer any questions about the financial report for the APCM.

At the first meeting after the APCM, in May 2024, Sue Marrable was appointed as Secretary to the PCC. Ube Casely-Hayford was appointed as Safeguarding Officer and The PCC accepted the Safeguarding Statements of the Church of England House of Bishops. Jeff Whiteley was co-opted and appointed Treasurer.

Rev Sue Vallente-Kerr, Jeff Whiteley, Elaine Ford, Ken Reynolds, Sarah Wilkinson, Rob Foxwell, Sue Marrable and Sue Davis (Financial Advisor) were appointed to form the Standing Committee.

Financial reports prepared by Sue Davis, our financial advisor, were considered and approved at each meeting.

SAFEGUARDING

Safeguarding at St Nicholas continues to be robust.

Sue Marrable and I work together to ensure all relevant courses and checks are updated and in place.

Over the year we have worked closely with the PCC and our church wardens to ensure that our church environment is inclusive and safe. Posters and relevant information from various courses are linked to our website and posted in the

church.

Our new vicar Rev Sue Vallente-Kerr has been actively involved in safeguarding cases.

Each disclosure has been treated with respect, openness and confidentiality.

We continue to work closely with the Diocesan Safeguarding board.

We marked Safeguarding Sunday in November, as our visiting vicar kindly gave a sermon about it.

In our PCC meetings we discussed the Church of England's national safeguarding standards to ensure good practice. Safeguarding continues to be on every PCC agenda.

I have attended some virtual courses and local meetings. I attended the annual Rochester and Canterbury Safeguarding Conference which had a focus on spiritual abuse. Relevant links to this and other courses such as Kent and Medway Adult Safeguarding and recruitment of Ex-offenders are on our website.

Our aim as a church is to ensure that everyone feels safe and knows where and how to get support when necessary.

Ube Casely-Hayford February 2025

SOCIAL AND GENERAL FUND-RAISING GROUP

Aims:

To provide the social links within our Church and to extend these to the local community.

To encourage and involve the congregation to be part of fund-raising events of our Church.

Objectives:

SOCIAL

To try to target all ages within our Church and community.

FUNDRAISING

To use a variety of events to encourage wide participation and interest.

In 2024 we were able to hold events in our reordered church space. We held a Book Sales, Jumble Sales and Table Top Sales In June we had a Big Lunch in the grounds, with activities for children, and in October we had a Harvest Lunch. For both events people brought their own food or food to share with others. We held a Christmas Bazaar in November which was very successful and well attended.

STANDING AND FINANCE COMMITTEE

Aims

To meet prior to each PCC meeting to think through the agenda for that meeting, making any necessary recommendations to the PCC. The Committee also makes interim decisions for the PCC when appropriate.

To work with the Accounts Advisor, who prepares the Accounts for us and gives advice about our financial position. The Standing Committee met bi-monthly during 2024.

WARM SPACE

Warm Space began in December 2023 and ran until March 2024. It opened again in December 2024. The number of people attending slightly increased and it fulfilled a need for people living on their own to have company.

WORSHIP GROUP

The aim of the Worship Group is to be a forum for discussion of every aspect of worship in our church. This includes consideration of the services we provide now, reviewing those that have taken place since we last met, and putting forward ideas for future services. The group also considers feedback from the congregation. The group met regularly throughout 2024.

The Annual Report was accepted at the APCM held on the 27th April 2025

Signed

Date.....

Independent Examiner's Report to the PCC of St Nicholas with St Mary, Strood

Accounts

St Nicholas with St Mary,
Strood

**ANNUAL REPORT
and
ACCOUNTS
For 2023**

St. Nicholas with St. Mary Strood

ANNUAL REPORT 2023

Parochial Name: St. Nicholas with St. Mary, Strood

Postal Address: High Street, Strood, Rochester, Kent
ME2 4TR

Correspondence: The Vicar

Address: 18 Honeypot Close, Strood, Rochester,
Kent ME2 3DU

Parochial Church Council Members for 2023

<i>Rev. David Green</i>	<i>(Chairman)</i>
<i>Rev Sue Vallente-Kerr</i>	<i>(Pioneer Minister)</i>
<i>Rob Foxwell</i>	<i>(LLM, Deanery Synod rep for three years from APCM 2023)</i>
<i>Elaine Ford</i>	<i>(Church Warden)</i>
<i>Ken Reynolds</i>	<i>(Church Warden)</i>
<i>Sarah Wilkinson</i>	<i>(From APCM 2022 for three years)</i>
<i>Yvonne Harris</i>	<i>(From APCM 2021 for three years)</i>
<i>Jade Goodwin</i>	<i>(From APCM 2021 for three years)</i>
<i>Jeff Whiteley</i>	<i>(From APCM 2021 for three years)</i>
<i>Olu Odumosa</i>	<i>(From APCM 2022 for three years)</i>
<i>Andy Vince</i>	<i>(From APCM 2022 for three years)</i>
<i>Lanza Wilson</i>	<i>(From APCM 2023 for three years)</i>
<i>Max Russell</i>	<i>(From APCM 2023 for three years)</i>
<i>Ube Casely-Hayford</i>	<i>(From APCM 2023 for three years)</i>
<i>Margaret James</i>	<i>(Deanery Synod rep for three years from APCM 2023)</i>
<i>Will Childs</i>	<i>(Stood down APCM 2023)</i>
<i>Robert James</i>	<i>(Stood down APCM 2023)</i>
<i>Sue Marrable</i>	<i>(Stood down APCM 2023)</i>
<i>Maggie Glover</i>	<i>(Resigned July 2022)</i>

Number on Electoral Roll: 107

Independent Examiner: Mr G Viggers

Bankers: Barclays Bank, Chatham

Registered charity no.: 1138948

AIMS AND PURPOSES

St Nicholas Church, Strood is a place of worship. We at St. Nicholas with St. Mary seek to fulfil our calling as followers of Jesus Christ. Our primary object is the promotion of the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to the doctrines and practices of the Church of England. The Parochial Church Council cooperates with the minister in promoting in the parish the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social, and ecumenical. We do this in many and varied ways, as the reports below will illustrate. In these ways we witness to the love of God shown to us in our lives and would draw others also into the life of discipleship. This witness is not simply a matter of words but includes practical service to one another and to the wider world, starting from the knowledge that all are loved by God and precious in His sight. We believe that this journey of faith is important for others to find. We also believe that Jesus is in our midst and therefore we seek to serve one another and the Jesus within and amongst us.

OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

We continue to develop a vision of 'welcome'.

In pursuance of this mission during the year we have:

1. Continued to look at the facilities of the church buildings and to move forward in improving them for future and current users.
2. Enabled the Worship area of the church be made more available for the onward mission of the church.
3. We continue to aim at implementing the Church of England's Five Marks of Mission:
 - 1 Enabling our church to be mission-minded.
 2. Helping children, young people and adults live out everyday faith in Jesus.
 3. Supporting loving service in local communities.
 4. Encouraging and responding to the prophetic voice of justice and peace.
 5. Protecting creation's life for future generations.

ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE

The centre of our church life is the Sunday services. The live-streaming of the 10:30am Service is a blessing and remains a valuable way for people to worship at home, particularly for those who cannot physically attend church. The email group of over 90 people, is a valuable medium for keeping people in contact with the St Nicholas community and the weekly Rochester Diocesan Digest, which the group receives, keeps people linked to the wider Church and provides much useful information about the Diocese. It also gives links to courses and seminars to further members' Christian Faith and informs people of issues within the Church of England and beyond. We were also active in keeping in touch with those who were not online.

When considering our achievements and the mission of the church we would like to thank particularly The Rev Sue Vallente-Kerr, our Pioneer Minister, for her vision and active service, her initiative and technical help; to Sue Marrable, our Parish Administrator, for her tireless and efficient work in maintaining and increasing the smooth running of the church, and for her technical expertise; to Ken Reynolds and Elaine Ford as once again being superb Church Wardens, with Ken also leading our music; to Sue Davis, who has been so helpful in steering our finances, and to all the members of the PCC. We have a Ministry Team, which meets every week, either by Zoom or personally, and this has been a vital source of inspiration and ensures that the mission of the church remains central to our church life and vision on a regular basis.

Average weekly attendance: 70 plus those who worship
online 36

Baptisms: 10

Confirmations: 0

Reaffirmation of Faith: 0

FINANCIAL REVIEW

Policy Statements

Liquidity

It is the policy of the PCC to generally maintain unrestricted funds, which are the free reserves of the charity, at a level which equates to approximately three months unrestricted expenditure. This provides sufficient funds to cover management, administration and support costs, and to respond to emergency expenditure and applications for grants that arise from time to time.

Risk Management

The church insurance is reviewed on a regular basis.

Cheques are signed by two signatories; online banking requires two people to approve.

A child protection policy is in place.

Any potential hazards which come to the PCC's attention are dealt with as soon as possible.

Review:

During the year, PCC general income increased by £61,690 (2023 £150,243 2022 £88,553) mostly due to grants of £55,832. This is slightly offset by a decrease in fees of £1,630, an increase of hall rental income of £1,650, an increase in gift aid claimed of £3,946 and an increase in car park income of £2,181.

General expenditure increased by £341,641 (2023 £465,932, 2022 £124,291) mostly due the reordering project of £380,900, a decrease on car park/grounds spend of £12,074 and £33,056 decrease on repairs. The Parish Offer paid was £7,013 higher.

Total cash and balances held in bank accounts at the end of 2023 stood at £201,209 (2022 £552,546).

It is the policy of the PCC to spend reserves under its stewardship to deliver its vision for the future and the PCC continues to discuss the best ways to use its funds to meet

God's purpose for the parish of Strood and the wider community.

Of the total cash resources of £201,209 at the end of 2023, £17,468 (2022 £30,887) was held in funds designated for the repair of the church, the installation of a lift to the upper hall and the music fund. £12,123 (2022 £10,867) was held in various restricted funds.

This year income has remained stable. In 2023 income from hall rental, car park and fundraising events increased by 7.6% on 2022 levels. This income contributed to 28% of general income this year.

We thank God that despite the difficult economic climate, St Nicholas is managing to make ends meet and has been able to make significant improvements to the church and grounds in recent years as a result of the reserves entrusted to it.

We pray for guidance in directing resources to best serve His purpose.

SAFEGUARDING

At the first meeting of a new PCC the House of Bishops' 'Promoting a Safer Church: Safeguarding Policy Statement' is read out and formally adopted by the PCC. A Parish Safeguarding Officer is appointed and details of those to contact if there are any concerns are displayed in church. The PCC adopts the Safeguarding Policy of the Church of England.

AWAY GIVING

We gave to the following charities in 2023:

Friends of Kent churches, Friends of Rochester Cathedral, Medway Night Shelter, Christian Aid, Crisis, DEC, The Children's Society

CHILDREN AND YOUTH WORK

See Fresh Expressions.

CHIT CHAT GROUP

This informal group met a few times in 2023 but has now ceased.

COFFEE SHOP

The coffee shop is on Saturday mornings and is open to all. It has a small number of regular customers who enjoy being able to purchase refreshments at a reasonable price and the chance to socialise. We managed to keep operating throughout the year even when the Lower Hall was closed for the new flooring to be put down, by utilizing some space at the back of the church.

CHRISTMAS HAMPERS / COMMUNITY LARDER

At Christmas in collaboration with local schools, we were able to provide over 60 hampers and 300 toys to help those families most in need. Thank you to all who helped contribute financially, with items, toys, or with time helping pack or deliver the hampers. A special thanks to Strood rotary for donating gift bags and to The Tony Hudgell foundation for donating toys.

We continue to regularly support several families locally with food. Thanks to Medway council for a generous grant enabling this to happen and to Jeff Whiteley and Sue Marrable for assisting with shopping.

DEANERY SYNOD

Deanery Synod Report 2023

At the February meeting, held in Allhallows, Rev Nicholas Cooper was commissioned as Area Dean of Strood by Archdeacon, Andy Wooding Jones.

Andy Wooding Jones spoke about the Diocesan strategy, Called to Grow, outlining 3 key ideas: Growing Disciples; Enriching our Communities; Resourcing each other in Mission and Ministry. Rev Stephen Gwilt shared news from All Saints, Allhallows and showed members improvements which had been made to the building.

At the June meeting, held at St Francis, Strood, Nicholas Cooper welcomed new clergy: Rev Adam Pyrke (Strood, St Francis) and Rev Clifford Stocking (Cliffe w Cooling) and new lay representatives of Deanery Synod. Pioneer Lay Minister, Giovanni Perrales, (St Francis Strood) shared news from the parish particularly with reference to his pioneering work in the parish and connections being made with the community and other agencies.

Standing Committee members were elected: Nicholas Cooper (Chair), Hilda Woolmington (Lay Chair), Andrew Dickinson (Treasurer, Strood, St Francis), Veronica Cordier (Lay Rep, Stoke w Grain), Rob Foxwell (Lay Rep Strood St Nicholas); Adam Pyrke (Clergy Rep, Strood, St Francis), Clifford Stocking (Clergy Rep Cliffe w Cooling), Sue Jones (Secretary).

Julie Baker (Allhallows) and Rob Foxwell (Strood, St Nicholas) were elected to serve as Lay Representatives, along with Andrew Dickinson (Strood, St Francis), on Diocesan Synod.

In July, a Big Green Hike was organised for Strood Deanery congregations, leaving from Allhallows church and raising funds for Kent Wildlife Trust; thanks are given to Judith

Armitt and Rob Sibley for organising the event. In August, Stephen Gwilt invited congregations to gather for a Deanery Picnic at High Halstow Vicarage, which was very much enjoyed by those attending.

November's meeting was held at St Helen's Cliffe. Rev Clifford Stocking shared news from the parish, including links being strengthened with schools and community.

Nicholas Cooper prepared an Advent meditation based on readings from Dietrich Bonhoeffer; refreshments and a time of prayer and fellowship followed.

Thanks, and best wishes were expressed to Rev David Green, Strood, St Nicholas, who retired in December.

Sue Jones
Strood Deanery Secretary February 2024

ELECTORAL ROLL

Number of people living within the parish	58
Number of people living outside the parish	46
Number of women	72
Number of men	32
Total	104

FABRIC REPORT

It has been a year of great change. The Re-ordering of the church space finally started. It should have been completed mid-November but asbestos was found and removed and then another patch was found and again was removed.

The ground floor beneath the new font was a lot further down than expected which created further delays. We managed to be back worshipping in church for Christmas and for the Rev David's final service on 31st December.

There are only a few bits left to complete in early 2024. We have been amazed by the space that has been created. We have a wonderful new floor, a new font, a new sanctuary area, a new kitchenette at the back of the church and more storage cupboards for tables and chairs. We await the arrival of new comfortable chairs, which have been delayed, to complete the transformation. We look forward to the future and pray that God will guide us in using this space for the good of the worshipping community and the wider community of Strood.

FRESH EXPRESSIONS

Children and families:

Over the last year our contact with children and families has continued to grow.

Sunday school:-

Although children and families are welcome every Sunday, on the first Sunday of the month we have Sunday school. Thanks to the committed help of Janet Hughes, Jade Goodwin and Rob Foxwell. We continue to try and follow a similar theme to the main service through age-appropriate activities and have something for the children to take home to remember the theme.

We have several children receiving communion before confirmation after completing a 6-week course.

Youth Group

Several children in the congregation are 11 or older, so we began a small youth group, beginning with some social activities such as bowling and visiting the Strood youth centre climbing wall. They have also been involved in some community action projects such as litter picking and with planting crocuses supplied and helped by the local Rotary Club. After discussion with the young people we have decided to try meeting once a month after the service on the first Sunday of the month. We've also begun thinking about how they can be more involved in the services by joining the serving team and the reading team.

Families@3

On the third Sunday of each month we hold Families@3 in the afternoon. This involves craft activities and games in the hall followed by a Bible story, an interactive song and creative prayers. We conclude our time together with refreshments.

It has been a real joy to welcome families to these events and have seen baptism families and some from the toddler group coming along regularly. A special thank you to Janet Hughes, Jeff Whiteley, Jean and Paul Kerr and Rev David Green for their help and support.

Toddler and Chat

The numbers for the Thursday toddler group fluctuated over the year. It continues to be one of the only free places for toddlers to attend locally which we feel is important.

The group is a safe space for parents, grandparents and carers to come along, meet others and for the children to play. The highlight is the singing at the end. Thanks to Sue Marrable, Jeff Whiteley and Janet Hughes for their great commitment to the group especially for setting up and tidying up every week!

Schools

We continue to have good contacts with the schools. We held harvest and Christmas assemblies at All Faiths and Gordon school. We also take termly assemblies for both KS1 and KS2 at Gordon school. We've been into the schools to conduct R.E. lessons.

Rev David, Ken Reynolds, Brian Davies and Rev Sue Vallente-Kerr continued to take weekly assemblies at St Nicholas Primary School. We have also been invited to several school production performances and assisted with their Christmas service and Christingle. Rev Sue Vallente-Kerr also had the pleasure of teaching an RE lesson to Reception class about baptism. We are grateful to the Headteacher, Ruth Gooch, for allowing us to hold our St Nicholas Toy service in the school and also for loaning chairs to the church on several occasions.

HALL GROUP

The Church has two halls and the Swain Vestry for the use of both the congregation and outside groups, for social and fund-raising events. The Upper Hall was used by a Playgroup on weekdays all year and Rainbows one night a week. It is also used by a Street Dance group weeknights and a Ballet class for young children on Saturday mornings. The Lower Hall was used by GA, AA, The Phoenix Art Group, Garden Club, Compassionate Friends, Friends of Medway Archives, CA, Strood Fellowship and Floral Art. A church run Parent Toddler used the Lower Hall too. The Swain Vestry was used by the church, Friends of Rede Common, Warblers Close and Kent Family History for meetings. Compassionate Friends hold a monthly Sunday afternoon meeting to support bereaved families. Raising Youth continued to be based on site, using the Swain Vestry as an office. The number of extra hirings in 2023 was curtailed by the closure of the Lower Hall and then the hall having to be used as the worship area whilst work took place in the church. This also had an impact on the social and fund-raising events we were able to hold.

MAGAZINE GROUP

The magazine editorial group, comprising of five people, made decisions by email during 2023.

MUSIC REPORT

Flexibility seems to have been the requirement of the year 2023. For almost half of the year we worshipped in the lower hall because of the major reordering project in the church. The organ console had to be disconnected and the casework covered for the new flooring to be laid. All our services were accompanied by the piano which also took up residence in the hall for the duration. Although the work was not quite finished, we were able to return into the church for the last two weeks of the year. The organ was returned to playing order for our Christmas services and the final service of the year when we also said farewell to Rev David. The most notable thing about the church space is the change in the acoustics, congregational singing now has a very different and powerful sound, just keep singing.

I am very grateful to the choir for their lead in our worship and their loyalty and dependability. New members are always welcome.

Ken Reynolds

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL

The full Council met six times during 2023. The APCM was held in April. The Standing Committee met weekly in person, with Zoom used if necessary, and the rest of the PCC were consulted, if needed, via email. At the start of 2023 there were five ex-officio members of the Council and nine elected members. Average attendance at meetings was 81%.

Our financial advisor, Sue Davis attended the meeting in March to answer any questions about the financial report for the APCM.

At the first meeting after the APCM, in May 2023, Sue Marrable was co-opted and appointed as Secretary to the PCC. Ube Casely-Hayford was appointed as Safeguarding Officer and The PCC accepted the Safeguarding Statements of the Church of England House of Bishops. Jeff Whiteley was appointed Treasurer.

Rev David Green, Rev Sue Vallente-Kerr, Jeff Whiteley, Elaine Ford, Ken Reynolds, Sarah Wilkinson, Sue Marrable and Sue Davis (Financial Advisor) were appointed to form the Standing Committee.

Financial reports prepared by Sue Davis, our financial advisor, were considered and approved at each meeting. The PCC met without clergy in November to discuss the Parish Profile with appointing Rev David's successor in mind.

SAFEGUARDING

During 2023, all DBS checks for PCC members were approved. Volunteers working with children and vulnerable adults also had their DBS checks approved. The relevant training courses for Safeguarding were completed by clergy, PCC members, church wardens and relevant church members. Sue Marrable and I continued to work together to ensure that as a church we kept up with relevant updated

documents for Safeguarding.

We continued to use the diocesan dashboard to update relevant documents. Sue Marrable regularly updated our website. Sue Marrable ensured that all PCC members receive the Safeguarding bulletins from the Diocese. I attended the online courses offered to Safeguarding Officers to keep up-to-date with resources and support. We continued to ensure relevant information for Safeguarding contacts and support was displayed even when we were disrupted by the work in the church.

Ube Casely-Hayford Safeguarding officer February 2024

SOCIAL AND GENERAL FUND-RAISING GROUP

Aims:

To provide the social links within our Church and to extend these to the local community.

To encourage and involve the congregation to be part of fund-raising events of our Church.

Objectives:

SOCIAL

To try to target all ages within our Church and community.

FUNDRAISING

To use a variety of events to encourage wide participation and interest.

In 2023 we were limited in the number of events we were able to use by either the hall or the church being unavailable. We held a Book Sale, Jumble Sale and Table Top Sale before the work started in May. We held nothing until October when we had a Harvest Supper which included Country Dancing and a Beetle Drive. We managed to hold a much reduced in size Christmas Bazaar in November which was very successful and well attended. We ended the year's events with a Table Top Sale.

STANDING AND FINANCE COMMITTEE

Aims

To meet prior to each PCC meeting to think through the agenda for that meeting, making any necessary recommendations to the PCC. The Committee also makes interim decisions for the PCC when appropriate.

To work with the Accounts Advisor, who prepares the Accounts for us and gives advice about our financial position. The Standing Committee met monthly during 2023.

WARM SPACE

Warm Space began in December 2022 and ran until March 2023. It opened again in December 2023. The number of people attending wasn't huge but fulfilled a need for people living on their own to have company.

WORSHIP GROUP

The aim of the Worship Group is to be a forum for discussion of every aspect of worship in our church. This includes consideration of the services we provide now, reviewing those that have taken place since we last met, and putting forward ideas for future services. The group also considers feedback from the congregation. The group met regularly throughout 2023.

The Annual Report was accepted at the APCM held on the 5th May 2024

Signed

Date.....

Independent Examiner's Report to the PCC of St Nicholas with St Mary, Strood

This Report on the accounts of the PCC for the year ended 31 December 2023, which are set out in this annual report, is in respect of an examination carried out under Regulation 3(3) of the Church Accounting Regulations 2006 ("the Regulations") and section 145 of the Charities Act 2011 ("the Act").

Respective responsibilities of the PCC and the examiner

As members of the PCC you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts; you consider the audit requirement of Regulation 3(3) of section 144(2) of the Act do not apply. It is my responsibility to issue this report on those accounts in accordance with the Regulations.

Basis of this report

My examination was carried out in accordance with the General Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act and to be found in the Church guidance, 2006 edition, issued by the Finance Division of the Archbishops' Council. That examination includes review of the accounting record kept by the PCC and a comparison of the accounts with those records. It also includes considering any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts and seeking explanations from you as trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently I do not express an opinion on the view given by the accounts.

Independent Examiner's statement

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

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

Date: 01.05.2024

Mr Gordon Viggers FCA
74 Woodstock Road
Sittingbourne
Kent
ME10 4HN

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF ST NICHOLAS WITH ST MARY, STROOD

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

	Note:	Unrestricted Funds £	Designated Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Endowment Funds £	TOTAL FUNDS 2023 £	TOTAL FUNDS 2022 £
Incoming resources							
<i>Voluntary income</i>	2a	91,993	370	2,337	0	94,700	43,314
<i>Activities for generating funds</i>	2b	42,800	0	0	0	42,800	39,938
<i>Income from investments</i>	2c	13,857	1,066	871	0	15,794	4,713
<i>Church activities</i>	2d	1,407	0	0	0	1,407	3,239
<i>Other income</i>	2e	186	0	0	0	186	626
Total		150,243	1,436	3,208	0	154,887	91,830
Resources expended							
<i>Church activities</i>	3a	465,235	1,957	0	0	467,192	124,539
<i>Raising funds</i>	3b	697	0	0	0	697	725
<i>Other resources expended</i>	3c	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total		465,932	1,957	0	0	467,889	125,264
<i>Gains/(losses) on investment assets</i>	6		5,974		3,337	9,311	14,036
Net income/(expenditure)		(315,689)	5,453	3,208	3,337	(303,691)	331,921
Transfers between funds - transfers in		0	(12,700)	(1,952)	0	(14,652)	3,840
Transfers between funds - transfers out		14,652	0	0	0	14,652	(3,840)
<i>Gains/(losses) on revaluation of fixed assets</i>		0	0	0	0	0	0
<i>Other recognised gains/losses</i>		0	0	0	0	0	0
Net movement in funds		(301,037)	(7,247)	1,256	3,337	(303,691)	331,921
Reconciliation of funds:							
Total funds brought forward at 1 January 2023		478,290	95,419	10,867	35,464	620,040	334,757
Total funds carried forward at 31 December 2023		177,253	88,172	12,123	38,801	316,349	666,678

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF ST NICHOLAS WITH ST MARY, STROOD

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2021

	Note:	Unrestricted Funds £	Designated Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Endowment Funds £	TOTAL FUNDS 2022 £	TOTAL FUNDS 2021 £
Incoming resources							
<i>Voluntary income</i>	2a	40,986	343	1,985	0	43,314	394,958
<i>Activities for generating funds</i>	2b	39,938	0	0	0	39,938	32,151
<i>Income from investments</i>	2c	3,764	123	826	0	4,713	2,910
<i>Church activities</i>	2d	3,239	0	0	0	3,239	1,633
<i>Other income</i>	2e	626	0	0	0	626	647
Total		88,553	466	2,811	0	91,830	432,299
Resources expended							
<i>Church activities</i>	3a	123,566	956	17	0	124,539	114,219
<i>Raising funds</i>	3b	725	0	0	0	725	195
<i>Other resources expended</i>	3c	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total		124,291	956	17	0	125,264	114,414
<i>Gains/(losses) on investment assets</i>	6		(8,472)		(4,732)	(13,204)	14,036
Net income/(expenditure)		(35,738)	(8,962)	2,794	(4,732)	(46,638)	331,921
Transfers between funds - transfers in		0	3,200	0	0	3,200	3,840
Transfers between funds - transfers out		(3,200)	0	0	0	(3,200)	(3,840)
<i>Gains/(losses) on revaluation of fixed assets</i>		0	0	0	0	0	0
Other recognised gains/losses		0	0	0	0	0	0
Net movement in funds		(38,938)	(5,762)	2,794	(4,732)	(46,638)	331,921
Reconciliation of funds:							
Total funds brought forward at 1 January 2022		517,228	101,181	8,073	40,196	666,678	334,757
Total funds carried forward at 31 December 2021		478,290	95,419	10,867	35,464	620,040	666,678

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF ST NICHOLAS WITH ST MARY, STROOD

BALANCE SHEET AT 31 DECEMBER 2023

	Notes	2023	2022
		£	£
Fixed assets			
Tangible fixed assets	5	4,197	405
Investments	6	108,268	98,958
Total fixed assets		112,465	99,363
Debtors	7	7,726	6,683
Short term deposits		96,245	491,524
Cash at bank and in hand		104,964	31,022
		208,935	529,229
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	8	(5,051)	(8,552)
Net current assets		203,884	520,677
Total assets less current liabilities		316,349	620,040
Creditors: amounts falling due after one year	8		
NET ASSETS		316,349	620,040
Funds	9		
Endowment funds	10	38,801	35,464
Restricted funds	10	12,123	10,867
Unrestricted funds	10	265,425	573,709
		316,349	620,040

Approved by the Parochial Church Council on 5 March 2024 and signed on its behalf

Revd David Green
Chairman

The accompanying notes form a part of these financial statements.

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF ST NICHOLAS WITH ST MARY, STROOD

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023**

1. Accounting policies

a 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 in accordance with the Church Accounting Regulations 2006 governing the individual accounts of PCCs, and with the Regulations' "true and fair view" provisions, together with FRS102 2016 as the applicable accounting standards and the 2016 version of the Statement of Recommended Practice, Accounting and Reporting by Charities SORP FRS102. The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention, except for the valuation of investment assets which are shown at fair value.

b Funds

Funds held by the PCC are:

Unrestricted funds - These represent the remaining income funds of the PCC that are available for spending on the general purposes of the PCC, including amounts designated by the PCC for fixed assets for its own use or spending on a future project and which are therefore not included in its 'free reserves' as disclosed in the trustees' report.

Restricted funds - These are income funds that must be spent on restricted purposes and details of the funds held and restrictions provided are shown in the notes to the accounts.

Endowment funds - These are restricted funds that must be retained as trust capital either permanently or subject to a discretionary power to spend as capital income, and where the use of any income or other benefit derived from the capital may be restricted or unrestricted. Full details of all their restrictions are shown in the notes to the accounts.

c Incoming resources

Recognition of income and endowments

These are included in the Statement of Financial Activities (SOFA) when:

1. the PCC becomes legally entitled to the use of the resources;
2. and the inflow of economic benefits is probable; and

Fundraising costs - Funds raised from events and trading activities (e.g. a fete, a garden party or sales of books and magazines) are reported gross in the SOFA – i.e., before any related costs that may have been deducted from the gross proceeds.

Grants and donations - Grants and donations are included in the SOFA when any preconditions preventing their use by the PCC have been met. For collections and planned giving this is when the funds are received.

Gift Aid Tax claims, etc. - Gift Aid and other tax claims are included in the SOFA at the same time as the cash donations to which they relate.

Gifts in kind - Gifts in kind are accounted for at a reasonable estimate of their fair value at the time of gift, if feasible, or else at the amount actually realised from their disposal. Gifts in kind for sale to fund the PCC are included in the accounts at their estimated fair value at the date of gift, if feasible – or else recognised when sold by the charity. Gifts in kind for the PCC's own use are included in the SOFA as incoming resources at their fair value when receivable, and expensed as and when consumed in use. Gifts of fixed assets, if material, are included in the balance sheet at their fair value and expensed over the asset's useful economic life.

Donated services and facilities - These are included in income (and at the same time in resources expended) at the estimated fair value to the PCC of the service or facility received.

Volunteer help - The value of any voluntary help received is not included in the accounts but is described in the trustees' annual report.

Rental income - Rental income from the letting of the church is recognised when the rental is due.

Investment income - This is included in the accounts when receivable.

Investment gains and losses - This includes any gain or loss on the sale of investments and any gain or loss resulting from revaluing investments to market value

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF ST NICHOLAS WITH ST MARY, STI

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (continued) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

d Expenditure and Liabilities

Liability recognition - Liabilities are recognised as soon as there is a legal or constructive

Governance costs - Include costs of the preparation and examination of statutory accounts, the costs of trustee meetings and cost of any legal advice to trustees on governance or constitutional matters.

Grants payable without performance conditions - These are recognised in the accounts when a commitment has been made externally and there are no pre-conditions still to be met for entitlement to the grant which remain within the control of the PCC.

e Assets

Consecrated and beneficed property - In so far as consecrated and benefice property of any kind is excluded from the statutory definition of "charity" by Section 10(2) (a) and (c) of the Charities Act 2011 such assets are not capitalised in the financial statements.

Movable church furnishings - These are capitalised at cost and depreciated over their useful economic life other than where insufficient cost information is available. In this case the item is not capitalised, but all items are included in the Church's inventory in any case.

Tangible fixed assets for use by the Church - These are capitalised if they can be used for more than one year, and cost at least £1,000. They are valued at cost or else, for gifts-in-kind, at a reasonable estimate of their open market value on receipt. Depreciation is calculated to write off the cost of tangible fixed assets less their currently anticipated residual fair value over their estimated useful lives as follows:

Land	Nil
Buildings*	Nil
Fixtures & Fittings	20 years
Computers	3 years

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF ST NICHOLAS WITH ST MARY, STROOD

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (continued)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

2 Incoming resources

	Unrestricted Funds £	Designated Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Endowment Funds £	TOTAL FUNDS 2023 £	Unrestricted Funds £	Designated Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Endowment Funds £	TOTAL FUNDS 2022 £
a Voluntary income										
Planned giving	17,043				17,043	17,941				17,941
Income tax recoverable on planned giving	5,552				5,552	1,606				1,606
Other planned giving	173				173	80				80
Collections	4,195				4,195	3,454				3,454
Donations and appeals	9,198	370	137		9,705	2,104	343	42		2,489
Income tax recoverable on donations and appeals	0				0	0				0
Grants	55,832		2,200		58,032	15,801		1,943		17,744
Legacies	0				0	0				0
Charitable giving receipts	0				0	0				0
Church group receipts	0				0	0				0
	91,993	370	2,337	0	94,700	40,986	343	1,985	0	43,314
b Activities for generating funds										
Church hall lettings to non church organisations	21,240				21,240	19,590				19,590
Fetes, bazaars and other fund-raising events	4,609				4,609	5,447				5,447
Car park space rental income	16,542				16,542	14,361				14,361
Magazine advertising	409				409	540				540
	42,800	0	0	0	42,800	39,938	0	0	0	39,938
c Income from investments										
Dividends and interest	13,857	1,066	871		15,794	3,764	123	826		4,713
	13,857	1,066	871	0	15,794	3,764	123	826	0	4,713
d Church activities										
Magazine sales	414				414	554				554
Book sales to promote objectives	0				0	0				0
Votive candles	206				206	268				268
Fees from weddings etc	787				787	2,417				2,417
	1,407	0	0	0	1,407	3,239	0	0	0	3,239
e Other income										
Other income	186				186	626				626
Insurance receipt	0				0	0				0
Shared staff costs	0				0	0				0
	186	0	0	0	186	626	0	0	0	626
Total incoming resources	150,243	1,436	3,208	0	154,887	88,553	466	2,811	0	91,830

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF ST NICHOLAS WITH ST MARY, STROOD

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (continued)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

3 Resources expended

	Unrestricted Funds £	Designated Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Endowment Funds £	TOTAL FUNDS 2023 £	Unrestricted Funds £	Designated Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Endowment Funds £	TOTAL FUNDS 2022 £
a Church Activities										
Missionary and charitable giving (Note 11):	4,134				4,134	1,564		17		1,581
Ministry costs:					0					0
Diocesan parish contribution	39,013				39,013	32,000				32,000
Working expenses	1,179				1,179	1,659				1,659
Vicarage expenses	2,924				2,924	2,796				2,796
Church running expenses	8,704				8,704	7,657				7,657
Church maintenance	6,507				6,507	7,692				7,692
Insurance	5,105				5,105	4,398				4,398
Upkeep of services	1,794	1,785			3,579	2,731	295			3,026
Education	119	172			291	285	566			851
Parish training and mission	251				251	2,067	95			2,162
Church refreshments	626				626	307				307
Parish magazine	0				0	18				18
Church hall costs	6,788				6,788	7,003				7,003
Flowers	60				60	0				0
Church purchases	722				722	1,173				1,173
Car park and grounds redevelopment	1,962				1,962	14,036				14,036
Church repairs	0				0	34,056				34,056
Project spending	380,900				380,900	0				0
Depreciation	534				534	647				647
Office costs	2,277				2,277	1,658				1,658
Cost of annual accounts - Independent examination fee	600				600	600				600
Bookkeeping service	1,036				1,036	1,219				1,219
Legal and professional	0				0	0				0
	465,235	1,957	0	0	467,192	123,566	956	17	0	124,539
b Raising funds										
Cost of applying for grants					0					0
Cost of planned giving	52				52	17				17
Fund raising costs	645				645	708				708
	697	0	0	0	697	725	0	0	0	725
c Other expenditure										
Other expenditure	0				0	0				0
	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total resources expended	465,932	1,957	0	0	467,889	124,291	956	17	0	125,264

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF ST NICHOLAS WITH ST MARY, STROOD

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (continued) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

4 Staff costs

a Wages and salaries

The PCC has two employees a cleaner and administrator total salary costs were £3,788 (2021 £3,231). The organist's services are donated.

b Payments to PCC members

£536 travel expenses were reimbursed to the organist during 2023 (2022 £233). The total donations by PCC members in 2023 was £4,806 (2022 £6,263)

5 Tangible fixed assets

	Freehold land and buildings	Church equipment	Kitchen fittings	TOTAL
Cost or valuation	£	£	£	£
At 1 January 2023	0	12,393	10,390	22,783
Additions		4,325		4,325
Disposals				0
Revaluation		0	0	0
At 31 December 2023	0	16,718	10,390	27,108
Depreciation				
At 1 January 2023		11,988	10,390	22,378
Provided in the year		533		533
Disposals				0
At 31 December 2023	0	12,521	10,390	22,911
Net book amounts				
At 31 December 2023	0	4,197	0	4,197
At 31 December 2022	0	405	0	405

The PCC spent £1,014 on new chairs in 2017 and £4,325 in 2023. All of which are being depreciated on straight-line basis over ten years with a full year's charge in the first year. Other equipment used within the Church premises has been depreciated on a straight-line basis over four years and has been completely written down to nil net book value. Individual items of equipment with a purchase price of £1000 or less are written off when acquired.

6 Investments

	£
At 1 January 2023	98,958
Disposals at carrying value	
Purchases at cost	0
Net gains and revaluation	9,309
At 31 December 2023	108,268

The following units are held in the CBF Investment Fund:	Book cost £	Units	Valuation p	Value £
Assistant Curate		3,073.04	2260.53	69,467
Swain Trust	219.6	55.00	2260.53	1,242
Whittaker/Reynolds	2000	1,230.47	2260.53	27,815
St Mary's Hall	2355.21	431.00	2260.53	9,744
				108,268

The general fund investment is unrestricted. The remaining three investments are held in endowment funds as

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF ST NICHOLAS WITH ST MARY, STROOD

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (continued)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023**

7 Debtors

	2023	2022
	£	£
Income tax recoverable	6,252	5,348
Prepayments	1,474	1,335
	7,726	6,683

8 Creditors

Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2023	2022
	£	£
Accrued expenses	3,129	6,923
Hall and key deposits	244	424
Other creditors	1,678	1,205
	5,051	8,552

There are no creditors falling due after more than one year

9 Analysis of Net assets by fund

	Unrestricted Funds	Designated Funds	Restricted Funds	Endowment Funds	Total Funds 2023	Total Funds 2022
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Fixed assets for church use	4,197				4,197	405
Investment fixed assets		69,467		38,801	108,268	98,958
Current assets	172,116	25,952	10,867		208,935	529,229
Current liabilities	(5,051)				(5,051)	(8,552)
	171,262	95,419	10,867	38,801	316,349	620,040

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF ST NICHOLAS WITH ST MARY, STROOD

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (continued)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023**

10 Statement of funds

	At 1 Jan 2023 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers, other gains and losses £	At 31 Dec 2023 £
Unrestricted Funds - undesignated	478,290	150,243	(465,932)	14,652	177,253
Unrestricted Funds - designated					
Church Repair Fund	21,584	181		(15,100)	6,665
Lift Fund	1,523	885			2,408
Assistant Curate Fund	64,145			5,974	70,119
Vicar's Discretionary Fund	100				100
Toddlers	187	370	(172)		385
SCP	100				100
Music	7,780		(1,785)	2,400	8,395
	<u>95,419</u>	<u>1,436</u>	<u>(1,957)</u>	<u>(6,726)</u>	<u>88,172</u>
Restricted Funds					
Garden of Remembrance	35				35
Swain Vestry	159	34			193
Whitaker Reynolds	5,358	837			6,195
Fabric	42				42
Hamper	1,926	2,337		(1,952)	2,311
Hymn books large print	38				38
Drop-in Centre	458				458
Bells	2,851				2,851
	<u>10,867</u>	<u>3,208</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>(1,952)</u>	<u>12,123</u>
Endowment Funds					
Swain Vestry	1,135			107	1,242
Whitaker Reynolds	25,423			2,392	27,815
St Mary's Hall	8,906			838	9,744
	<u>35,464</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>3,337</u>	<u>38,801</u>
Total funds	<u>620,040</u>	<u>154,887</u>	<u>(467,889)</u>	<u>9,311</u>	<u>316,349</u>

The designated funds comprise:

The Church Repair Fund is a deposit accounts held with Rochester Diocese Board of Finance and have been designated by the PCC for the repair of the church. The Hall repair accounts was closed in 2012 as there has not been a separate hall for some time. The closing balance of £335 was transferred to the general fund.

At the end of 2012, the PCC decided to designate the 10,183.44 units in the CBF investment fund to provide income towards the costs of an assistant curate in the parish. The assets were therefore transferred from the general fund to the new Assistant Curate fund.

The PCC commenced a new fund in 2011 to fund projects to improve the church facilities and surroundings. In 2011 the PCC was able to make improvements to the South Porch and redevelopment of the car park from this fund.

The PCC commenced a new fund in 2010 to set aside legacies so that these could be used for specific purposes rather than general running costs, although there was no restriction in the bequest.

The PCC commenced a new fund to save for a lift to Upper Hall in 2009 (the "Lift Fund"). Donations received from the Strood Community Project's sponsored abseiling down the church tower were designated by the PCC for the lift.

The restricted funds comprise:

The Missions and Charities fund is for donations given specifically for charitable giving and the ensuing donations to charities.

The Creche fund is for donations given specifically for the creche area of church and the PCC intends to use it to

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF ST NICHOLAS WITH ST MARY, STROOD

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (continued)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023**

10 Statement of funds (continued)

The Garden of Remembrance fund is for donations given specifically for the garden of remembrance.

The Mothering Sunday flowers fund is for donations given specifically for Mothering Sunday flowers.

The Upper Hall fund resulted from a grant received specifically for the refurbishment of the upper hall.

The Bookcase fund and Hymn book large print fund are for donations given specifically for these purposes.

The Stipend and assistant staff fund is for the income from the guaranteed annuity which is restricted for the incumbent's stipend and the donated services of the assistant clergy.

The Swain restricted fund and the Whittaker Reynolds restricted fund comprise the accumulated interest from these endowment funds.

The endowment funds comprise:

The Swain Trust is a permanent endowment, the income from which is restricted for the upkeep of the memorial vestry.

The Whittaker/Reynolds gift is a permanent endowment, the income from which is restricted for the maintenance of the assistant clergy of the parish, including visiting speakers.

St Mary's Hall fund results from the proceeds of the sale of the hall and the income may be used for the general ecclesiastical purposes of the parish. Whilst it is an expendable endowment, the capital may only be used with the consent of the Charity Commissioners.

11 Missionary and charitable giving

	2023	2023	2022	2022
	£	£	£	£
	General	Restricted	General	Restricted
Warm Space	191	0	0	0
Hampers	137	0	0	0
Families @3	97	0	0	0
Medway Foodbank	5	0	0	0
Mission Aviation Fellowship	0	0	200	0
Friends of Kent Churches	10	0	10	0
Friends of Rochester Cathedral	20	0	20	0
Poverty & Hope Appeal	3	0	76	0
Community Larder	2,941	0	0	0
Night Shelter	110	0	236	0
Christian Aid	400	0	0	0
Crisis	0	0	200	0
DEC	220	0	0	0
Children's Society	0	0	91	0
Canterbury Oast Trust	0	0	16	0
Strood Community shop	0	0	500	0
Diocese of Rochester	0	0	2,000	0
Raising Youth	0	0	50	0
CDSG	0	0	5	0
	4,134	0	3,404	0

Accounts

St Nicholas with St Mary,
Strood

**ANNUAL REPORT
and
ACCOUNTS
For 2022**

St. Nicholas with St. Mary Strood ANNUAL REPORT 2022

Parochial Name: St. Nicholas with St. Mary, Strood
Postal Address: High Street, Strood, Rochester, Kent
ME2 4TR
Correspondence: The Vicar
Address: 18 Honeypot Close, Strood, Rochester,
Kent ME2 3DU

Parochial Church Council Members for 2022

<i>Rev. David Green</i>	<i>(Chairman)</i>
<i>Rev Sue Vallente-Kerr</i>	<i>(Pioneer Minister)</i>
<i>Rob Foxwell</i>	<i>(LLM)</i>
<i>Elaine Ford</i>	<i>(Church Warden)</i>
<i>Ken Reynolds</i>	<i>(Church Warden)</i>
<i>Sarah Wilkinson</i>	<i>(From APCM 2022 for three years Deanery Synod Rep from 2020)</i>
<i>Will Childs</i>	<i>(From APCM 2020 for two years Deanery Synod from Rep 2020)</i>
<i>Sue Marrable</i>	<i>(From APCM 2020 for three years)</i>
<i>Robert James</i>	<i>(From APCM 2020 for three years)</i>
<i>Yvonne Harris</i>	<i>(From APCM 2021 for three years)</i>
<i>Jade Goodwin</i>	<i>(From APCM 2021 for three years)</i>
<i>Jeff Whiteley</i>	<i>(From APCM 2021 for three years)</i>
<i>Olu Odumosa</i>	<i>(From APCM 2022 for three years)</i>
<i>Maggie Glover</i>	<i>(From APCM 2022 for three years)</i>
<i>Andy Vince</i>	<i>(From APCM 2022 for three years)</i>
<i>Robert Foxwell</i>	<i>(Stood down APCM 2022)</i>
<i>Ube Casely-Hayford</i>	<i>(Stood down APCM 2022)</i>

Number on Electoral Roll: 107
Independent Examiner: Mr G Viggers
Bankers: Barclays Bank, Chatham
Registered charity no.: 1138948

AIMS AND PURPOSES

St Nicholas Church, Strood is a place of worship. We at St. Nicholas with St. Mary seek to fulfil our calling as followers of Jesus Christ. Our primary object is the promotion of the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to the doctrines and practices of the Church of England. The Parochial Church Council cooperates with the minister in promoting in the parish the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical. We do this in many and varied ways, as the reports below will illustrate. In these ways we witness to the love of God shown to us in our lives and would draw others also into the life of discipleship. This witness is not simply a matter of words, but includes practical service to one another and to the wider world, starting from the knowledge that all are loved by God and precious in His sight. We believe that this journey of faith is important for others to find. We also believe that Jesus is in our midst and therefore we seek to serve one another and the Jesus within and amongst us.

OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

We continue to develop a vision of 'welcome'.

In pursuance of this mission during the year we have:

1. Continued to look at the facilities of the church buildings and to move forward in improving them for future and current users.
2. Continued to make preparations for enabling the Worship area of the church be made more available for the onward mission of the church.
3. We continue to aim at implementing the Church of England's Five Marks of Mission:
 - 1 Enabling our church to be mission-minded.
 2. Helping children, young people and adults live out everyday faith in Jesus.
 3. Supporting loving service in local communities.
 4. Encouraging and responding to the prophetic voice of justice and peace.
 5. Protecting creation's life for future generations.

ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE

At the centre of our church life is the Sunday services. The live-streaming of the 10:30am Service is a blessing and remains a valuable way for people to worship at home, particularly for those who cannot physically attend church, but also for those who still feel vulnerable and do not want to take risks as Covid-19 is still very much with us. The email group of over 70 people, has continued to be a valuable medium for keeping people in contact with the St Nicholas community and the weekly Rochester Diocesan Digest, which the group receives, keeps people linked to the wider Church and provides much useful information about the Diocese. It also gives links to courses and seminars to further members' Christian Faith and informs people of issues within the Church of England and beyond. We were also active in keeping in touch with those who were not online.

When considering our achievements and the mission of the church we would like to thank particularly The Rev Sue Vallente-Kerr, our Pioneer Minister, for her vision and active service, her initiative and technical help; to Sue Marrable, our Parish Administrator, for her tireless and efficient work in maintaining and increasing the smooth running of the church, and for her technical expertise; to Ken Reynolds and Elaine Ford as once again being superb Church Wardens, with Ken also leading our music; to Sue Davis, who has been so helpful in steering our finances and keeping us up-to-date with Diocesan directives, and to all the members of the PCC. We now have a Ministry Team, which meets every week, either by Zoom or personally, and this has been a vital source of inspiration and ensures that the mission of the church remains at the centre of our church life and vision on a regular basis.

Average weekly attendance:	55, plus those who worship online
Baptisms:	16
Confirmations:	0
Reaffirmation of Faith:	0

FINANCIAL REVIEW

During the year, PCC general income decreased by £342,482 (2022 £88,553, 2021 £431,035) mostly due to a legacy of £353,494 in 2021. This is slightly offset by an increase in fees of £1,564, an increase of hall rental income of £2,966 and a increase in car park income of £1,059, Grants of £11,705 from Medway Council £1,943 for hampers, and £3,946 energy support. The Diocese gave a grant of £600 for the Warm Space.

General expenditure increased by £11,154 (2022 £124,291, 2021 £113,137) mostly due to a reduction in parish offer of £32,000 due to the legacies in 2021, an increase on car park/grounds spend of £12,800 and £22,015 increase on repairs.

Total cash and balances held in bank accounts at the end of 2022 stood at £552,546 (2021 £551,148).

It is the policy of the PCC to spend reserves under its stewardship to deliver its vision for the future and the PCC continues to discuss the best ways to use its funds to meet God's purpose for the parish of Strood and the wider community.

Of the total cash resources of £522,546 at the end of 2022, £31,926 (2021 £29,216) was held in funds designated for the repair of the church, the installation of a lift to the upper hall

and the music fund. £10,867 (2021 £8,073) was held in various restricted funds.

This year income has continued to return towards pre pandemic levels. In 2022 income from hall rental, car park and fundraising events increased by 24% on 2021 levels and is almost back to 2019 levels. This income contributed to 55% of general income this year.

We thank God that despite the difficult economic climate, St Nicholas is managing to make ends meet and has been able to make significant improvements to the church and grounds in recent years as a result of the reserves entrusted to it. We pray for guidance in directing resources to best serve His purpose.

Policy Statements

Liquidity

It is the policy of the PCC to generally maintain unrestricted funds, which are the free reserves of the charity, at a level which equates to approximately three months unrestricted expenditure. This provides sufficient funds to cover management, administration and support costs, and to respond to emergency expenditure and applications for grants that arise from time to time.

Risk Management

The church insurance is reviewed on a regular basis.

Cheques are signed by two signatories.

A child protection policy is in place.

Any potential hazards which come to the PCC's attention are dealt with as soon as possible.

SAFEGUARDING

At the first meeting of a new PCC the House of Bishops' 'Promoting a Safer Church: Safeguarding Policy Statement' is read out and formally adopted by the PCC. A Parish Safeguarding Officer is appointed and details of those to contact if there are any concerns are displayed in church. The PCC adopts the Safeguarding Policy of the Church of England.

AWAY GIVING

We gave to the following charities in 2022:

Crisis, Raising Youth, Medway Night Shelter, The Children's Society, Poverty & Hope Appeal, Friends of Kent Churches, Friends of Rochester Cathedral, Christian Aid.

In March we organized the collection and delivery of clothing and essential items for Ukraine. This was supported by the local community and we were able to deliver a van load to the distribution centre.

CHILDREN AND YOUTH WORK

See Fresh Expressions.

CHIT CHAT GROUP

This informal group meets as a Home Group once a month.

COFFEE SHOP

We were able to restart Coffee Shop in February 2022. It has a small number of regular customers who enjoy being able to purchase refreshments at a reasonable price and the chance to socialise.

CHRISTMAS HAMPERS / COMMUNITY LARDER

At Christmas Rev Sue Vallente-Kerr, in collaboration with local schools, was able to provide over 100 hampers to help those families most in need. Thank you to all who helped contribute financially, with items or with time helping pack or deliver the hampers.

We were approached by families in need who required more than the local Foodbank was able to provide. Thanks to a generous grant from Medway council we have been able to support several families regularly with food and hygiene products.

DEANERY SYNOD

Deanery Synod Report 2022

St Francis, Strood entered into interregnum following the appointment of the Reverend Sharon Copestake as Archdeacon of Tonbridge.

A Living in Love and Faith Course for Deanery Synod members was held by Zoom in January 2022, led by the Rev Canon Jane Winter, Assistant Director of Formation and Ministry.

At the February meeting, Hilda Woolmington, Lay Chair, announced that, following consultation, a pastoral reorganisation had been agreed whereby the Strood Deanery boundaries would be more closely aligned with civil

boundaries. The Parish of Higham was therefore transferred to Gravesend Deanery – the Vicar of Higham also being Priest-in-Charge of Perry Street (Gravesend Deanery). The Rev Christine Allen was appointed Priest-in-Charge at Grain with Stoke on 13th March and the Rev Andy Hobbs, Priest-in-Charge of St Helen's Cliffe was to move to Birmingham celebrating his last service at St Helen's on Palm Sunday.

Hilda welcomed Liz Mullins, Generous Giving Adviser for the Diocese of Rochester. Liz gave an informative presentation on Encouraging Generosity and outlined the Diocesan Parish Giving scheme.

Reverend Mark Borley, Vicar of Hoo, (host church) shared lessons and experiences from the parish of St Werburgh Hoo.

On 21 May the Reverend Dr Mark Borley was commissioned as Area Dean of Strood.

At the June meeting Mark Borley welcomed Magali van der Merwe, Diocesan Lead Community Engagement and Social Action Adviser. Magali shared the vision of CESA (Community Engagement and Social Action Team), outlining 3 areas of their work: Poverty and Deprivation (including the work of Foodbanks and Community Larders; Wellbeing (including Dementia Cafes, Healthy Walks Programmes, Community Hubs); and Immigration and Refugees (highlighting the work with partnerships supporting Ukrainian refugees.)

The Rev Nicholas Cooper (host church) shared some observations and experiences of church life post-Covid in the parish of Frindsbury with Upnor and Chattenden. The Rev Sue Vallente-Kerr, Pioneer Minister for Strood Cluster, shared reflections of schools work and children and family work post pandemic.

The October meeting was an opportunity to join with the Deaneries of Medway to meet with the new Bishop of Rochester, the Right Reverend Dr Jonathan Gibbs

In November, due to health reasons, the Rev Dr Mark Borley stood down as Area Dean of Strood.

In December it was announced that the Rev Nicholas Cooper was to be commissioned as Area Dean of Strood on 20 February 2023.

Sue Jones, Strood Deanery Secretary

February 2023

ELECTORAL ROLL

Number of people living within the parish	57
Number of people living outside the parish	50
Number of women	75
Number of men	32
Total	107

FABRIC REPORT

The Re-Ordering Project is finally getting to the tendering stage with contractors visiting the church in early 2023. Behind the scenes the work continued. One major project that was completed was the replacement of the benches in the church grounds as the old ones were askew and falling apart. We also had railings installed on the steep slope from Gun Lane to give people something to hold on to. Grateful thanks to funding for the benches and railings from a Section 106 contribution required from the Temple Waterfront development by Redrow Homes for community use. Councillors Hubbard and Buckwell supported our project and put us in touch with Jill King of the planning office at Medway Council. We also upgraded the Lightning Protection System

to comply with the latest regulations. There was the usual running repairs to the plumbing and electrics, also substantial repairs to the roof. We purchased a Defibrillator with an outdoor lockable cabinet and a Bleed Kit for use by anyone in the vicinity needing them.

Elaine Ford

FRESH EXPRESSIONS

Children and families:

Over the last year our contact with children and families has really continued to blossom and flourish.

Sunday school:

Although children and families are welcome every Sunday and activities are provided for them, On the first Sunday of the month we hold Sunday school and especially invite families to come along that week. Thanks to the committed help of Janet Hughes, Jade Goodwin and Vickie Desai we are able to welcome children of all ages into the hall to hear the Bible reading in an age appropriate way, have a game or activity relating to the theme and some craft activity for the children to take home to remind them through the month . We've also been helping them learn to pray together in different creative ways.

Through this we have been able to prepare 7 children to receive communion before confirmation (in 2023) following a 6 week course and two older children to confirmation.

Families@3:

On the third Sunday of the month we hold Families@3 in the afternoon. This involves craft activities and challenges in the hall followed by a time in church of games, a Bible story, an interactive song and creative prayers. We conclude our time together with refreshments back in the hall.

It has been a real joy to welcome families to these events and have seen baptism families and some from the toddler group coming along regularly. A special thank you to Janet Hughes, Jeff Whiteley and Rev David Green for their continued help and support .

Toddler and Chat

The numbers for the Thursday toddler group continue to be good, with many regulars in attendance as well as frequent newcomers attending.

The group is a safe space for parents, grandparents and carers to come along, meet others and for the children to play. The highlight is definitely the singing at the end. Thanks to Sue Marrable, Jeff Whiteley and Janet Hughes for their great commitment to the group but also for setting up and tidying up every week!

Schools:

Since Covid we have managed to build up some good contacts with the schools. We did harvest and Christmas assemblies at All Faiths and Gordon school and also do termly assemblies for both KS1 and KS2 at Gordon school. We've also been invited into the schools to conduct R.E. lessons.

The schools have also been immensely generous in donating to our community larder over the year and especially supporting the Christmas hampers.

Rev David, Ken Reynolds, Brian Davies and Rev Sue Vallente-Kerr continue to conduct weekly assemblies at St Nicholas Infant school. We have also been invited into several school production performances and welcomed the school to church for their Christmas service and Christingle. David and Rev Sue Vallente-Kerr also had the pleasure of teaching an RE lesson to Reception class about baptism.

HALL GROUP

The Church has two halls and the Swain Vestry for the use of both the congregation and outside groups, for social and fund-raising events. The Upper Hall was used by a Playgroup on weekdays all year and Rainbows one night a week. Towards the end of the year a Street Dance group began to use the Upper Hall to rehearse and a Ballet class for young children began to use the hall on Saturday mornings. The Lower Hall was used by GA, AA, The Phoenix Art Group, Garden Club, Compassionate Friends, Friends of Medway Archives, CA, Strood Fellowship and Floral Art. A church run Parent Toddler used the Lower Hall too.

The Swain Vestry was used by the church, Friends of Rede Common and Kent Family History for meetings. Towards the end of the year Compassionate Friends began to hold a monthly Sunday afternoon meeting to support bereaved families. Raising Youth continue to be based on site, using the Swain Vestry as an office. The Lower Hall was available for children's parties Saturday and Sunday afternoons and hired for this about once a month.

MAGAZINE GROUP

The magazine editorial group, comprising of five people, made decisions by email during 2022.

MUSIC REPORT 2022

As we continued to recover from the limitations of Covid, our musical tradition was able to be reinstated and take its place in helping with our worship.

I would like to thank the choir for their continuing support and contribution throughout the year and also to welcome our new members.

One problem that has become more noticeable during the course of the year is the declining state of our organ. It dates from 1859 and was last renovated in 1984. It is now beginning to show serious signs of wear. Some of the thin leather items which control the key action and stops are leaking, making them slow and noisy. Our organ builder has prepared a plan of what is needed and so, I hope that soon we will be able to have the work done and return the organ to good playing order.

Ken Reynolds

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL

The full Council met six times during 2022. The meeting in January was held by Zoom. The APCM was held in April. The Standing Committee met weekly via Zoom or in person and the rest of the PCC were consulted, when necessary, via email. At the start of 2022 there were five ex-officio members of the Council and eight elected members. Average attendance at meetings was 82%.

Our financial advisor, Sue Davis attended the meeting in March to answer any questions about the financial report for the APCM.

At the first meeting after the APCM, in May 2022, Sue Marrable was appointed as Secretary to the PCC. Ube Casely-Hayford was appointed as Safeguarding Officer and The PCC accepted the Safeguarding Statements of the Church of England House of Bishops. Jeff Whiteley was appointed Treasurer.

Rev David Green, Rev Sue Vallente-Kerr, Jeff Whiteley, Elaine Ford, Ken Reynolds, Sarah Wilkinson, Sue Marrable and Sue Davis (Financial Advisor) were appointed to form the Standing Committee.

Financial reports prepared by Sue Davis, our financial advisor, were considered and approved at each meeting.

SAFEGUARDING

During 2022, all DBS checks for PCC members were approved. Volunteers working with children and vulnerable adults also had their DBS checks approved. Basic online training courses for Safeguarding have been completed by - Rev David, PCC members, church wardens and relevant church members including Sue Marrable and myself. Sue Marrable has digital copies of completed courses. Sue Marrable and I continue to work together to ensure that as a church we keep up with relevant updated documents for Safeguarding. Sue Marrable completed several online courses on Safeguarding.

A confidential disclosure was made by Rev Sue Vallente-Kerr with regard to a family.

We continue to use the diocesan dashboard to update relevant documents. Sue Marrable regularly updates our website. Sue Marrable ensures that all PCC members receive the Safeguarding bulletins from the Diocese.

Ube Casely-Hayford Safeguarding officer
26th February 2023

SOCIAL AND GENERAL FUND-RAISING GROUP

Aims:

To provide the social links within our Church and to extend these to the local community.

To encourage and involve the congregation to be part of fund-raising events of our Church.

Objectives:

SOCIAL

To try to target all ages within our Church and community.

FUNDRAISING

To use a variety of events to encourage wide participation and interest.

In 2022 we held Book sales, Jumble Sales, Boot Fairs, a Summer Fete and a Christmas Bazaar which were very successful. The Summer Fete was a Community event with local organisations invited to have stalls to promote what they do. The Christmas Bazaar was very well attended. We had a Harvest Supper which included Country Dancing and a Beetle Drive.

STANDING AND FINANCE COMMITTEE

Aims:

To meet prior to each PCC meeting and to think through the Agenda for that meeting, making any necessary recommendations to the PCC. The Committee also makes interim decisions for the PCC when that is appropriate.

To work with the Accounts Adviser, who prepares the accounts for us and gives us advice as to our financial position.

The Standing Committee met weekly via Zoom during 2022 and for a monthly face-to-face meeting.

WARM SPACE

In December 2022 we began to open the Swain Vestry as a Warm Space on Mondays. Initially we wanted to open all day but didn't have enough volunteers to do so. Take up of the Space was slow to begin with.

WORSHIP GROUP

The aim of the worship Group is to be a forum for discussion on every aspect of worship in our church. This includes consideration of the services we provide now, reviewing those which have taken place since the group last met and also, looking ahead, putting forward ideas for the future. The group is useful also in discussing any feedback about services from the congregation. We met regularly throughout the year.

The Annual Report was accepted at the APCM held on Sunday 23rd April 2023

Rev David Green (Incumbent)



Independent Examiner's Report to the PCC of St Nicholas with St Mary, Strood

This Report on the accounts of the PCC for the year ended 31 December 2022, which are set out in this annual report, is in respect of an examination carried out under Regulation 3(3) of the Church Accounting Regulations 2006 ("the Regulations") and section 145 of the Charities Act 2011 ("the Act").

Respective responsibilities of the PCC and the examiner

As members of the PCC you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts; you consider the audit requirement of Regulation 3(3) of section 144(2) of the Act do not apply. It is my responsibility to issue this report on those accounts in accordance with the Regulations.

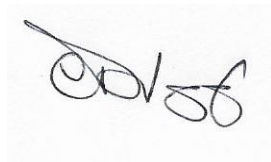
Basis of this report

My examination was carried out in accordance with the General Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act and to be found in the Church guidance, 2006 edition, issued by the Finance Division of the Archbishops' Council. That examination includes review of the accounting record kept by the PCC and a comparison of the accounts with those records. It also includes considering any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts and seeking explanations from you as trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently I do not express an opinion on the view given by the accounts.

Independent Examiner's statement

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

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



Date: 21 April 2023

Mr Gordon Viggers FCA
74 Woodstock Road
Sittingbourne
Kent
ME10 4HN

Independent Examiner's Report to the PCC of St Nicholas with St Mary, Strood

This Report on the accounts of the PCC for the year ended 31 December 2022, which are set out in this annual report, is in respect of an examination carried out under Regulation 3(3) of the Church Accounting Regulations 2006 ("the Regulations") and section 145 of the Charities Act 2011 ("the Act").

Respective responsibilities of the PCC and the examiner

As members of the PCC you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts; you consider the audit requirement of Regulation 3(3) of section 144(2) of the Act do not apply. It is my responsibility to issue this report on those accounts in accordance with the Regulations.

Basis of this report

My examination was carried out in accordance with the General Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act and to be found in the Church guidance, 2006 edition, issued by the Finance Division of the Archbishops' Council. That examination includes review of the accounting record kept by the PCC and a comparison of the accounts with those records. It also includes considering any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts and seeking explanations from you as trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently I do not express an opinion on the view given by the accounts.

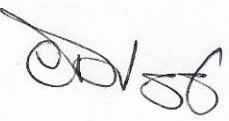
Independent Examiner's statement

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

(1) which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements

- to keep accounting records in accordance with section 130 of the Act; and
- to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the requirements of the Act and the Regulations, have not been met; or

(2) to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.



74 Woodstock Road
Sittingbourne
Kent
ME10 4HN

Accounts

St Nicholas with St Mary,
Strood

**ANNUAL REPORT
and
ACCOUNTS
For 2021**

**St. Nicholas with St. Mary Strood
ANNUAL REPORT 2021**

Parochial Name: St. Nicholas with St. Mary, Strood
Postal Address: High Street, Strood, Rochester, Kent ME2 4TR
Correspondence: The Vicar
Address: 18 Honeypot Close, Strood, Rochester, Kent ME2 3DU

Parochial Church Council Members for 2021

<i>Rev. David Green</i>	<i>(Chairman)</i>
<i>Rev Sue Vallente-Kerr</i>	<i>(Pioneer Minister)</i>
<i>Elaine Ford</i>	<i>(Assistant Church Warden)</i>
<i>Ken Reynolds</i>	<i>(Church Warden)</i>
<i>Robert Foxwell</i>	<i>(From APCM 2019 for three years)</i>
<i>Sarah Wilkinson</i>	<i>(Deanery Synod Representative from 2020)</i>
<i>Ube Casely-Hayford</i>	<i>(From APCM 2019 for three years)</i>
<i>Will Childs</i>	<i>(From APCM 2020 for two years, Deanery Synod representative from 2020)</i>
<i>Robert James</i>	<i>(From APCM 2020 for three years)</i>
<i>Sue Marrable</i>	<i>(From APCM 2020 for three years)</i>
<i>Yvonne Harris</i>	<i>(From APCM 2021 for three years)</i>
<i>Jade Goodwin</i>	<i>(From APCM 2021 for three years)</i>
<i>Jeff Whiteley</i>	<i>(From APCM 2021 for three years)</i>
<i>Margaret James</i>	<i>(stood down 2021)</i>
<i>Andrew Vince</i>	<i>(stood down 2021)</i>
<i>Sarah Wilkinson</i>	<i>(stood down 2021)</i>

Number on Electoral Roll:	96
Independent Examiner:	Mr G Viggers
Bankers:	Barclays Bank, Strood
Registered charity no.:	1138948

AIMS AND PURPOSES

St Nicholas Church, Strood is a place of worship.

We at St. Nicholas with St. Mary seek to fulfil our calling as followers of Jesus Christ. Our primary object is the promotion of the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to the doctrines and practices of the Church of England. The Parochial Church Council cooperates with the minister in promoting in the parish the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical. We do this in many and varied ways, as the reports below will illustrate. In these ways we witness to the love of God shown to us in our lives and would draw others also into the life of discipleship. This witness is not simply a matter of words, but, includes practical service to one another and to the wider world, starting from the knowledge that all are loved by God and precious in His sight. We believe that this journey of faith is important for others to find. We also believe that Jesus is in our midst and therefore we seek to serve one another and the Jesus within and amongst us.

OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

We continue to develop a vision of 'welcome'.

In pursuance of this mission during the year we have:

1. Continued to look at the facilities of the church buildings and to move forward in improving them for future and current users.
2. Continued to make preparations for enabling the Worship area of the church be made more available for the onward mission of the church.
3. During this pandemic we have maintained contact with the schools in the Parish via recorded assemblies and worship time, which will be a good preparation for when we finally are able to visit the schools. We have provided the schools with visual material that they can use in the classrooms.

ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE

At the centre of our church life is the Sunday services. We were able to begin congregational services in the church during the year, with all the Covid safeguards in place. The live-streaming of the 10:30am Service is a blessing and remains a valuable way for people to worship at home, particularly for those who cannot physically attend church, but also for those who feel vulnerable and do not want to take risks as the pandemic continues to affect community life. We set up an email group of over 70 people, who regularly received Digests from the Diocese and other links to material to help their spiritual life during the pandemic. We were also active in keeping in touch with those who were not online.

When considering our achievements and the mission of the church we would like to thank particularly The Rev Sue Vallente-Kerr, our Pioneer Minister, for her vision and active service, her initiative and technical help; to Sue Marrable, our Parish Administrator, for her tireless and efficient work in maintaining and increasing the smooth running of the church, and for her technical expertise; to Ken Reynolds and Elaine Ford as once again being superb Church Wardens, with Ken also leading our music; to Sue Davis, who has been so helpful in steering our finances and keeping us up-to-date with Diocesan directives, and to all the members of the PCC Standing Committee, who have met on a weekly basis during this difficult time to make sure we are continuing to move forward into the future.

We are conscious of the stress of social isolation which has been a part of the effects of this pandemic. An important initiative to combat this, which we have put into practice during the year when restrictions began to ease, was the setting up of a Toddlers Group in the Lower Hall. This was set up by The Rev Sue Vallente-Kerr and Vickie Desai, so we thank them very much for their vision and work on this.

Average weekly attendance:	40
Baptisms:	17
Confirmations:	5
Reaffirmation of Faith:	0

St Nicholas with St Mary Strood

Financial Review

During the year, PCC general income increased by £112,290 (2021 £431,035, 2020 £318,745) mostly due to a legacy of £353,494 a reduction in fees of £3,477, a increase of hall rental income of £6,017 and a increase in car park income of £4,005, Grants of £7,175 from Medway Council and £5,801 from LPWG. General expenditure decreased by £19,205 (2021 £113,137, 2020 £132,342) mostly due to an increase in parish offer of £8,440, an increase in away giving of £1,406 and a decrease in repairs of £32,405. Total

cash and balances held in bank accounts at the end of 2021 stood at £551,148 (2020 £234,151). It is the policy of the PCC to spend reserves under its stewardship to deliver its vision for the future and the PCC continues to discuss the best ways to use its funds to meet God's purpose for the parish of Strood and the wider community.

This year the Covid-19 pandemic recovery has slowly become to be seen. In 2020 income from hall rental, car park and fundraising events fell by 52% on 2019 levels. In 2021 it has been 30% lower than 2019 levels. Fortunately, two large legacies have helped to cushion the impact of the pandemic.

We thank God that despite the difficult economic climate, St Nicholas is managing to make ends meet and has been able to make significant improvements to the church and grounds in recent years as a result of the reserves entrusted to it. We pray for guidance in directing resources to best serve His purpose.

Policy Statements

Liquidity

It is the policy of the PCC to generally maintain unrestricted funds, which are the free reserves of the charity, at a level which equates to approximately three months unrestricted expenditure. This provides sufficient funds to cover management, administration and support costs, and to respond to emergency expenditure and applications for grants that arise from time to time.

Risk Management

The church insurance is reviewed on a regular basis.

Cheques are signed by two signatories.

A child protection policy is in place.

Any potential hazards which come to the PCC's attention are dealt with as soon as possible.

Safeguarding

At the first meeting of a new PCC the House of Bishops' 'Promoting a Safer Church: Safeguarding Policy Statement' is read out and formally adopted by the PCC. A Parish Safeguarding Officer is appointed and details of those to contact if there are any concerns are displayed in church.

The PCC adopts the Safeguarding Policy of the Church of England.

AWAY GIVING

We gave to the following charities in 2021:

USPG, MAF, Crisis, Raising Youth, Medway Night Shelter, The Children's Society, Strood Community Shop, Canterbury Oast Trust, Poverty & Hope Appeal, Friends of Kent Churches, Friends of Rochester Cathedral, The Diocese of Rochester, Christian Aid, CDSG and Demelza Hospice.

2021 Due to the Pandemic the majority of groups did not meet in person until mid-year when restrictions were lifted.

BEREAVEMENT AND PASTORAL GROUP

This group was not able to meet after Covid 19 emerged. The PCC Standing Committee took over the pastoral roll of the group and liaised with the group members if needed. The visiting of bereaved relatives had to cease when the pandemic took hold.

COFFEE SHOP

This did not take place in 2021 due to restrictions and concerns about the level of COVID infections.

CHILDREN AND YOUTH WORK

See Fresh Expressions.

CHIT CHAT GROUP

This informal group began to meet again towards the end of 2021.

DEANERY SYNOD

The Deanery Synod met twice during 2021, on Zoom on Tuesday 4th May 2021 and in person on 19 October 2021.

At the May meeting we were invited to share something which we had learned during the previous difficult year.

At the October meeting Rev Dylan Turner gave a presentation and led a discussion workshop on the "Called to Grow" initiative, which is seeking to help churches engage with the local community. There was a presentation from the incumbent of St Helen's, Rev Andy Hobbs, and his Licensed Lay Minister, David Green, about the value of lay ministry and its impact on parish work. We discussed the "Living in Love and Faith" course and it was agreed to ask Jane Winter to deliver the course online for the Deanery.

Will Childs

ELECTORAL ROLL

Number of people living within the parish	52
Number of people living outside the parish	44
Number of women	66
Number of men	30
Total	96

FABRIC REPORT

After the relative quiet of 2020, 2021 has been a year that has presented many challenges, not least the ongoing Covid Pandemic. Restrictions changed and then changed again throughout the year and these made us look at what we do and how we can do it safely. We began to stream services in 2020, having a camera already in place, we just needed to purchase a small device to link it to the internet and to set up a YouTube account. We continued to live stream in 2021, even when we were able to have physical church services, for those who were unable to join us in person. We reached some who didn't attend our services previously. The reordering project continued with lots of meetings and emails. We hope that in the early part of 2022, the tendering process will begin. Medway Council, as part of their improvements to Strood, wanted to illuminate St Nicholas Church. The result is lovely. As part of this project new cables were laid which involved a lot of digging. An archeologist was on site most days to deal with any remains and finds uncovered. From her we learnt a lot about the churchyard. The other major change was the installation of a Fire Detection System which, after a few teething troubles, settled down nicely. Unfortunately problems with Strood High Street electrics continued to make life interesting.

Elaine Ford

FRESH EXPRESSIONS

2021 was another challenging year for us all, however, we continued to invite families to our monthly outreach event Up4it. Up4it gathers families of all ages together for 40 mins of craft, games, activities, stories and creative prayers and includes those from the parishes of Frindsbury and Upnor. We even had a wild Christingle outside in the Vicarage garden .

Contact with schools had to change and clergy recorded assemblies for the schools within the Parish and sent them out to be watched in classrooms. Schools were visited for Harvest celebrations but Omicron meant it was back to virtual worship for schools at Christmas. The St Nicholas Infant School assembly team continued to support the school with weekly worship, and a special thanks for this goes to Rev David, Brian Davis and Ken Reynolds.

During the Christmas Period we worked with the Parish of Frindsbury in providing food hampers for those families most in need in Strood. We were able to support 80 families thanks to the generosity of the congregations here and St Gabriel's Church Kings Hill, including presents for every child, supported also by Strood Rotary club .

Sunday School

In 2021 we restarted Sunday school for families once a month encouraging families to come especially on that Sunday (though obviously they are welcome every week). They were able to enjoy additional activities during the sermon and prayer time that were more age appropriate. The involvement of all ages in Sunday Worship was considered leading to children reading the lesson, helping the Stewards and taking the collection plate up to the altar.

Toddlers

We became increasingly aware of parents and carers struggling with isolation during the pandemic. After conversations with various parents we decided to begin a toddler group called Toddle and Chat on Thursday mornings 10-11.30. The children have access to toys and craft activities, some adult led, whilst parents chat. The session usually ends with singing or a parachute game. The group has been a real success with a special thanks to the inspiration and hard work of Vickie Desai. Thanks also to Janet Hughes, Jeff Whiteley and Sue Marrable for their help and support.

HALL GROUP

The Church has two halls and the Swain Vestry for the use of both the congregation and outside groups, for social and fund-raising events. Many groups swapped halls in 2021 so that they were better able to space out. As a result the Swain Vestry was rarely used and we offered it as temporary office space to Raising Youth, a charity working to support mental health issues from birth to adulthood. The collaboration was of great benefit to them and us so they stayed. The Upper Hall was used by a Playgroup weekdays all year and Rainbows one night a week when they returned in September. The Lower Hall was used by GA, AA and The Home Education Group from the beginning of the year. From June to September other groups returned – The Phoenix Art Group, Garden Club, Compassionate Friends, Friends of Medway Archives, CA and Floral Art. The

Home Education Group left in October. A church run Parent Toddler group, established during the year, and Kent Family History Society used the Lower Hall too.

The Swain Vestry was used for church meetings. It was also used by the Medway Parent Carer Forum, a Housing Charity and Rede Common Group for meetings as well as by Raising Youth.

MAGAZINE GROUP

The magazine editorial group, comprising of five people, made decisions by email during 2021.

MUSIC REPORT 2021

The year started in much the same way as 2020, we followed all the rules and added music into the service in ways we were allowed. As the year progressed, we were able to increase the musical contribution. Gradually, we moved from just hymns to be able to add other parts such that by Christmas 2021 we were singing our usual musical settings of the Eucharist as well as hymns led by the choir. In the Autumn we restarted our sung evening prayer once a month. We were able to reintroduce many of our regular Christmas services I would like to thank the choir for their continuing loyalty and strong lead to our singing over the past year but also all of our congregations for maintaining our music within the limits imposed on us.

Ken Reynolds

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL

The full Council met twice physically and four times by Zoom during 2021. One meeting was an extraordinary one to discuss the problems in the car park. The APCM was held in May. The Standing Committee met weekly via Zoom and the rest of the PCC were consulted when necessary via email. At the start of 2021 there were five ex-officio members of the Council and eight elected members. Average attendance at meetings was 86%.

At the first meeting after the APCM, in July 2021, Sue Marrable was appointed as Secretary to the PCC. Ube Casely-Hayford was appointed as Safeguarding Officer and The PCC accepted the Safeguarding Statements of the Church of England House of Bishops. Jeff Whiteley was appointed Treasurer.

Rev David Green, Jeff Whiteley, Elaine Ford, Rob Foxwell, Ken Reynolds, Sarah Wilkinson, Sue Marrable and Sue Davis (Financial Advisor) were appointed to form the Standing Committee.

Financial reports prepared by Sue Davis, our financial advisor, were considered and approved at each meeting.

SAFEGUARDING

During 2021, there were no Safeguarding issues.

The Diocesan office regularly updated us by emails and through the Digest about any changes in Safeguarding. This was useful particularly due to the restrictions of the Pandemic.

Rev. David Green ensured that Safeguarding is always on the agenda for PCC meetings.

We appointed Sue Marrable as deputy DBS recruiter. DBS checks for all that needed to have them were kept up-to-date and Safeguarding training was undertaken by all who needed to.

Uberta Casely-Hayford, Safeguarding officer

SOCIAL AND GENERAL FUND-RAISING GROUP

Aims:

To provide the social links within our Church and to extend these to the local community.

To encourage and involve the congregation to be part of fund-raising events of our Church.

Objectives:

SOCIAL

To try to target all ages within our Church and community.

FUNDRAISING

To use a variety of events to encourage wide participation and interest.

In 2021 the only event we held was a Christmas Bazaar which was very successful.

During Lent Smarties tubes were given out to be returned filled with money at Easter, these helped support our charities.

STANDING AND FINANCE COMMITTEE

Aims:

To meet prior to each PCC meeting and to think through the Agenda for that meeting, making any necessary recommendations to the PCC. The Committee also makes interim decisions for the PCC when that is appropriate.

To work with the Accounts Adviser, who prepares the accounts for us and gives us advice as to our financial position.

The Standing Committee met weekly via Zoom during 2021 and aimed for a monthly face-to-face meeting from September.

WORSHIP GROUP

The Worship Group began meeting again in 2021. Its aim is to be a forum for discussion on every aspect of worship in our church. This includes consideration of the services we provide now, reviewing those which have taken place since the group last met and also looking ahead, putting forward ideas for the future. The group is useful also in discussing any feedback about services from the congregation.

Independent Examiner's Report to the PCC of St Nicholas with St Mary, Strood

This Report on the accounts of the PCC for the year ended 31 December 2020, which are set out in this annual report, is in respect of an examination carried out under Regulation 3(3) of the Church Accounting Regulations 2006 ("the Regulations") and section 145 of the Charities Act 2011 ("the Act").

Respective responsibilities of the PCC and the examiner

As members of the PCC you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts; you consider the audit requirement of Regulation 3(3) of section 144(2) of the Act do not apply. It is my responsibility to issue this report on those accounts in accordance with the Regulations.

Basis of this report

My examination was carried out in accordance with the General Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act and to be found in the Church guidance, 2006 edition, issued by the Finance Division of the Archbishops' Council. That examination includes review of the accounting record kept by the PCC and a comparison of the accounts with those records. It also includes considering any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts and seeking explanations from you as trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently I do not express an opinion on the view given by the accounts.

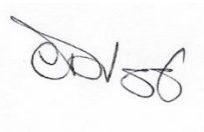
Independent Examiner's statement

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

(1) which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements

- to keep accounting records in accordance with section 130 of the Act; and
- to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the requirements of the Act and the Regulations, have not been met; or

(2) to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.



Date: 28 April 2022

Mr. Gordon Viggers FCA
74 Woodstock Road
Sittingbourne
Kent
ME10 4HN

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF ST NICHOLAS WITH ST MARY, STROOD

**STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2021**

	Note:	Unrestricted Funds £	Designated Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Endowment Funds £	TOTAL FUNDS 2021 £	TOTAL FUNDS 2020 £
Incoming resources							
<i>Voluntary income</i>	2a	394,812	146	0	0	394,958	292,104
<i>Activities for generating funds</i>	2b	32,151	0	0	0	32,151	22,578
<i>Income from investments</i>	2c	2,089	41	780	0	2,910	2,859
<i>Church activities</i>	2d	1,633	0	0	0	1,633	1,399
<i>Other income</i>	2e	350	297	0	0	647	3,769
Total		431,035	484	780	0	432,299	322,709
Resources expended							
<i>Church activities</i>	3a	112,942	1,277	0	0	114,219	133,004
<i>Raising funds</i>	3b	195	0	0	0	195	115
<i>Other resources expended</i>	3c	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total		113,137	1,277	0	0	114,414	133,119
<i>Gains/(losses) on investment assets</i>	6		9,006		5,030	14,036	6,316
Net income/(expenditure)		317,898	8,213	780	5,030	331,921	195,906
<i>Transfers between funds - transfers in</i>		0	3,840	0	0	3,840	3,340
<i>Transfers between funds - transfers out</i>		(3,840)	0	0	0	(3,840)	(3,340)
<i>Gains/(losses) on revaluation of fixed assets</i>		0	0	0	0	0	0
<i>Other recognised gains/losses</i>		0	0	0	0	0	0
Net movement in funds		314,058	12,053	780	5,030	331,921	195,906
Reconciliation of funds:							
Total funds brought forward at 1 January 2021		203,170	89,128	7,293	35,166	334,757	138,851
Total funds carried forward at 31 December 2021		517,228	101,181	8,073	40,196	666,678	334,757

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF ST NICHOLAS WITH ST MARY, STROOD

**STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2020**

	Note:	Unrestricted Funds £	Designated Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Endowment Funds £	TOTAL FUNDS 2020 £	TOTAL FUNDS 2019 £
Incoming resources							
<i>Voluntary income</i>	2a	289,377	0	2,727	0	292,104	31,485
<i>Activities for generating funds</i>	2b	22,578	0	0	0	22,578	45,695
<i>Income from investments</i>	2c	2,053	58	748	0	2,859	2,808
<i>Church activities</i>	2d	1,399	0	0	0	1,399	4,868
<i>Other income</i>	2e	3,338	431	0	0	3,769	0
Total		318,745	489	3,475	0	322,709	84,856
Resources expended							
<i>Church activities</i>	3a	132,227	527	250	0	133,004	84,605
<i>Raising funds</i>	3b	115	0	0	0	115	449
<i>Other resources expended</i>	3c	0	0	0	0	0	312
Total		132,342	527	250	0	133,119	85,366
<i>Gains/(losses) on investment assets</i>	6		4,051		2,265	6,316	14,468
Net income/(expenditure)		186,403	4,013	3,225	2,265	195,906	13,958
Transfers between funds - transfers in		0	3,340	0	0	3,340	3,340
Transfers between funds - transfers out		(3,340)	0	0	0	(3,340)	(3,340)
<i>Gains/(losses) on revaluation of fixed assets</i>		0	0	0	0	0	0
<i>Other recognised gains/losses</i>		0	0	0	0	0	0
Net movement in funds		183,063	7,353	3,225	2,265	195,906	13,958
Reconciliation of funds:							
Total funds brought forward at 1 January 2020		20,107	81,775	4,068	32,901	138,851	124,893
Total funds carried forward at 31 December 2020		203,170	89,128	7,293	35,166	334,757	138,851

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF ST NICHOLAS WITH ST MARY, STROOD

BALANCE SHEET AT 31 DECEMBER 2021

	Notes	2021	2020
		£	£
Fixed assets			
Tangible fixed assets	5	1,052	1,699
Investments	6	112,161	98,124
Total fixed assets		113,213	99,823
Debtors	7	5,391	5,043
Short term deposits		356,537	33,694
Cash at bank and in hand		194,611	200,457
		556,539	239,194
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	8	(3,074)	(4,260)
Net current assets		553,465	234,934
Total assets less current liabilities		666,678	334,756
Creditors: amounts falling due after one year	8		
NET ASSETS		666,678	334,757
Funds	9		
Endowment funds	10	40,196	35,166
Restricted funds	10	8,073	7,293
Unrestricted funds	10	618,409	292,298
		666,678	334,757

Approved by the Parochial Church Council on 1 March 2022 and signed on its behalf

Revd David Green
Chairman

The accompanying notes form a part of these financial statements.

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF ST NICHOLAS WITH ST MARY, STROOD

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2021

1. Accounting policies

a 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 in accordance with the Church Accounting Regulations 2006 governing the individual accounts of PCCs, and with the Regulations' "true and fair view" provisions, together with FRS102 2016 as the applicable accounting standards and the 2016 version of the Statement of Recommended Practice, Accounting and Reporting by Charities SORP FRS102. The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention, except for the valuation of investment assets which are shown at fair value.

b Funds

Funds held by the PCC are:

Unrestricted funds - These represent the remaining income funds of the PCC that are available for spending on the general purposes of the PCC, including amounts designated by the PCC for fixed assets for its own use or spending on a future project and which are therefore not included in its 'free reserves' as disclosed in the trustees' report.

Restricted funds - These are income funds that must be spent on restricted purposes and details of the funds held and restrictions provided are shown in the notes to the accounts.

Endowment funds - These are restricted funds that must be retained as trust capital either permanently or subject to a discretionary power to spend as capital income, and where the use of any income or other benefit derived from the capital may be restricted or unrestricted. Full details of all their restrictions are shown in the notes to the accounts.

c Incoming resources

Recognition of income and endowments

These are included in the Statement of Financial Activities (SOFA) when:

1. the PCC becomes legally entitled to the use of the resources;
2. and the inflow of economic benefits is probable; and

Fundraising costs - Funds raised from events and trading activities (e.g. a fete, a garden party or sales of books and magazines) are reported gross in the SOFA - i.e., before any related costs that may have been deducted from the gross proceeds.

Grants and donations - Grants and donations are included in the SOFA when any preconditions preventing their use by the PCC have been met. For collections and planned giving this is when the funds are received.

Gift Aid Tax claims, etc. - Gift Aid and other tax claims are included in the SOFA at the same time as the cash donations to which they relate.

Gifts in kind - Gifts in kind are accounted for at a reasonable estimate of their fair value at the time of gift, if feasible, or else at the amount actually realised from their disposal.

Gifts in kind for sale to fund the PCC are included in the accounts at their estimated fair value at the date of gift, if feasible - or else recognised when sold by the charity.

Gifts in kind for the PCC's own use are included in the SOFA as incoming resources at their fair value when receivable, and expensed as and when consumed in use. Gifts of fixed assets, if material, are included in the balance sheet at their fair value and expensed over the asset's useful economic life.

Donated services and facilities - These are included in income (and at the same time in resources expended) at the estimated fair value to the PCC of the service or facility received.

Volunteer help - The value of any voluntary help received is not included in the accounts but is described in the trustees' annual report.

Rental income - Rental income from the letting of the church is recognised when the rental is due.

Investment income - This is included in the accounts when receivable.

Investment gains and losses - This includes any gain or loss on the sale of investments and any gain or loss resulting from revaluing investments to market value

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2019

d Expenditure and Liabilities

Liability recognition - Liabilities are recognised when a liability is legal or constructive

Governance costs - Include costs of statutory accounts, the costs of trustee meetings, and advice to trustees on governance

Grants payable without performance - Grants payable without performance are recognised in the accounts when the grant is received externally and there are no pre-conditions to the grant which remain within the control of the Council

e Assets

Consecrated and beneficed property - Property of any kind is consecrated or beneficed if it is held for the purposes of "charity" by Section 10(2) (a) and its value as an asset is not capitalised in the financial statements

Movable church furnishings - Movable church furnishings are depreciated over their useful economic lives. Depreciation information is available. In the financial statements, all items are included in the Church of England

Tangible fixed assets for use - Tangible fixed assets are recognised if they can be used for more than one year. They are valued at cost or else, if the fair value is more reliable, at fair value. Depreciation is calculated to write down the assets over their useful lives less their currently anticipated residual values as follows:

Land
Buildings*
Fixtures & Fittings
Computers

OF ST NICHOLAS WITH ST MARY, STRO

ATEMENTS (continued) CEMBER 2021

is are recognised as soon as there is a
sts of the preparation and examination
eetings and cost of any legal
e or constitutional matters.

ormance conditions - These are
a commitment has been made
onditions still to be met for entitlement
the control of the PCC.

roperty - In so far as consecrated and
excluded from the statutory definition of
d (c) of the Charities Act 2011 such
financial statements.

These are capitalised at cost and
nomic life other than where insufficient
his case the item is not capitalised, but
rch's inventory in any case.

by the Church - These are capitalised
n one year, and cost at least £1,000.
for gifts-in-kind, at a reasonable estimate
e off the cost of tangible fixed assets
esidual fair value over their estimated

Nil
Nil
20 years
3 years

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF ST NICHOLAS WITH ST MARY, STROOD

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (continued)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2021**

2 Incoming resources

	Unrestricted Funds £	Designated Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Endowment Funds £	TOTAL FUNDS 2021 £	Unrestricted Funds £	Designated Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Endowment Funds £	TOTAL FUNDS 2020 £
a Voluntary income										
Planned giving	19,090				19,090	17,424				17,424
Income tax recoverable on planned giving	5,003				5,003	3,429				3,429
Other planned giving	10				10	90				90
Collections	2,018				2,018	1,471				1,471
Donations and appeals	2,071	146			2,217	2,356		2,727		5,083
Income tax recoverable on donations and appeals	0				0	0				0
Grants	13,126				13,126	1,556				1,556
Legacies	353,494				353,494	263,000				263,000
Charitable giving receipts	0				0	51				51
Church group receipts	0				0	0				0
	394,812	146	0	0	394,958	289,377	0	2,727	0	292,104
b Activities for generating funds										
Church hall lettings to non church organisations	16,624				16,624	10,607				10,607
Fetes, bazaars and other fund-raising events	1,650				1,650	2,104				2,104
Car park space rental income	13,302				13,302	9,297				9,297
Magazine advertising	575				575	570				570
	32,151	0	0	0	32,151	22,578	0	0	0	22,578
c Income from investments										
Dividends and interest	2,089	41	780		2,910	2,053	58	748		2,859
	2,089	41	780	0	2,910	2,053	58	748	0	2,859
d Church activities										
Magazine sales	652				652	593				593
Book sales to promote objectives	0				0	0				0
Votive candles	128				128	146				146
Fees from weddings etc	853				853	660				660
	1,633	0	0	0	1,633	1,399	0	0	0	1,399
e Other income										
Other income	350	78			428					0
Insurance receipt	0				0	3,338				3,338
Shared staff costs	0	219			219		431			431
	350	297	0	0	647	3,338	431	0	0	3,769
Total incoming resources	431,035	484	780	0	432,299	318,745	489	3,475	0	322,709

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF ST NICHOLAS WITH ST MARY, STROOD

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (continued)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2021**

3 Resources expended

	Unrestricted Funds £	Designated Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Endowment Funds £	TOTAL FUNDS 2021 £	Unrestricted Funds £	Designated Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Endowment Funds £	TOTAL FUNDS 2020 £
a Church Activities										
Missionary and charitable giving (Note 11):	3,404				3,404	1,998				1,998
Ministry costs:					0					0
Diocesan parish contribution	65,700				65,700	57,260				57,260
Working expenses	847				847	859				859
Vicarage expenses	2,581				2,581	2,574				2,574
Church running expenses	4,330				4,330	3,853				3,853
Church maintenance	5,400				5,400	1,531		250		1,781
Insurance	4,235				4,235	4,165				4,165
Upkeep of services	1,939	110			2,049	837	527			1,364
Education	0				0	0				0
Parish training and mission	1,164	219			1,383	227				227
Church refreshments	290				290	37				37
Parish magazine	56				56	13				13
Church hall costs	3,073				3,073	3,223				3,223
Flowers	0				0	33				33
Church purchases	1,815				1,815	1,069				1,069
Car park and grounds redevelopment	1,236				1,236	4,444				4,444
Church repairs	12,041	948			12,989	44,532				44,532
Project spending	0				0	0				0
Depreciation	647				647	647				647
Office costs	1,944				1,944	2,845				2,845
Cost of annual accounts - Independent examination fee	800				800	400				400
Bookkeeping service	1,440				1,440	1,440				1,440
Legal and professional	0				0	240				240
	112,942	1,277	0	0	114,219	132,227	527	250	0	133,004
b Raising funds										
Cost of applying for grants					0					0
Cost of planned giving	5				5	21				21
Fund raising costs	190				190	94				94
	195	0	0	0	195	115	0	0	0	115
c Other expenditure										
Drop-in centre costs	0				0	0				0
	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	312	0	0
Total resources expended	113,137	1,277	0	0	114,414	132,342	527	562	0	133,119

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF ST NICHOLAS WITH ST MARY, STROOD

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (continued) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2021

4 Staff costs

a Wages and salaries

The PCC has two employees a cleaner and administrator total salary costs were £3,231 (2020 £2,431). The organist's services are donated.

b Payments to PCC members

£233 travel expenses were reimbursed to the organist during 2021 (2020 £102). The total donations by PCC members in 2021 was £6,263 (2020 £5,479)

5 Tangible fixed assets

	Freehold land and buildings	Church equipment	Kitchen fittings	TOTAL
Cost or valuation	£	£	£	£
At 1 January 2021	0	12,393	10,390	22,783
Additions				0
Disposals				0
Revaluation		0	0	0
At 31 December 2021	0	12,393	10,390	22,783
Depreciation				
At 1 January 2021		10,694	10,390	21,084
Provided in the year		647		647
Disposals				0
At 31 December 2021	0	11,341	10,390	21,731
Net book amounts				
At 31 December 2021	0	1,052	0	1,052
At 31 December 2020	0	1,699	0	1,699

The PCC spent £10,390 on a new kitchen, in 2009, for the lower hall and, in 2013, £5,455 on a new sound system and in 2017 £1,014 on new chairs. All of which are being depreciated on straight-line basis over ten years with a full year's charge in the first year. Other equipment used within the Church premises has been depreciated on a straight-line basis over four years and has been completely written down to nil net book value. Individual items of equipment with a purchase price of £1000 or less are written off when acquired.

6 Investments

At 1 January 2021	£
Disposals at carrying value	98,124
Purchases at cost	0
Net gains and revaluation	14,036
At 31 December 2021	112,161

The following units are held in the CBF Investment Fund:	Book cost £	Units	Valuation p	Value £
Assistant Curate		3,073.04	2341.81	71,965
Swain Trust	220	55.00	2341.81	1,287
Whittaker/Reynolds	2000	1,230.47	2341.81	28,815
St Mary's Hall	2355	431.00	2341.81	10,094
				112,161

The general fund investment is unrestricted. The remaining three investments are held in endowment funds as

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF ST NICHOLAS WITH ST MARY, STROOD

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (continued)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2021**

7 Debtors

	2021	2020
	£	£
Income tax recoverable	4,128	3,765
Prepayments	1,263	1,278
	5,391	5,043

8 Creditors

Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2021	2020
	£	£
Accrued expenses	1,465	2,970
Hall and key deposits	564	343
Other creditors	1,045	947
	3,074	4,260

There are no creditors falling due after more than one year

9 Analysis of Net assets by fund

	Unrestricted Funds	Designated Funds	Restricted Funds	Endowment Funds	Total Funds 2021	Total Funds 2020
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Fixed assets for church use	1,052				1,052	1,699
Investment fixed assets		71,965		40,196	112,161	98,124
Current assets	519,250	29,216	8,073		556,539	239,194
Current liabilities	(3,074)				(3,074)	(4,260)
	517,228	101,181	8,073	40,196	666,678	334,757

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF ST NICHOLAS WITH ST MARY, STROOD

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (continued)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2021**

10 Statement of funds

	At 1 Jan 2021 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers, other gains and losses £	At 31 Dec 2021 £
Unrestricted Funds - undesignated	203,170	431,035	(113,137)	(3,840)	517,228
Unrestricted Funds - designated					
Church Repair Fund	18,595	33	(948)	1,900	19,580
Lift Fund	1,495	8			1,503
Assistant Curate Fund	63,392	219		9,006	72,617
Vicar's Discretionary Fund	100				100
Toddlers	0	224	(219)	500	505
SCP	100				100
Music	5,446		(110)	1,440	6,776
	<u>89,128</u>	<u>484</u>	<u>(1,277)</u>	<u>12,846</u>	<u>101,181</u>
Restricted Funds					
Garden of Remembrance	35				35
Swain Vestry	93	32			125
Whitaker Reynolds	3,818	748			4,566
Hymn books large print	38				38
Drop-in Centre	458				458
Bells	2,851				2,851
	<u>7,293</u>	<u>780</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>8,073</u>
Endowment Funds					
Swain Vestry	1,126			161	1,287
Whitaker Reynolds	25,209			3,606	28,815
St Mary's Hall	8,831			1,263	10,094
	<u>35,166</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>5,030</u>	<u>40,196</u>
Total funds	<u>334,757</u>	<u>432,299</u>	<u>(114,414)</u>	<u>14,036</u>	<u>666,678</u>

The designated funds comprise:

The Church Repair Fund is a deposit accounts held with Rochester Diocese Board of Finance and have been designated by the PCC for the repair of the church. The Hall repair accounts was closed in 2012 as there has not been a separate hall for some time. The closing balance of £335 was transferred to the general fund.

At the end of 2012, the PCC decided to designate the 10,183.44 units in the CBF investment fund to provide income towards the costs of an assistant curate in the parish. The assets were therefore transferred from the general fund to the new Assistant Curate fund.

The PCC commenced a new fund in 2011 to fund projects to improve the church facilities and surroundings. In 2011 the PCC was able to make improvements to the South Porch and redevelopment of the car park from this fund.

The PCC commenced a new fund in 2010 to set aside legacies so that these could be used for specific purposes rather than general running costs, although there was no restriction in the bequest.

The PCC commenced a new fund to save for a lift to Upper Hall in 2009 (the "Lift Fund"). Donations received from the Strood Community Project's sponsored abseiling down the church tower were designated by the PCC for the lift.

The restricted funds comprise:

The Missions and Charities fund is for donations given specifically for charitable giving and the ensuing donations to charities.

The Creche fund is for donations given specifically for the creche area of church and the PCC intends to use it to provide new carpeting in this area.

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF ST NICHOLAS WITH ST MARY, STROOD

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (continued) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2021

10 Statement of funds (continued)

The Garden of Remembrance fund is for donations given specifically for the garden of remembrance.

The Mothering Sunday flowers fund is for donations given specifically for Mothering Sunday flowers.

The Upper Hall fund resulted from a grant received specifically for the refurbishment of the upper hall.

The Bookcase fund and Hymn book large print fund are for donations given specifically for these purposes.

The Stipend and assistant staff fund is for the income from the guaranteed annuity which is restricted for the incumbent's stipend and the donated services of the assistant clergy.

The Swain restricted fund and the Whittaker Reynolds restricted fund comprise the accumulated interest from these endowment funds.

The endowment funds comprise:

The Swain Trust is a permanent endowment, the income from which is restricted for the upkeep of the memorial vestry.

The Whittaker/Reynolds gift is a permanent endowment, the income from which is restricted for the maintenance of the assistant clergy of the parish, including visiting speakers.

St Mary's Hall fund results from the proceeds of the sale of the hall and the income may be used for the general ecclesiastical purposes of the parish. Whilst it is an expendable endowment, the capital may only be used with the consent of the Charity Commissioners.

11 Missionary and charitable giving

	2021 £	2021 £	2020 £	2020 £
	General	Restricted	General	Restricted
USPG	0	0	200	0
Mission Aviation Fellowship	200	0	200	0
Friends of Kent Churches	10	0	10	0
Friends of Rochester Cathedral	20	0	20	0
Poverty & Hope Appeal	76	0	200	0
Demelza	0	0	200	0
Night Shelter	236	0	200	0
Christian Aid	0	0	200	0
Crisis	200	0	200	0
Children's Society	91	0	368	0
Canterbury Oast Trust	16	0	200	0
Strood Community shop	500	0	0	0
Diocese of Rochester	2,000	0	0	0
Raising Youth	50	0	0	0
CDSG	5	0	0	0
	3,404	0	1,998	0

Gordon Viggers FCA
74 Woodstock Road
Sittingbourne
Kent
ME10 4HN
Tel: 01795 477774
Email: gordon.viggers@yahoo.co.uk

28 April 2022

Dear Sue

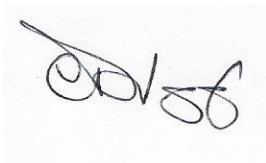
St Nicholas with St Mary, Strood – Year ended 31 December 2021

I am pleased to confirm that I have now completed my work in connection with the independent examination of the PCC Accounts for the year ended 31 December 2021.

I have no comments to raise on the accounts at all this year and accordingly I enclose a note of my fees for your kind attention in due course.

With best wishes

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Gordon Viggers', enclosed within a light grey rectangular border.

Gordon Viggers

Gordon Viggers FCA
74 Woodstock Road
Sittingbourne
Kent
ME10 4HN
Tel: 01795 477774
Email: gordon.viggers@yahoo.co.uk

To the PCC
St Nicholas with St Mary
High Street
Strood
Kent

INVOICE

Dated 28 April 2022

Fee for carrying out an independent examination of the Annual Accounts for the year ended 31 December 2021.

Total Due.....£600.00

Please make cheque payable to LJ Viggers
Or by bank transfer to:

Sort Code: 11-07-02
Account Number: 00429971

Accounts

St Nicholas with St Mary,
Strood

ANNUAL REPORT
and
ACCOUNTS
For 2020

**St. Nicholas with St. Mary Strood
ANNUAL REPORT 2020**

Parochial Name: St. Nicholas with St. Mary, Strood
Postal Address: High Street, Strood, Rochester, Kent ME2 4TR
Correspondence Address: The Vicar
18 Honeypot Close, Strood, Rochester, Kent
ME2 3DU

Parochial Church Council Members for 2020

<i>Rev. David Green</i>	<i>(Chairman)</i>
<i>Elaine Ford</i>	<i>(Church Warden)</i>
<i>Ken Reynolds</i>	<i>(Assistant Church Warden)</i>

<i>Margaret James</i>	<i>(From APCM 2018 for three years)</i>
<i>Robert Foxwell</i>	<i>(From APCM 2019 for three years)</i>
<i>Andrew Vince</i>	<i>(From APCM 2018 for three years)</i>
<i>Sarah Wilkinson</i>	<i>(From APCM 2018 for three years , Deanery Synod Representative from 2020)</i>

<i>Ube Casely-Hayford</i>	<i>(From APCM 2019 for three years)</i>
<i>Will Childs</i>	<i>(From APCM 2020 for two years, Deanery Synod representative from 2020)</i>

<i>Robert James</i>	<i>(From APCM 2020 for three years)</i>
<i>Sue Marrable</i>	<i>(From APCM 2020 for three years)</i>

<i>Jeff Whiteley</i>	<i>(stood down September 2020)</i>
<i>Andrew Living</i>	<i>(stood down September 2020)</i>

Number on Electoral Roll: 97
Independent Examiner: Mr G Viggers
Bankers: Barclays Bank, Strood
Registered charity no.: 1138948

AIMS AND PURPOSES

St Nicholas Church, Strood is a place of worship.

We at St. Nicholas with St. Mary seek to fulfil our calling as followers of Jesus Christ. Our primary object is the promotion of the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to the doctrines and practices of the Church of England. The Parochial Church Council cooperates with the minister in promoting in the parish the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical. We do this in many and varied ways, as the reports below will illustrate. In these ways we witness to the love of God shown to us in our lives and would draw others also into the life of discipleship. This witness is not simply a matter of words, but, includes practical service to one another and to the wider world, starting from the knowledge that all are loved by God and precious in His sight. We believe that this journey of faith is important for others to find. We also believe that Jesus is in our midst and therefore we seek to serve one another and the Jesus within and amongst us.

OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

We continue to develop a vision of 'welcome'.

In pursuance of this mission during the year we have:

1. Continued to look at the facilities of the church buildings and to move forward in improving them for future and current users.
2. Continued to make preparations for enabling the Worship area of the church be made more available for the onward mission of the church.
3. The smart screen has proved invaluable for groups using the vestry. It also continues to be important to families attending our 10.30am Service on Sundays, enabling them to have that option of seeing the service on the screen whilst their children play with the toys provided. This is part of our vision of opening up the church to all age-groups. The effects of the Covid 19 pandemic has greatly affected the use of this vestry and, indeed, all the halls.
4. During this pandemic we have maintained contact with the schools in the Parish via recorded assemblies and worship time, which will be a good preparation for when we finally are able to visit the schools. We have provided the schools with visual material that they can use in the classrooms.

ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE

At the centre of our church life is the Sunday services. Unfortunately for most of the year we have not been able to meet for worship as a result of Covid 19 restrictions, although we did open the church for some time after the first lockdown. When we were in lockdown we were able to live-stream the Sunday Service from the church, as we had the forethought previously to install Wi-Fi in church and halls. We were also able during the year to have our own Sunday reflections and sermons put onto Youtube for the benefit of those with the technology. We set up an email group of over 70 people, who regularly received Digests from the Diocese and other links to material to help their spiritual life during the pandemic.

We were also active in keeping in touch with those who were not online. The weekly attendance below is based on the opening of the church between lockdowns. Baptisms have had to be postponed due to the restriction of numbers of those attending.

When considering our achievements and the mission of the church we would like to thank particularly The Rev Sue Vallente-Kerr, our Pioneer Minister, for her vision and active service, her initiative and technical help, and her spiritual wisdom; to Sue Marrable, our Parish Administrator, for her tireless and efficient work in maintaining and increasing the smooth running of the church, and for her technical expertise; to Ken Reynolds and Elaine Ford as once again being superb Church Wardens, with Ken also leading our music; to all the members of the PCC Standing Committee,

who have met on a weekly basis during this difficult time to make sure we are continuing to move forward into the future; and to our Financial Analyst, Sue Davis, who keeps us on track superbly with our finances and also continues to provide us with valuable advice in so many ways.

Average weekly attendance: 40

Baptisms: 4

Confirmations: 0

Reaffirmation of Faith: 0

Financial Review

During the year, PCC general income increased by £234,677 (2020 £318,745, 2019 £84,068) mostly due to a legacy of £263,000 a reduction in fees of £3,477, a decrease of hall rental income of £12,122 and a decrease in car park income of £5,581.

General expenditure increased by £47,931 (2020 £132,342, 2019 £84,611) mostly due to an increase in parish offer of £8,060, an increase in away giving of £1,795 and an increase in repairs of £42,277.

Total cash and balances held in bank accounts at the end of 2020 stood at £234,151 (2019 £40,157).

It is the policy of the PCC to spend reserves under its stewardship to deliver its vision for the future and the PCC continues to discuss the best ways to use its funds to meet God's purpose for the parish of Strood and the wider community.

Of the total cash resources of £234,151 at the end of 2020, £25,536 (2019 £22,665) was held in funds designated for the repair of the church, the installation of a lift to the upper hall and the music fund. £7,293 (2019 £4,068) was held in various restricted funds.

This year the Covid-19 pandemic has resulted in significantly reducing income from hall rental, car park and fundraising events by 52% on 2019 levels. Fortunately, a large legacy has helped to cushion the impact of the pandemic.

We thank God that despite the difficult economic climate, St Nicholas is managing to make ends meet and has been able to make significant improvements to the church and grounds in recent years as a result of the reserves entrusted to it. We pray for guidance in directing resources to best serve His purpose.

Policy Statements

Liquidity

It is the policy of the PCC to generally maintain unrestricted funds, which are the free reserves of the charity, at a level which equates to approximately three months unrestricted expenditure. This provides sufficient funds to cover management, administration and support costs, and to respond to emergency expenditure and applications for grants that arise from time to time.

Risk Management

The church insurance is reviewed on a regular basis.

Cheques are signed by two signatories.

A child protection policy is in place.

Any potential hazards which come to the PCC's attention are dealt with as soon as possible.

Safeguarding

At the first meeting of a new PCC the House of Bishops' 'Promoting a Safer Church: Safeguarding Policy Statement' is read out and formally adopted by the PCC. A Parish Safeguarding Officer is appointed and details of those to contact if there are any concerns are displayed in church.

The PCC adopts the Safeguarding Policy of the Church of England.

AWAY GIVING

We gave to nine charities in 2020. They were as follows:

USPG, Poverty and Hope, The Children's Society, The Canterbury Oast House Trust, Mission Aviation Fellowship, Crisis, Medway Night Shelter, Demelza Hospice and Christian Aid.

2020 Due to the Pandemic the majority of groups were unable to meet after March.

BEREAVEMENT AND PASTORAL GROUP

This group meets six or seven times per year. Members of the group visit those people who have been bereaved during the year and invite them along to the annual Memorial Service, which takes place in March/April. The group also takes on the role of considering any in the congregation who particularly need pastoral help. The group met during the first few months of the year, but were not able to meet after Covid 19 emerged. The PCC Standing Committee, meeting on a weekly basis during the crisis, took over the pastoral roll of the group and liaises with the group members if needed. The visiting of bereaved relatives had to cease when the pandemic took hold.

COFFEE SHOP

This took place in the lower hall of the church every Saturday morning, 10.00am – 12.00noon until the first Lockdown in March 2020. Due to the restrictions it was unable to be held for the rest of 2020.

CHILDREN AND YOUTH WORK

See Fresh Expressions.

CHIT CHAT GROUP

This informal group met monthly on a Tuesday afternoon but was unable to do so after the first Lockdown in March 2020.

DEANERY SYNOD

There were two meetings of the Strood Deanery Synod in 2020. The first took place at All Saints Church, All Hallows on 10th March, where the main item on the agenda was a presentation from The Rev Stephen Gwilt, giving an update on all that was happening in the Parish, including building reordering plans. The second meeting took place by Zoom on 25th November, during the week in which Bishop Simon was visiting Strood Deanery. The main item on the agenda was a talk by Bishop Simon on the subject of 'Church in a Post-Pandemic World.'

DROP-IN CENTRE

The Strood Drop-in Centre continued to fulfil a great need in our community up till the first Lockdown in March 2020. Due to restrictions it was not possible to operate Drop-in for the rest of the year. During the year the Leader /Coordinator resigned due to moving out of the area.

ELECTORAL ROLL

Number of people living within the parish	52
Number of people living outside the parish	45
Number of women	69
Number of men	28
Total	97

FABRIC REPORT

If 2019 was a relatively quiet year, then 2020 could be described as silence. The pandemic has brought a halt to many of our church services and activities. However, we have managed to make progress in several projects in the church. For the reordering of the church, we have met with architects, contractors and consultants on various matters and plans are now moving forward. There are still some issues to be finalised as we wish to include updated technology. During the year, we took the opportunity to replace the unpredictable and inefficient church boiler. Later in the year we also replaced the lower hall boiler with a more powerful unit which has enabled us to provide a new heating system for the upper hall.

Discussions on the architectural lighting project for the church continued and were finally agreed with the work starting in February 2021 for completion around Easter.

We have also managed to finalise the plans for a fire alarm system. After a few delays, this work should also take place in early 2021.

FRESH EXPRESSIONS

The last year has certainly been a challenge for us all , however, the pandemic has opened up opportunities for us to be a little more creative in our Outreach using social media and Zoom combining with people from the Parish of Frindsbury.

We have held monthly Zoom meetings gathering families of all ages together virtually for 40 mins of games, activities, stories and prayer. In the in-between times “worship bags” have been produced and Covid safely delivered with activities for families to engage with before the next meeting.

We have also been able to hold special festival events such as a Christingle and Crib service.

Contact with schools has also had to change and clergy have been recording assemblies for the schools within the Parish to use and send out to pupils studying at home. Special assemblies on festivals and wellbeing have also been produced.

During the Christmas Period we worked with the Parish of Frindsbury in providing food hampers for those families most in need in Strood. We were able to support 50 families thanks to the generosity of the congregations here and St Gabriel’s Church Kings Hill . Several families who have struggled in the pandemic have been supported. This has been an amazing act of Christian witness that those families are extremely grateful for.

HALL GROUP

The Church has two halls and the Swain vestry for the use of both the congregation and outside groups, for social and fund-raising events. After March 2020 the majority of groups were unable to meet due to the restrictions. Only the Playgroup, AA and GA groups were able to continue on a regular basis after the first Lockdown. The Home Schooling

group met, when it was able to, following guidance for schools. Foodbank was able to continue until the end of April but then moved it’s operation to a telephone and home delivery service.

The Upper Hall is used by the Playgroup on five mornings and four afternoons a week. In the evenings and weekends the hall is used by the Rainbows, Gambler’s Anonymous group, and Alcoholics Anonymous.

Groups using the Lower Hall in the day have included a Home-Schooling group, Medway Foodbank, Drop-in Centre, Young at Heart Club and a Computer class for disabled people. In the evenings the groups included Alcoholics

Anonymous, Strood Fellowship, a Karate group, Strood Gardening Club, Friends of Medway Archives, and an Art group. A Coffee Shop is held every Saturday morning. The hall is also used as one of the venues for the Medway Night Shelter during its first phase in January-February.

The Swain Vestry is used by an IT help session, the Luxor group, Chit Chat Club, Floral Art group, Compassionate Friends and Yoga classes. It is also used for Christian Meditation, PCC meetings, occasional committee meetings, and by the Choir on Sundays.

Karate group and the Computer group stopped using the hall during 2020 but a group supporting adults with Autism and another Art group were due to begin sessions.

HOME GROUPS

Homegroup at 42 Jersey Road

The homegroup meets on the second Monday of each month at 8.00pm to study a particular book of the Bible. We met in January and February in 2020, but had to cease meeting from March, due to the pandemic.

Christian Meditation Group

Christian Meditation is a form of contemplative prayer and the aim is to allow God's mysterious and silent presence within us to become more and more not only a reality but the reality which gives meaning, shape and purpose to everything we do, everything we are. We come to this through the saying of a mantra, or prayer word, 'maranatha', an Aramaic word and a very early Christian prayer. The meaning of the word is 'Come, Lord'. There is an introductory reading, followed by meditation for thirty minutes. The group met, on Friday mornings, until March 2020. The group has kept in contact since then via material supplied by the World Community for Christian Meditation.

MAGAZINE GROUP

The magazine editorial group, comprising of five people, met once during the year, to discuss the magazine. We continued to produce the magazine, posting it to people when hand delivery was not possible.

MUSIC REPORT

After the first few weeks of 2020, our services have been very much restricted and the contribution of the choir has similarly been very limited. While the church was open for services, the choir led the singing of the hymns as congregational singing was not allowed. We did manage to have a service of readings and carols, again with choir singing the carols. During one period of church closure some of the choir sang for the streamed services but as we were forced to limit the number of people involved in the streaming, music was limited to organ accompaniment only.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank June Cornwell and Di Leonard for their valued long service to the choir. June has moved into a care home and Di will be moving near to her family in Sittingbourne. Hopefully, we will be able to resume a more normal pattern of services with choral and congregational singing later in 2021. I am sure we are all waiting for that time.

Ken Reynolds

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL

The full Council has met twice physically and once by Zoom during 2020. The APCM was unable to be held until September. The Standing Committee met weekly via Zoom and the rest of the PCC were consulted when necessary via email. At the start of 2020 there were three ex-officio members of the Council and twelve elected members. Average attendance at meetings was 80%. Sue Vallente-Kerr, the Pioneer Minister, attended two meetings.

At the first meeting after the APCM, in October 2020, Sue Marrable was appointed as Secretary to the PCC. Ube Casely-Hayford was also appointed as Safeguarding Officer and The PCC accepted the Safeguarding Statements of the Church of England.

Rev David Green, Jeff Whiteley, Elaine Ford, David Acott, Ken Reynolds, Sarah Wilkinson, Sue Marrable and Sue Davis (Financial Advisor) were appointed to form the Standing Committee.

Financial reports prepared by Sue Davis, our financial advisor, were considered and approved at each meeting.

SOCIAL AND GENERAL FUND-RAISING GROUP

Aims:

To provide the social links within our Church and to extend these to the local community.

To encourage and involve the congregation to be part of fund-raising events of our Church.

Objectives:

SOCIAL

To try to target all ages within our Church and community.

FUNDRAISING

To use a variety of events to encourage wide participation and interest.

In 2020 we held a jumble sale, boot fair and book sale before restrictions ruled out such events.

During Lent Smarties tubes were given out to be returned filled with money at Easter, these helped support our charities. They were returned when attendance at church was possible.

STANDING AND FINANCE COMMITTEE

Aims:

To meet prior to each PCC meeting and to think through the Agenda for that meeting, making any necessary recommendations to the PCC. The Committee also makes interim decisions for the PCC when that is appropriate.

To work with the Accounts Adviser, who prepares the accounts for us and gives us advice as to our financial position.

The Standing Committee has met weekly via Zoom during 2020 since the first Lockdown in March.

STROOD FELLOWSHIP

The Strood Fellowship met monthly until March 2020.

WORSHIP GROUP

The Worship Group met regularly throughout the year. Its aim is to be a forum for discussion on every aspect of worship in our church. This includes consideration of the services we provide now, reviewing those which have taken place since the group last met and also looking ahead, putting forward ideas for the future. The group is useful also in discussing any feedback about services from the congregation. From March, the Standing Committee of the PCC, meeting on a weekly basis, has taken over the agenda of this group in adapting the provision of worship to this continually changing environment dominated by Covid 19.

Independent Examiner's Report to the PCC of St Nicholas with St Mary, Strood

This Report on the accounts of the PCC for the year ended 31 December 2020, which are set out in this annual report, is in respect of an examination carried out under Regulation 3(3) of the Church Accounting Regulations 2006 ("the Regulations") and section 145 of the Charities Act 2011 ("the Act").

Respective responsibilities of the PCC and the examiner

As members of the PCC you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts; you consider the audit requirement of Regulation 3(3) of section 144(2) of the Act do not apply. It is my responsibility to issue this report on those accounts in accordance with the Regulations.

Basis of this report

My examination was carried out in accordance with the General Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act and to be found in the Church guidance, 2006 edition, issued by the Finance Division of the Archbishops' Council. That examination includes review of the accounting record kept by the PCC and a comparison of the accounts with those records. It also includes considering any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts and seeking explanations from you as trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently I do not express an opinion on the view given by the accounts.

Independent Examiner's statement

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

(1) which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements

- to keep accounting records in accordance with section 130 of the Act; and
- to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the requirements of the Act and the Regulations, have not been met; or

(2) to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.



Date: 21 April 2021

Mr Gordon Viggers ACA
74 Woodstock Road
Sittingbourne
Kent
ME10 4HN

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF ST NICHOLAS WITH ST MARY, STROOD

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2020

	Note	Unrestricted Funds £	Designated Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Endowment Funds £	TOTAL FUNDS 2020 £	TOTAL FUNDS 2019 £
Incoming resources							
<i>Voluntary income</i>	2a	289,377	0	2,727	0	292,104	31,485
<i>Activities for generating funds</i>	2b	22,578	0	0	0	22,578	45,695
<i>Income from investments</i>	2c	2,053	58	748	0	2,859	2,808
<i>Church activities</i>	2d	1,399	0	0	0	1,399	4,868
<i>Other income</i>	2e	3,338	431	0	0	3,769	0
Total		318,745	489	3,475	0	322,709	84,856
Resources expended							
<i>Church activities</i>	3a	132,427	527	250	0	133,204	84,605
<i>Raising funds</i>	3b	115	0	0	0	115	449
<i>Other resources expended</i>	3c	0	0	0	0	0	312
Total		132,542	527	250	0	133,319	85,366
<i>Gains/(losses) on investment assets</i>	6		4,051		2,265	6,316	14,468
Net income/(expenditure)		186,203	4,013	3,225	2,265	195,706	13,958
Transfers between funds - transfers in		0	3,340	0	0	3,340	3,340
Transfers between funds - transfers out		(3,340)	0	0	0	(3,340)	(3,340)
<i>Gains/(losses) on revaluation of fixed assets</i>		0	0	0	0	0	0
Other recognised gains/losses		0	0	0	0	0	0
Net movement in funds		182,863	7,353	3,225	2,265	195,706	13,958
Reconciliation of funds:							
Total funds brought forward at 1 January 2020		20,107	81,775	4,068	32,901	138,851	124,893
Total funds carried forward at 31 December 2020		202,970	89,128	7,293	35,166	334,557	138,851

Gordon Viggers FCA
74 Woodstock Road
Sittingbourne
Kent
ME10 4HN
Tel: 01795 477774
Email: gordon.viggers@yahoo.co.uk

21 April 2021

Dear Sue

St Nicholas with St Mary, Strood – Year ended 31 December 2020

I am pleased to confirm that I have now completed my work in connection with the independent examination of the PCC Accounts for the year ended 31 December 2020.

I have no comments to raise on the accounts themselves but, as noted during the examination in relation to the significant balance on bank current account, I would recommend that consideration be given to utilizing investment/deposit opportunities to optimize income and reduce credit exposure below the £85,000 limit on the protection of the Financial Services Compensation Scheme.

Finally, I enclose a note of my fees for your kind attention in due course.

With best wishes

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Gordon Viggers', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Gordon Viggers

Gordon Viggers FCA
74 Woodstock Road
Sittingbourne
Kent
ME10 4HN
Tel: 01795 477774
Email: gordon.viggers@yahoo.co.uk

To the PCC
St Nicholas with St Mary
High Street
Strood
Kent

INVOICE

Dated 21 April 2021

Fee for carrying out an independent examination of the Annual Accounts for the year ended 31 December 2020.

Total Due.....£600.00

Please make cheque payable to LJ Viggers
Or by bank transfer to:

Sort Code: 11-07-02
Account Number: 00429971