

This is certainly the most unusual report that I have written for an APCM. The advent of the coronavirus, in a very short space of time, has brought the whole world to a standstill and of course Saint Georges has been profoundly affected too.

In the immediate period of lockdown the Church of England decided we could not be in church and so for a period I broadcast the Sunday Eucharist live on Facebook from a makeshift altar in a room at the Rectory. I also began to broadcast the daily office each day. It felt a rather meagre attempt to maintain our worshipping life in the context of the world so full of fear and anxiety. On the other hand, we were also grateful for what the Internet could do, for no matter how tenuous a connection it was online, it nevertheless meant we were able to remain connected, to know that we were praying for each other and for the world.

I was also able to keep in contact with parishioners by telephone and on Zoom and Teams. I think it was very important, particularly for people living alone, that St Georges was still there for them.

Eventually we were allowed back into church, and following strict safety guidelines and protocols the gathered community met once again to celebrate the Eucharist and we were able to broadcast this live on Facebook. Masks have to be worn, hands have to be sanitised and distance has to be kept. Yet nevertheless here we are together again in person and online.

The pandemic has raised many issues for us all. Particularly in the initial period there was a certain bewilderment, and anxiety about what exactly was happening and how long it would go on for and that was very frightening. We quite rightly applauded our NHS and those people who were putting their own lives at risk for the sake of others. We were worried about the most vulnerable people in our family and in our communities and about ourselves. We suddenly felt that we could not see very far into the future at all, we did not know what tomorrow would bring for us, our friends and the nation. As I write this report there is a sense of a second wave of infections potentially engulfing parts of the country, reminding us that we cannot be blasé or indifferent to what is happening. We long and hope for a scientific breakthrough.

You will remember in H G Wells's novel *The War of the Worlds*: the invading Martian Army was defeated by the smallest of living things, bacteria and viruses, which brought them tumbling down. We have learnt that our complex, and highly developed civilisations too are far more vulnerable than we cared to think about.

And yet hopefully in the midst of all of this we have begun to learn much. Perhaps we have learned to see what it is we can live without, and to recognise more clearly what it is we can't live without. We have been denied the very basic building blocks of human relationship, of touch, of

an embrace, of being physically present with other people. Grandparents have been kept away from grandchildren, elderly feeling trapped in homes, children worried about parents. The funerals of Covid victims I have taken have been pared down, with limited numbers of the family being able to attend, no hymns and everybody sitting well apart.

Suddenly we know what is most valuable in life – each other. Suddenly we are so strongly reminded that we are embodied, that we are physical beings needing other embodied physical beings and that we are very much mortal.

And this has particularly affected our church life. The resurrected Christ comes to his frightened disciples and lets them touch his wounded hands and he eats breakfast with them. He did not make an appointment on zoom. We continue to be restricted in the physical nature of faith, not being able to share the peace, not being able to receive the common cup at communion, not being able to have a natter over a cup of coffee after the Eucharist. These things will return and hopefully with a renewed sense of how important they are. Yet we continue, gathered together in prayer and in communion around our risen Lord. In one of the resurrection stories Jesus comes to his frightened disciples who are hid behind locked doors. The lockdown of the last six months has not kept Christ out.

The whole of the Holy week and Easter services were conducted from that reception room at the Rectory via Facebook. It was a very strange time indeed. Yet, nevertheless we were able, through the gift of the Internet, to have members of the congregation read lessons and our holy week preacher, the Rev Professor Robert Gilbert still able to send us some very good Holy week addresses, for which we were very grateful. It was a frustrating time, for the Easter services at St George's have become important and powerful moments in our common life. Yet despite the limitations imposed upon us we remained connected.

We give thanks for the many events and experiences in the period before the pandemic. Christmas saw Saint Georges hosting a variety of carol services, from the University of the Arts to a charity that helps disabled Palestinian children in Bethlehem as well of course as our own. A packed church, full of people singing carols is always a joy. A very moving All Souls Requiem set to the Mozart setting was also very well attended.

Yet the beating heart of the parish is the rhythm of the Sunday by Sunday Eucharists. Worship that is enhanced by the choral scholars, ably led by our director of music, Mr Sam Bardsley. Attendance has remained pretty steady.

We continue to be faithfully and ably served by Julian and Mabel in their commitment to the kids club: thank you! A lot of preparation goes into those 30 minute sessions each Sunday.

The book club continued as did parish lunches. We enjoyed some quiz nights and there was a wonderful Christmas party, at which Eva Driskell and Helena Roden prepared some delicious food and the choir sang some saucy music. It was a great evening and whilst I think we are not going to be able to repeat it this year we look forward to when we can.

Our work with C4 WS and the homeless during the winter months has continued for a fifth Year and we are pleased that this is the case. I am very grateful to all who help with cooking, serving and offering friendship to our guests.

There are many people to whom I need to give my thanks both personally and on behalf of you all.

To our churchwardens, Julian Sharpe and Helena Roden, for their personal support and a commitment to the life of St Georges. I am so very grateful to them both. Julian, as an architect takes a particular responsibility with the building, which as you can imagine presents some unique and continuing needs. Helena has an eye of the social side of life at St George's and offers her support for these events.

To the PCC, Hugh Kennedy, Neil Handley, Dorothy Connell, Mabel Alonso, Sara Payne, and to the Rev Jenny Hogan many thanks for finding time to meet and to discuss and plan. To Mabel for her work as treasurer, which can be very time-consuming. To Sara Payne for her work as PCC secretary. We keep Fr Rene in our prayers, he is still in Sierra Leone.

Thanks also go to all who helped in the kitchen on Sunday, particularly of course to Carmen Bailey. Thanks also to Eva Driskell for her help with the Sunday sheets and for being the creative mind behind our three yearly brochures which are very splendid indeed.

Thanks to all who read lessons, ring the bell, great people at the door. Thank you to Tim Fairclough for organising the intersessions rotor. Thank you to Michael Taylor and Jack Highton for serving. Thank you to the clergy and to our lay reader, Jennie, Rene and Neal.

Our congratulations go to Jack and Bell and to Trinity and Keith who were married this year

Again I am very grateful to Eva Driskell for her work, not only in the parish office, but also her support and enthusiasm for the internet broadcasting through Facebook of the Sunday service. Eva was also responsible for the newsletters that went out which kept people in contact with St Georges. So thank you very much!

We are also indebted to Sheba who spend so many years paying for and building up the garden and flower beds around the church. She decided to retire from that work this year and has left us with our own garden of Eden

and it is a pleasure that this can now be a parish project for all who wish to participate in tending to this colourful array around us.

It was sad to say goodbye to Mark Summerbell and Tazina Frank this year. After 11 years with us in which a fantastic programme of concerts, exhibitions and festivals were constructed they had both decided to explore living in a new country. Initially they hoped to go to Portugal but the pandemic stopped that and as I write this they are touring France. They go with our very best wishes and our grateful thanks. They were both splendid colleagues.

Thank you to Noel Gordon who continues to look after our lettings and keep an eye on the building and the people coming and going.

We continue to be grateful to the church volunteers who offer their time opening the church and helping with the concert programme.

It continues to be a great pleasure to have the Anglican Korean Community with us, meeting on Sunday afternoons under the pastoral care of Fr Luke Lee. Thank you for being with us and praying for us.

Looking beyond the immediate period covered by this report the pandemic has meant that so many things have had to be cancelled, including the pilgrimage to Walsingham, the summer party at the Rectory, cream tea on the portico, quizzes and other social gatherings. Looking ahead it is difficult to know how to plan for Christmas: how can we have a carol service if we not allowed to sing? But we will gather in whatever ways we can to celebrate the birthday of Our Lord. I am pleased to say, that through the generosity of a parishioner we should be able to celebrate the All Souls' Requiem to the Faure setting in November. Let us hope that it will not be sabotaged by last-minute changes in regulations about public gatherings!

Most of our income is sourced by the letting out of the crypt to the Leicester Square Theatre Company and from the renting out of the hall to various social groups. This income has all but dried up and we have had to dig deep in to our limited reserves. The situation from January onwards, if things do not change, will become quite serious for us. We will simply run out of money. I would like to thank those individuals who have been particularly generous over the past few months and I would like to ask you all to be as generous as you can according to your means.

So what will the world look like next week, next month, next year? We don't know. We don't know when a vaccine will be available, and we don't know what the economic effects will truly be. We must not fear and lose heart. We must keep our eye on the present and to see what is needed and to face the future with hope.

Revd Dr David Peebles

Rector

Profit & Loss

January through December 2020

	Jan - Dec 20
Ordinary Income/Expense	
Income	
Collections	
Gift Aided	
Church music - gift aided	1,725.00
Weekly giving scheme	2,263.66
Yellow Envelopes	1,509.20
Gift Aided - Other	11,445.94
Total Gift Aided	16,943.80
Plate	1,522.42
Tax recovered	
GASDS recovered	697.18
Tax recovered - Other	2,760.46
Total Tax recovered	3,457.64
Collections - Other	-272.07
Total Collections	21,651.79
Dividend Income	21,367.38
Fundraising	
Books	20.00
Cards	5.00
Fundraising - Other	69.50
Total Fundraising	94.50
Gifts and Donations Income	
Restricted	2,826.26
Unrestricted	30.00
Total Gifts and Donations Income	2,856.26
Income - Church and Hall Hire	
Church	10,950.00
Donations for use of space	
Donation for use of E courtyard	295.00
Donations for use of space - Ot...	800.00
Total Donations for use of space	1,095.00
Musician fees	815.00
Upper Meeting Room	520.00
UVH (Upper Vestry hall)	205.00
Income - Church and Hall Hire - Ot...	10,090.00
Total Income - Church and Hall Hire	23,675.00
Income - Concerts	
Concerts Income	
Sunday Recitals & SGB concerts	330.80
Total Concerts Income	330.80
Income - Concerts - Other	2,175.00
Total Income - Concerts	2,505.80
Income - Licences granted	
Lower Vestry Hall Licence	41,750.00
Parking space licence	2,800.00
Undercroft Licence	26,600.68
Income - Licences granted - Other	810.43
Total Income - Licences granted	71,961.11
Parochial Fees	1,431.00
Uncategorized Income	255.80
Total Income	145,798.64
Expense	

Profit & Loss

January through December 2020

	Jan - Dec 20
1004 Donation to Charities	
C4WS night shelter	848.05
Total 1004 Donation to Charities	848.05
2001 Common Fund	63,000.00
2002 Clergy Expenses	
2002 Books	187.84
2002 Computer consumables	322.52
2002 Postage and stationery	13.72
2002 Rector's pastoral work	979.71
2002 Rector discretionary fund	150.00
2002 Stationery	21.83
2002 Sundry	129.01
2002 Telephone	390.00
2002 Travel	260.46
2002 Working lunches & coffees	72.00
Total 2002 Clergy Expenses	2,527.09
2003 Rectory Expenses	
2003 Rectory Water Rates	430.93
Total 2003 Rectory Expenses	430.93
2005 Church Running Expenses	
2005 Cleaning General	2,938.65
2005 Electricity	9,612.72
2005 Gas	7,825.29
2005 Insurance	14,694.80
2005 Sundry	114.20
2005 Water Rates	517.04
Total 2005 Church Running Expenses	35,702.70
2006 Church Maintenance	
2006 Drains clearance	50.00
2006 Guttering	291.52
2006 Key cutting	91.00
2006 Lift Maintenance	189.11
2006 Misc	31.24
2006 Piano Tuning	155.00
2006 Plumbing	300.72
2006 Refuse Collection	1,668.73
2006 Window storage	250.00
Total 2006 Church Maintenance	3,027.32
2007 Upkeep of Services	
2007 Candles	177.69
2007 Flowers	71.98
2007 Giving Envelopes	59.94
2007 Honoraria	510.00
2007 Music Extra	150.00
2007 Music for High services	2,195.48
2007 Music Licensing	164.13
2007 Music sheets	52.75
2007 Palm Crosses	15.00
2007 Publicity	166.25
2007 Repair and Replacement	17.97
2007 Sacristy Supplies	192.69
2007 Service Sheets	359.16
2007 Upkeep of Services - other	170.52
Total 2007 Upkeep of Services	4,303.56
2016 Salaries & Support	
2016 Accounts Manager	4,292.05
2016 Admin/Volunteer Support	530.48
2016 Book-keeping services	762.35
2016 Cantors	

Profit & Loss

January through December 2020

	Jan - Dec 20
Choral Scholars	4,611.98
Scholar deputies	895.00
Total 2016 Cantors	5,506.98
2016 Caretaker	9,683.08
2016 Church Secretary	5,012.25
2016 Concert/Arts Director	4,540.82
2016 Concerts volunteers admin	433.34
2016 Organists	4,886.34
Total 2016 Salaries & Support	35,647.69
3000 Fund Raising	41.85
4000 Church Administration	
4000 Computer Hardware	115.97
4000 Computer Maintenance	366.50
4000 Computer Software	115.06
4000 IT Support	1,754.88
4000 Office Equipment	845.78
4000 Postage	74.84
4000 Stationery/IT Consumables	354.49
4000 Sundry	35.97
4000 Telephone & broadband	2,037.22
4000 Web Hosting	216.56
Total 4000 Church Administration	5,917.27
5000 Staff Training	2,010.00
6000 Musician Fees	680.00
Concerts & Events	
Concerts - core expenses	
PRS tariff for concerts	451.34
Total Concerts - core expenses	451.34
Concerts & Events - Other	1,048.75
Total Concerts & Events	1,500.09
Gifts and Honoraria	737.50
Parish Events	739.48
Payroll Expenses	
Pensions expense	673.77
Payroll Expenses - Other	882.00
Total Payroll Expenses	1,555.77
Repairs & Renewals	32,760.86
Total Expense	191,430.16
Net Ordinary Income	-45,631.52
Other Income/Expense	
Other Income	
Increase in value of investment	43,009.04
Job Retention Scheme - furlough	5,797.99
Total Other Income	48,807.03
Net Other Income	48,807.03
Profit for the Year	3,175.51



Eva Driskell – Parish Administrator
St George's Bloomsbury
The Lower Vestry House
6 Little Russell Street
London
WC1A 2HR

Our ref: LC/S002

19 May 2021

Dear Eva Driskell

2020 Accounts

I have concluded my examination of the accounts and accounting records for the year ended 31 December 2020.

I can confirm that there are no material matters or concerns arising from my examination.

Please find enclosed herewith signed Independent examiner's report to the PCC of St George's, Bloomsbury for the year ended 31 December 2020.

Should you have any queries regarding the enclosed please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

Leon Charalambides