



St Peter with St Thomas Bethnal Green

Annual Report and Financial Statements For the Year Ended 31 December 2020

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ANNUAL REPORT 2020

Part 1

Sections 1-6: The Vicar's Report

1. Reference information

Members of the PCC are elected as Trustees on an annual basis at the Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM) in accordance with the Church Representation Rules. During the year the following served as members of the PCC:

Vicar: The Rev'd Heather Atkinson, Chair

Wardens: 1. Maria Wyard 2. Andy Walton (resigned March 2020 and position now vacant)

Representative on the Deanery Synod: David Lawrence (Triennium to 2020)

Elected Members: Charlotte Parmiter, Vikki Lovell, Josh Parikh, Tessa Bosworth, Philippa Bannister, Philippa Bosworth (appointed March 2020) Pieter-Bas Spronk (appointed March 2020), David Butler (resigned March 2020), Stephen Tunstall (resigned March 2020)

St Peter's Bethnal Green is a registered charity number 1154668.

St Peter's Bethnal Green uses the banking services of Reliance Bank Ltd at Faith House, 23-24 Lovat Lane, London, EC3R 8EB.

Stewardship (1 Lamb's Passage, London EC1Y 8AB) were re-appointed as the charity's accountants and an employee nominated by Stewardship serves as the charity's independent examiner.

Postal address of the church: St Peter's Bethnal Green, St Peter's Close, London E2 7AE.

Administrative address: The Vicarage, St Peter's Close, London, E2 7AE

2. Structure & Governance

Responsibilities of the PCC

The PCC of St Peter's Bethnal Green has the responsibility, together with the Vicar, the Rev'd Heather Atkinson, to promote in the parish the whole mission of the Church. This includes the pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical aspects. It is responsible for the maintenance of the buildings of St Peter's Bethnal Green. As a Church of England Parish church, the PCC and Vicar follow requirements of Church of England Canon Law.

The charity is registered with the Charity Commission and operates under the Charities Act 2011. The governing documents for the charity are the Parochial Church Councils (Powers) Measure 1956 (as amended) and the Church Representation Rules.

With regard to the PCC's obligations to safeguard children and vulnerable adults, the members of the PCC confirm that they have complied with their duties under section 5 of the Safeguarding and Clergy Discipline Measure 2016.

Objectives and activities

The objectives of St Peter's Bethnal Green are to promote in the parish the whole mission of the Church with a focus to worship God, make friends and change the world. Amplification of the vision of St Peter's is on the website and available in other papers.

The 2020 electoral roll had 117 registered members at the APCM. Those on the Electoral roll are able to nominate candidates for the PCC. The PCC and Church Wardens are elected annually at the APCM. The PCC organises itself to carry out its aims and objectives by having regular meetings and various sub-committees. The PCC held five formal meetings over the year and two standing meetings regarding the hall.

The PCC's Finance Team prepares information for explanation and decision making for the PCC and takes forward management matters with the Vicar. Day-to-day management of the church is delegated to the Vicar, Rev'd Heather Atkinson and her staff team. An Executive Group operating as a Standing Committee was not formed this year.

Public Benefit

The PCC members confirm that they have complied with the duty in section 17 of the Charities Act 2011 to have regard to the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit. St Peter's Bethnal Green works alongside a number of organisations as partners in undertaking mercy, justice and evangelism. We support these practically, financially and in encouraging people to volunteer and we receive support from them in fulfilling our calling as a local church.

These include: Bethnal Green Spear Trust, Resurgo, Tower Hamlets, Bow and Bethnal Green Foodbanks, The Bethnal Green and Hoxton Community Hub, Columbia Road Traders Association, The Mission Practice, Oaklands School, The Arch (formerly Arch 76), The Tower Hamlets Healing Prayer School, and other local churches, individual ministries and social enterprises.

The church of St Peter's Bethnal Green benefits the community by the activities described in the section entitled 'Change the World', notably through outreach and supporting others through our volunteer programme, prayer and financial input.

3. 'Worship God'

Church attendance

Average Sunday attendance in 2020 at St Peter's Bethnal Green (2019-2015 in brackets):

	Q1 (Jan-March)	Q2 (April-June)	Q3 (July-Sept)	Q4 (Oct-Dec)
10am sung Eucharist				
adults	26 (32, 31, 38, 50, 45)	33 (30, 27, 34, 58, 44)	32 (27, 24, 27, 44, 46)	30 (27, 30, 31, 37, 53)
11am service of the Word/Eucharist/All Age Worship				
adults	61 (55, 40, 37, 40, 47)	51 (56, 40, 37, 39, 44)	43 (56, 37, 41, 35, 47)	46 (58, 55, 45, 44, 45)
children	15 (14, 10, 14, 11, 9)	11 (16, 12, 11, 10, 12)	12 (17, 10, 13, 10, 12)	15 (13, 15, 12, 12, 10)
10.30am all-age services				
adults	0 (60, 74, 70, 68, 67)	99 (68, 77, 54, 80, 75)	46 (48, 56, 58, 59, 63)	58 (77, 68, 70, 74, 74)
children	0 (15, 11, 20, 13, 11)	16 (19, 13, 4, 13, 13)	7 (11, 10, 7, 10, 14)	8 (10, 14, 12, 16, 11)
5pm evening service (Not inc Campfire Carols: 42 adults, 39 kids or Carols by Candlelight: 150 adults, 13 kids, or Carols on Columbia Road – approx. 5,000 adults...)				
adults	15 (23, 23, 31, 25, 16)	12 (15, 21, 28, 25, 17)	0 (18, 29, 25, 37, 20)	0 (19, -, 25, 30, 31)
Total number of communicants across all Sunday services				
	336	553	341	483

'A variety of services were held regularly' understates a year of constant change as the pandemic swept the globe and we adapted to each new set of guidelines and enforcements. The table below summarises what we did, but in each case we were balancing the *benefit* of meeting together to worship and find spiritual succour, with the *danger* of an increasing risk of spreading infection. The prohibition on singing, indoors at least, was surely the biggest privation and frustration. Every time the situation changed the new guidelines were absorbed, interpreted and a thorough risk assessment made for every adjustment to public worship. At the same time there was a lot of listening, re-interpreting, communicating and reassuring to be done so that the church and community were confident that our decisions were thought through.

The services themselves were adapted to be slicker and enable engagement. We made mistakes and we got better. We have had to learn to worship through a screen and it hasn't been easy. For most of us it's been a subsistence diet, but the preaching has remained at a good standard and the breakout rooms have been particularly good for breaking up old 'go to' circles of friends and gently enabling us to meet more people.

The table below charts the range of services we have held. The clergy and lay members of St Peter's Bethnal Green led and preached at services. We follow the Church of England lectionary and the rubric of Common Worship. The shaded area indicates where we were legally obliged to close the church building entirely and gathered worship was prohibited. Where 'in person' services were resumed from 5th July, all due precautions were taken to ensure that the risk of infection was reduced as far as possible, including re-arrangement of the church furniture, provision of ventilation, masks, sanitiser etc, as well as strict adherence to guidelines for the distribution of Holy Communion.

Period	Sunday & Weekday Service(s)	Notes
Pre-Pandemic (Jan – Mar)	10am Holy Communion 11am Contemporary Service	With kids groups
Lockdown 1 (Mar – June)	10.30 Zoom with Spiritual Communion	Kids group bi-weekly at 4pm
Tier 2 (July – Sept)	10am Holy Communion 11am Zoom Service One 10.30 Outdoor Holy Communion	Kids group within the service With 'Back to School BBQ'
Tier 4 (Sept – Oct)	10am Holy Communion 11am Outdoor Service with Zoom alternating with a full Zoom Service Daylight Service 11am (Friday)	Sermon recorded Informal Service of the Word
Lockdown 2 (Nov)	10.30 Zoom with Spiritual Communion	Kids group within the service
Tier 4 (Dec)	10am Holy Communion 11am Zoom Service Daylight Service 11am (Friday)	Plus outdoor services: Jesus on the Green and Campfire Carols
Christmas 'Exeat'	Midnight Mass & Christmas Day with Holy Communion in person & on zoom.	

A new midweek, informal Service of the Word was introduced in October, attracting senior citizens who are otherwise isolated. It is designed to be very accessible to those without a history of regular church-going. Our rhythm of The Tuesday Early Prayer Meeting and Wednesday Morning Prayer, along with the monthly Prayer and Worship Night began well, but the pandemic ended the option of singing and gathering. Those who generally attended one of the two morning options stepped up to meet on zoom, where a liturgical format works as a cradle for intercession for the church, the community and the world.

At the start of the pandemic, we recognised that a number of worshipers would not easily have access to the internet. Where possible younger people have connected with older people to help them buy smart phones or learn how to use zoom. Others have been encouraged to phone in to the services. The daily lectionary readings have been printed out with weekly collects and distributed regularly by George to those who appreciate them, along with encouragements to watch Songs of Praise and call the Church of England 'Daily Hopeline' for daily readings and prayers.

Occasional Services, Seasonal Services and Service to the Wider Church.

In a year when tight restrictions surrounded occasional offices it was particularly poignant that 1 infant baptism and 1 wedding were nonetheless officiated at St Peter's Bethnal Green in 2020. To our joy, and although delayed and scaled down by government restrictions, the wedding of former staff members, Olly and Katie, was celebrated at St Peter's under Common Licence in July and Micah was baptized a few weeks later. 2 sets of Banns were read for marriages that were then postponed. At cemeteries the Vicar undertook more funerals than usual for members of the parish,

as well as preaching at Wycliffe Hall Theological College and undertaking duties as an Assistant Diocesan Director of Ordinands, as a Trustee of the Simeon's Patronage Trust and The Arch, and as a Stepney Area Deliverance Ministry Advisor. Other services included:

- Ash Wednesday – Holy Communion with ashing (in person)
- Mothering Sunday – A zoom service (Daffodils delivered to all the senior members of the church)
- Maundy Thursday – A zoom service during which we ate supper 'separately but together'.
- Good Friday – A zoom service of passion readings and Spiritual Communion
- Easter Sunday – an all age zoom service in which we all built our own caves to emerge from
- Ascension Day – an evening zoom service with Spiritual Communion
- Harvest Festival – A joint all age service in the church garden, with Holy Communion
- All Saints – an in person Holy Communion
- Remembrance Sunday – A zoom service featuring an Act of Remembrance and a film of memories from our most senior members of wartime experiences
- Christingle – An outdoor all age service
- 'Jesus on the Green' – Taking carols out to the community as a sign of hope
- Campfire Carols – Two outdoor carol services featuring a nativity trail in the crypt
- Midnight Mass – An 'in person or zoom' Christmas Eve Eucharist with a socially distanced choir
- Christmas Day – An 'in person or zoom' all age service with live music, music from the wider church and a rare moment of connection pulling crackers.

Children's Church

Until the pandemic the children's work during the 11am service took place in Room 1, a 0-4s crèche in Room 2 and the 5-11s in Room 1 (used by Spear midweek as the training room). The children would be in the worship space for the beginning of the 11am service before leaving for groups and have craft-based activities at 10.30 services. Once we were not permitted to gather, the families took even greater responsibility for nurturing their children in faith. They were supported by the creation of a families WhatsApp group and the creation of a 'Voyagers Online' zoom meeting in the afternoons which was later replaced by a kids break out room during the service, led by a team of volunteers, with a special mention to David & Jess for all their extra input.

Worship Music

It has been a tough year for sung worship. Lydia and Alastair led worship nights in January and February; Dan continued playing at the Early Prayer Breakfast; Naomi and Maria Wyard played the organ or keys at the 10am service, as well as leadership at the 11am from others. But beyond this the pandemic precluded singing. In addition, a number of our worship leaders are in changed circumstances that make the big commitment of leading worship difficult to fulfil while others have moved out of London during the year.

However, the remaining team worked incredibly hard to produce a library of videos for use in online worship and we have been blessed with the gift of help from other sources. Hence we have been able to use high quality videos made available by other churches and at Christmas our regular Midnight Mass organist, Nick, literally pulled out all the stops to ensure there was a small, socially distanced choir for Christmas Eve.

Nick was also a great help to our neighbour, Filip, who volunteered his time to do some vital repairs on the church organ. (The work needed to fully restore the organ was originally quoted to us by Manders for a cost of £22k) Filip is setting himself up as an independent organ builder and will be using our organ as his showpiece. We are deeply grateful to him for long hours of awkward, unpaid work that have resulted in a much better sound. There is more to do, when time allows, but Filip and Nick were able to ensure especially uplifting music for Christmas.

The AV team was active in the early part of the year and were grateful for some team training from John, the worship leader at St John's Hoxton. His observation that the AV operator is part of the third part of a key leadership triangle in any service was borne out when the pandemic struck and Alastair took on the task of enabling worship services by attending weekly planning meetings and seeing to all the technical aspects of each service, whether in church or on zoom. Online church simply could not have happened without him. We are deeply grateful for his commitment and generous contribution of time but recognize that a new team will need to be recruited for the future.

Prayer and Bible Study

Prayer is foundational to all the work we do. Any visible action and growth are built on the unseen life of prayer and the chancel remains a dedicated space for prayer and 24/7 prayer weeks. A week of prayer was held in January with individuals booking slots and with resource materials provided by Tessa Bosworth.

In order to connect with one another and fuel faith in the pandemic, Dave Cokayne co-ordinated the delivery of 3 months of daily devotional videos, recorded by members of the congregation and edited professionally by Hannah. These videos were an important part of helping the church manage the transition into lockdown and the loneliness, stress and anxiety that it induced.

Another key innovation in 2020 was The Prayer Garden Podcast, written and produced mainly by Dan, with additional material from Hannah and Tessa Bosworth. This beautifully produced podcast was named in response to the increased ministry of the St Peter's garden and the desire to continue, on a less intense basis, the valuable work of the Daily Devotional videos. Using music, spacious reflection and ancient prayers, the podcast has been a gift into the wider community and has been appreciated internationally, even being valued by an underground church in Turkey.

A small but committed number of the congregation meet weekly to pray for the life of the church, adding to the prayers of the PCC, the staff and those who pray for the ministry of St Peter's at home. The intercessions in our services are often led by volunteers, bringing a wide range of voices and approaches.

The 'say one for me' cards available in the church porch are prayed over by those who attend Early Prayer and Morning Prayer. They are stored in the aumbry, with the reserved sacrament, and are burnt at the Easter Morning Vigil. We can see from the handwriting that some people are confident enough in the kindness of the church to use this gift regularly. However, the enforced closure of the church doors during lockdown has reduced the number of people using this opportunity. We expect numbers to pick up again and during Lockdown 2, the church was allowed to open for Private Prayer. Volunteers ensured that this could happen almost every day and each time visitors appreciated the warm space of welcome and beauty. Some visited simply to appreciate the building, others clearly came to pray.

The preaching programme started with a study of the whole letter to the Ephesians, looking at how the church is a source of strength and opportunity for blessing. We plundered lectionary readings through the Easter Season for a series aptly entitled 'Faith on (the) line' and then looked at a number of Old Testament characters whose notable strength reflected God's character. The 'Finding Strength' series was followed through high summer with a series of films we made using the *lectio divina* mode to read and reflect slowly on a longer passage of scripture. The rich chapters of Isaiah 49-61 gave way to gospel readings as we explored our identity and call again and then, as the cold weather and isolation set in, we sat with just a few verses from Romans 8 for several weeks, in order to understand more deeply that '*nothing can separate us from the love of God which is ours in Christ Jesus*'. In line with the Church of England our Advent theme was 'Comfort and Joy'.

We welcomed Dr Stephen Backhouse and the Archdeacon of Charing Cross as visiting preachers and benefited from a 'Lent Tent' on the subject of *What is the Church?* The moment that Stephen had preached on the three gifts of the church (forgiveness, open-handedness and speaking truth to power) we found ourselves lamenting the loss of cosy church as we knew it. Later in the year, recorded interviews with high profile Christian leaders (Bob Goff, Francis Chan, Danielle Strickland, Jo Saxton and Nicky Gumbel) were shown at online services.

4. 'Make Friends'

'Making friends' is about discipleship and community for ourselves and for others.

Welcome & Hospitality

This section is usually within our 'Worship God' section. This year, despite hospitality still being an act of worship, our shift in activity helps it sit also under the banner of 'Make Friends'. The twin tasks of Welcome and Hospitality belong to the whole church and everyone is encouraged to help newcomers stay and develop friendships. However, in normal circumstances the particular practicalities fall on four smiling teams who started the year under the leadership of Tessa Bosworth and who all rely on Angela, Lorraine and George who were on site very early each week to ensure there are lights, neat pews, refreshments and prayer before our pre-Covid 'in person' services.

This year our practice and understanding of hospitality has morphed and widened. We have used break out rooms at the end of services to catch up with one another and because they are randomly assigned, we have found ourselves nudged into getting to know different people in the church. It has been good to disperse in this way and closer friendships have been fostered in other groups such as life groups. It has been a slower process for newcomers to integrate into the church and we have needed to be more deliberate and patient about this, with zoom 1:1 meetings and walks proving a more realistic approach. Using the 'chat' facility in Zoom has enabled us to add a link to our 'Hello' pro-forma on our website and the extroverts have done a great job in welcoming newcomers in the random break out rooms.

Initially there was concern over 'zoom bombing' but although we have had many guests joining us, from all over the world, everyone has behaved well. As a safeguarding precaution we have created a Zoom Waiting Room with a safeguarding notice and appointed a 'Doorkeeper' for each service – a role sometimes carried out by one of the staff team or, more often, by Bethia who has been keeping the service counts and entering them in the service register on behalf of Steve & Andrea who took care of the count until the pandemic. Bethia has also taken responsibility to ensure a warm welcome and the observance of Covid protocols at all the 'in person' services, making a vital contribution to the smooth running of services this year.

One of the upsides has been the accessibility of St Peter's worship to some who are no longer in London and we have enjoyed the sense of an international community when we have been joined by friends from Derbyshire, Leicestershire, Portugal, Australia, Hong Kong and the US.

Tessa Bosworth has maintained the website very efficiently, managing to relay all the changes swiftly so that our information output is never (or rarely!) out of date. We are very thankful to Tessa for managing all our social media since Dave Cokayne was ordained in the summer to his Title Post at St Stephen's Twickenham. Our online media have been a vital part of staying connected with our community and offering good hospitality to those who are reaching out to the church. We are regularly complimented by professionals 'with an eye' on the quality of our website and this is another way in which we extend welcome.

A more old-fashioned approach has been to update regularly the temporary notices and banners on the railings around the church. One such poster explained what Good Friday in an 18 word 'sermon' with Christ on the cross drawn as if he was dying of Covid; another poster was a simple invitation to '*Come on in and smell the roses*' put up in late May. The effect was phenomenal and the church garden quickly became a place of respite, play and renewal.

Life Groups

Life Groups are the midweek meetings designed to be at the heart of the church at St Peter's Bethnal Green. Through 2020 four groups continued: 'Daylight' led by Pam and Joy; 'Basement' led by Nigel and Charlotte; 'Canada' led by David and Joseph; and the Men's Bible Study led by Steve. The groups have adapted to changed circumstances and held a balance between the need for connection and support and a general tiredness with zoom contact. All the life groups took the opportunity to use the garden to meet at different points and have been a focus for prayer, bible study and mutual support. While there are a number of people who are not yet in a life group, other informal prayer groups also flourish and a knitting group, led by Andrea was flourishing until the pandemic.

It was particularly good to see the Daylight group and their friends reach out to another local network based around the Zander Court Lunch Club and invite them to use the marquee in the garden as an alternative meeting place. Anne and Pam secured local funding for refreshments and worked hard with George to provide Covid-secure coffee mornings.

In order to 'make friends', both with God, with one another and with people who need the friendship of God, we strongly encourage everyone to belong to something, to remain outwardly focused in their life groups and to serve on a team.

Nurturing Faith in Children & Youth

The old African wisdom that 'it takes a village to raise a child' usually resonates in a church such as ours. I am deeply aware that many of the parents have carried a particularly heavy load during 2020 with home-schooling on top of being much less able to share the task of handing on faith with the rest of 'the village'.

St Peter's has aimed to ensure that all the children on our roll feel loved and valued, even if they have had less direct experience of worship, teaching and fellowship. Hence the church also sent all the children gifts through the post in the summer holidays, (because what child doesn't want to receive a surprise parcel through the letterbox?) This was repeated at Christmas, with an Advent Pack of learning resources and fun activities from *GodVenture* and *The Bible Society*.

Until stepping down at Easter, Rach gave a morning a week as Children's Team Leader and gave the team great encouragement. She and Maria P have sorted through all the children's toys and resources. Rach has produced an excellent Children at St Peter's Handbook which will be revised and published in 2021 as new circumstances dictate. As well as training and supporting the team she developed good practice in the children's groups, welcomed newcomers and led activities for children at events. Her impact showed how clearly we need a Children & Church Growth Pastor on staff. Kathy remains as Children's Champion and has helped to fill the gap left by Rach by keeping an eye out for materials and resources. I am so grateful for these individuals and the whole team's prayer and care of the children.

At the end of the year a new Youth Group for those in Year 6, 7 and 8 was launched by Stephen and Lara, and David and Jess, with a highly successful, Covid-secure 'Covid Sucks Party'.

St Peter's has also facilitated the ministry of part-time staff member, Dumaeza, who runs a weekly conversation group for local young people. They meet him mainly through the Spear programme and opt to attend the group in order to have meaningful, often spiritual conversations inspired by contemporary music, culture and events. This group, known as Re:verb, has struggled with the implications of being an online gathering, but Dumaeza has endeavoured to maintain relationships and supported young people through a particularly difficult period.

Discovering God

Danny and Helen, with Heather Atkinson, attended the London Alpha Conference and reviewed the strategy for running Alpha, preparing for a course running in early 2021.

Maria Wyard ran a Discovery Bible Study in the garden over the summer that was greatly appreciated by attendees.

Relationship building and sharing

A number of our traditional events, outings and parties were unable to happen due to the pandemic or a tightened budget. In the light of the 'Rule of 6', the Petertide Summer BBQ became dispersed Petertide Picnics and the Back-to-School BBQ was a rare moment of social connection despite being subject to a simple, reduced menu and social-distancing.

Many members missed the visits to and from the Beane Valley Benefice, where urban/rural friendship of over 40 years have been nurtured. It was therefore a particular joy to welcome George and Angela and Martin from Hertfordshire to some of our Zoom services. Our traditional joint Harvest Festival giving with the Beane Valley Benefice was replaced by a joint donation to Bethnal Green Foodbank. Using a match-funding opportunity with the food donation platform 'Bankuet', we were able to raise almost £1,000 at a time when many locally are experiencing food deprivation for the first time as the pandemic impacted jobs and the economy.

5. 'Change the world'

Pastoral Care and Relationships

Supporting and caring for others bridges the call to make friends and change the world. As soon as the pandemic struck, we were guided by God's example 'He sets the lonely in families' (Psalm 68:6) and aimed to get all those who were isolated by lockdown to have a network of people

around them who would reach out regularly, meeting practical and emotional needs. So many of us quietly got on with this vital work, making phone calls, doing shopping and delivering meals within our community. You know who you are.

Others volunteered readily with organisations such as Mutual Aid, Council organized relief work and the Love Your Neighbour initiative. Our 'Love Christmas' campaign ensured that 45 St Peter's Christmas mini-hampers were delivered to vulnerable adults and Christmas meals were cooked for those alone on Christmas Day. At the same time many of the congregation were on 'the front line' serving in schools, shops and the NHS, while others were working flat out 'behind the lines' in a range of industries.

There has been an increased need for sustained pastoral care of those who have noticed their mental health deteriorating and as a community we have gained a fresh awareness of how mental health needs relate to community decisions. It is good that people have been honest about their needs (I need to be with people more/I need to withdraw/I am stressed because this is happening and I don't know if I can join in) and for the leadership team to be honest that we cannot easily meet every need in such circumstances, but that listening and responding creatively and diligently is central to our practice.

As part of encouraging one another to invest in relationships and use lockdown well, we ran The Marriage Course online over 7 weeks. 8 couples, including guests from the Good Shepherd Mission Church in Bethnal Green, were able to invest in their marriages and reported some great conversations and shifts.

Social Action

In order to provide a more joined up response to the increasing social needs locally, and to access government funding, David Bishop was asked to facilitate and drive a new initiative to co-ordinate and develop the work already going on locally at St Peter's and elsewhere. We reached out to St Matthews, running Bethnal Green Food Bank, and to St John's Hoxton, forming a Debt Advice Centre, so that, along with our ongoing employment coaching work through Spear, *The Bethnal Green and Hoxton Community Hub* is now a focus for provision for those facing poverty in this area, in partnership with the Church Revitalisation Trust's initiative, #LoveYourNeighbour.

Spear Bethnal Green, which runs employment coaching for NEET young people aged 16 – 25 continued, the 7th year of operation. Bethnal Green Spear Trust is a separate charity but St Peter's offers office space and training facilities gratis. Spear Bethnal Green coaches are part of the St Peter's staff team by extension. Most of the gathered events, such as Mock Interview Day, are held at St Peter's in the church or Mission Hall. The celebrations, when a cohort finish their intensive coaching, last about 90 minutes in total and offer a great opportunity for the rest of the church to show their support of the project in an easy, heart-warming way.

Most of the Trustees are members of the church operating in an executive capacity and we are especially grateful to them for an immense amount of hard work and prayer which has enabled the charity to keep going. Please pray for the chair, Rebecca, and all the trustees as well as supporting the trust financially as part of your giving to St Peter's. Other income is derived from grant-making bodies (though this is a precarious and time-consuming model) and we are pleased that Spear is a popular charity locally, supported in recent years by members of the local community, including the Columbia Road Traders Association. However, the link was weakened this year when the pandemic regulations prevented us from our usual carol singing at the Columbia Road Christmas market.

After two very strong cohorts completing the course in the first three months of 2020, the Spear staff were furloughed and the on-going mentoring passed into the hands of volunteers. In response to the growing employment needs in London, our Centre Manager, Tim, was later seconded to Resurgo, Spear's umbrella organization, to develop Spear Online and Re:work, a new programme aimed at helping people beyond the 16-24 age bracket find work. Tim also offered an informal online gathering, 'Spear Nation' for trainees who wanted to be in touch for support while volunteers from St Peter's and our wider network took on the mentoring of trainees. Our online course was launched in November and members of St Peter's were invited to support it by giving mock interviews and being visiting speakers.

St Peter's staff and congregation are encouraged to be involved in management and governance of ministries, projects and institutions. We seek to support and champion everyone's weekday activities, by counting what we do for 'the other six days' as the mission of the church, whether what we do is paid or unpaid. Our regular 'This Time Tomorrow' slot in the 11am service highlights the lives and impact of individuals, with the aim of being known, being commissioned and being prayed for. In 2020 the work of The Arch, a local charity building friendship with vulnerable women, whose board of trustees and volunteer base includes several members of St Peter's, has been an important partner in a difficult season.

Church members made around 95 phone calls a week to vulnerable people and Spear trainees; delivered 100s of food parcels each week, volunteered with a range of social enterprises; shopped regularly for isolated individuals; provided hot food for neighbours and met (safely) with isolated, elderly people for company. In addition we gave away 30kg flour; sent flowers and care parcels to children; handmade & distributed around 155 face masks; raised funds for overseas charities undertaking pandemic relief; gave time and effort in charity governance; offered many hours of pro bono work and worked in frontline jobs in the NHS and from the Cabinet Office to Refuse Collection... and that's just the stuff we uncovered...

The Church Garden

The garden at St Peter's has taken on a new lease of life this year. After the investment of careful maintenance of the shrubs and beds from our groundsman, Colin, the diligent clearing of leaves by George and the planting done by Les, as well as the work quietly done on the vine and roses by Adam, the garden has been a source of beauty and peace for the many locals who now spend time there. Les covered Colin's work while he was recovering from surgery and has planted over 300 bulbs so that next Spring we should see a third bed of tulips followed by alliums, with a bed of bluebells that will naturalise under the trees either side of the front door over the next few years.

New local connections have been formed and over the summer the garden became an informal co-working space. It has also hosted coffee mornings, a wedding reception, a baptism reception and Michelle's 90th birthday party. The young people have gathered there for 'Re:verb', as have the life groups and staff holding 1:1 meetings.

This has been made possible by the purchase of 3 sturdy new benches (funded by a local charitable trust) and by erecting a marquee. We are grateful to the site team and the Men's Bible Study group for their help in construction and deconstruction at various points. In order to ensure that infection control was maximised, the site team were fully trained in hygiene control and George was responsible for sanitizing all the gates and door handles every evening, as well as hosing down the benches.

Tessa Bosworth sprayed flower symbols on the concrete to indicate social distancing expectations and this enabled outdoor services to remain considerate. The availability of fire pits and plenty of firewood enabled a number of small groups to meet safely in the Autumn and for the Campfire Carols to attract so many visitors that we had to put on a second service.

6. Management & Administration

Mission Hall

At our last report we were almost ready, after a very slow response from the Diocesan solicitors to amend the title deeds to a recognizable repository, to sign a deal with Kido, a nursery education provider who would take a lease on the mission hall in order to renovate and repurpose it for the next decade, giving the building a new lease of life. Two weeks later the terms were agreed verbally, including an £80k up front premium that would enable us to start our development project. Two and a half weeks later – while the paperwork was being prepared – Covid 19 became a reality in the UK and everything was put on hold while Kido looked at the impact on their business. We could do nothing else but agree to return to the deal ‘on the other side’.

Conversations resumed briefly in September and November, but at that point Kido, seeing a glut of available properties on the market, told us their offer of a premium was no longer viable. They insist they are still interested, but would not, when asked, put any form of down payment on the hall as a mark of good faith. While we acknowledge the difficulties that nursery education providers have encountered in the past year, we are deeply frustrated at this stalemate.

As a result we have begun to seek tenants for the side rooms off the main hall, as these are considerably cheaper to heat and maintain. At present Chris is based in the downstairs office for tailoring and alterations, while Japanese drums from a local music group fill the store room. This means that the basic running costs of the hall (insurance, utilities etc) are just about breaking even. Before Chris began to rent there was a break in and damage done to the doors and windows, so it is very good to have someone on site and we are keen to find other tenants for the upstairs office and former kitchen.

Although we were able to update the title deeds successfully, there is still an unsatisfactory state of affairs regarding the ‘flying freehold’ that sits across the spaces which abut the Pebble Centre. When the land adjacent to the hall was sold off 26 years ago, and the Pebble Centre was built with a community room between the two premises, and accessible from both sides, the diocese did not provide adequate paperwork to protect the rights of the PCC to use the space which had been in a ‘gentleman’s agreement’ made under a previous incumbent in the 80s. It has now not been used for about 7 years, since the owners of the Pebble Centre resisted our use of it. However, architecturally the nature of the space looks very shared and there is a further question over a blocked space on the first floor. Although Kido were willing to overlook this anomaly, this legal and spacial blur may prove a sticking point for alternative tenants. We are therefore pleased to have won support from the diocese on this issue and are working with a consultant who we hope will enable us to unpick the legal tangle and re-market the property. The market (and change of use class ratings) have changed significantly in the last year and we will need to adjust our expectations on any future deal. Nonetheless it is a great encouragement that senior guns at the Diocese of London are now behind us and keen to see the Hall spend a season making a commercial income so that we can resume paying our Common Fund contribution in full and look after our church buildings properly.

The Crypt

After about 70 years of leasing the crypt to our neighbours, Mander Organs, for storing their wood, packing materials and archives, we were sad to witness the company's collapse and the end of a mutually convenient arrangement. The crypt is dry, spacious and atmospheric and an asset to the church, but in a year of pandemic it was difficult to see how a new use and income could be generated. However we were approached by a theatre company, Parabolic, seeking a new base, following the sale of the Co Lab Theatre in Southwark, which they had gradually converted into a performance venue when it ceased to be a carpet factory. Parabolic's model of gradual investment while expanding performances made sense, given we were not in a position to spend money on re-purposing the crypt. A partnership was necessary and since Parabolic is a Christian enterprise with proven experience in creating performance spaces and keen to be linked to a church with whom there is already relationship, the option seemed a good one. At present Parabolic are simply storing their props and wardrobe in the crypt under license and a faculty is being sought for it to become a performance space. A new legal entity will be formed that employs Bethia to manage the venue and its trustees will include members of St Peter's as well as Parabolic Theatre Company. This will enable other companies and musicians to hire the space, increasing the potential rental income for St Peter's which will be basic in the first year, but is expected to increase towards a commercial rate beyond that.

Maintenance & Development

During Lockdown 1 we went through a rigorous process to appoint a new architect, who will guide us through both the maintenance and development work, as well as becoming our quinquennial inspector and have appointed Malcolm Fryer (<http://www.mfryer-architects.com/>) as our new architect. This will enable us to tackle the £1.5million worth of work needed to repair, maintain and develop the church so that we have a level floor, decent/disabled loos and a kitchen, and execute a ten-year plan for works that will ensure the building is robust for its future mission.

The following works have been done on site:

- The boiler has been serviced and two of the burners needed to be replaced. The 'frost stat' was adjusted so that our heating bills should be lower but come the winter we will need to monitor how to tweak it to get maximum effect for minimum outlay.
- An electrician has worked on various areas of vulnerability that meant the circuits at the rear of the building kept tripping whenever there was rain.
- The safe light was restored to working order.
- The broken pews have been mended by a craftsman recommended by the diocese – just in time to allow for two different services to use two sets of pews.
- Damage done to the hall window, the fire doors and the side doors at the time of the break in, was repaired and the mess left by the intruders cleared.
- A smart meter for the gas supply was fitted to ensure we are not hit by inflated utility bills and we plan to pursue the same for the electricity.
- On two occasions a small external spotlight on the front steps was stolen and took time (but happily not much money) to replace.
- The leaks in the hall roof have been dealt with by a new contractor, as has the damp patch in Rm 2.
- The South Side Corridor has been re-organised, with tables roped off securely, equipment stored neatly and the walls improved with pictures and the wooden cross which formerly hung in Room 1 but was removed when it became the Spear Training Room.

- The organ cupboard has been cleared of most items to prevent further damage to the organ.
- Storage areas in the vestry and crypt have been de-cluttered, including fire-risks being attended to in the boiler room.
- The door key pads have been serviced.
- Routine testing and fire safety checks have been done in line with regulations.
- In line with fire regulations handrails have been installed for the steps into the crypt drawing down some remaining funding awarded by City Bridge Trust to improve our access.
- Some scrap lead and iron remaining in the crypt has been sold.
- The legal faculty for the pizza oven was applied for and awarded but the pandemic delayed its use and concreting it in fell down the priority list (to be reprioritised in Spring 2021).

Media

A new designer, John Lloyd, produced seasonal images of flowers which have boosted our social media, our service slides and local comms on the church railings. However Christmas designs from the previous year were re-used as they were so good and aptly depicted a dispersed church.

The website has proved pivotal in lockdown and we have noted a gradual change of culture so that the congregation to refer to it more as a central source of information. This is a healthy development which we hope will continue beyond Covid 19 and we are grateful for all the work that Tessa Bosworth has done to keep it up to date, attractive and user-friendly. People outside the church often comment on its high standard.

We no longer use Twitter, but Instagram and Facebook are now our main external reach. Mailchimp emails reach the Electoral Roll and beyond. The WhatsApp group 'St Peter's Alive' has continued to engender a sense of church family which was especially important during lockdowns but is used regularly only by about a third of its members. Smaller groups within the church also have WhatsApp groups and the Life Group leaders and staff will continue to pursue a wise – and no doubt evolving - use of social media to promote both social connection and broadcast information.

Staff

- Our Worship & Teaching Pastor, Olly resigned his post at the end of January 2020 following a 10 month period of sick leave. We were so grateful for all that Olly brought to St Peter's, including the development of a worship team that did sterling work during his absence and beyond. Wishing him well as he turns to academic study and continuing to pray for his healing we now look to God (and the power of advertising) to provide another Worship Leader on the staff team.
- Dave Cokayne completed his placement here as an Ordinand at the end of May and went to serve his title at St Stephen's, Twickenham. We were all sad not to be able to say goodbye to Dave and his family in person, but we were able to celebrate his ministry within a final zoom service and continue to pray for him as a deacon. Dave had worked hard to organize a very promising church weekend away scheduled for May, which sadly the pandemic prevented happening until a later date. As a leader, preacher and pastor he has left a big hole. Rach Cokayne's enormous contribution is noted above.

- Tessa Bosworth is in her third year as an Ordinand at St Mellitus. She serves on the PCC as the Safeguarding Officer and continues to take responsibility for welcome in its changing forms. She has also taken on the social media and maintains the website to a very high standard. Tessa's role is also pivotal to planning and delivering Sunday and midweek services, as a service leader, intercessor or preacher. With the cancellation of residential weekends during the pandemic, Tessa has willingly given her time and skills to St Peter's way beyond her Working Agreement and we are deeply grateful for her service and care amongst us.
- David Bishop continues as our indefatigable Operations Director and added to his role a further half day per week following a grant awarded by the DCMS for him to lead the #Love Your Neighbour Community Hub. In addition he manages all the church finances, oversees the maintenance and development of the buildings, administers the Henry Fawcett Fund and serves Bethnal Green Spear Trust as financial operator, while helping to manage site staff and underpinning it all with prayer.
- Colin is a self-employed gardener who takes care of the grounds for 12 hours per week. He has made a significant impact and the site tells a positive story to our neighbours. He was forced to take 2.5 months sick leave following a serious bike accident. He and his family greatly appreciated our financial support during that time and he has now returned to work.
- Part of the staff team (but employed separately, by the Bethnal Green Spear Trust) were our coaches, Tim (Centre Manager), Alex (Lead Coach) and Kezia (Grad Coach). All were furloughed at the start of the pandemic and only Tim came back. Having both done great work in Bethnal Green, Kezia eventually moved on to a new role at a Job Centre and Alex deservedly won promotion to become the Centre Manager for Spear at St Mark's, Kennington. Jessica then joined the team as Lead Coach and Hannah as Graduate Coach. From home offices in three different counties and two different islands they successfully delivered our first Spear programme online.
- Dumaeza, our Re:verb project leader/'Parish Chaplain' was accepted for ordination training in the summer, on the new 'Peter Stream' of ordinands. This is good news for the Church of England but means he must move on from his work at St Peter's, being based for training at St George in the East. The rector of St George's is kindly allowing him to continue running Re:verb until Easter 2021, at which point new leadership is needed.
- The Rev'd Heather Atkinson remains Vicar of St Peter's and deeply thankful for the privilege of leading this caring, faithful, outward-looking community.

Part 2

Section 7: Treasurer's report

Income to support Church mission

The ministries and activities of St Peter's Bethnal Green are largely funded by three groups of income.

Giving Income in 2020 (funding from the congregation members and friends of St Peter's in the form of standing orders, one-off gifts, regular collections and related gift aid) amounted to **£82,538**. This was a significant decrease from 2019 when giving income totalled £119,461. No 'giving drives' for particular projects were carried out in 2020.

Property Income (the letting and renting of church premises) also accounts for a significant proportion of the church's income, at **£24,218** (2019: £24,278). This was comprised of £1,132 for the hall, £16,902 for the church crypt and £6,184 from a flat.

- Hall

We had expected an increase in hall income in 2020 however contractual negotiations with potential new tenants were put on hold indefinitely at the onset of the Coronavirus pandemic. The Parochial Church Council (PCC) continues to feel that the hall would be best used by a socially conscious commercial venture that can provide market rental price in order to fund other aspects of St Peter's mission and secure a solid long-term financial footing.

- Crypt

Full crypt rent was received from Mander Organs (for storage) until September 2020. However, Manders unfortunately had to close, relinquishing their long-term hire of the crypt. The PCC has considered alternative rental opportunities for the crypt (to be covered in plans for 2021).

Thirdly, **Grant Income** from external bodies, such as the Henry Fawcett Fund (HFF) and the City Bridge Trust (CBT), and the Church Revitalisation Trust (CRT) provided a total of **£38,832**. (The total was £43,126 in 2019). HFF supported some staffing costs while CBT made a generous donation to St Peter's as part of their Covid response. In 2021 most of the grant received from the Church Revitalisation Trust was distributed to other organisations that provide essential services to vulnerable people.

Overall, St Peter's received **£148,883** in 2020, down from £194,320 in 2019.

Expenditure to support Church mission

All expenditure aims to support St Peter's mission to Worship God, Make Friends and Change the World.

Over the course of the year:

Staff costs were **£37,216** (2019: £50,037). Note that we had no worship pastor employed in 2020.

Ministry expenses were **£6,040** (2019: £17,970). The reduction was largely due the cutting back of activities during Covid.

Running cost expenditure totalled **£47,547** in 2020. (2019: £65,304 – high due to the pollarding of the trees surrounding the church building). Key expenditure included a five-yearly electrical inspection, as well as heating and roofing repairs. Also repairing the pews and making good hall door and window frames that were damaged because of a break-in during the year.

Gift Expenditure (including a contribution to the **Diocese Common Fund**) amounted to **£26,086** (significantly down from 2019: £66,053). The Common Fund contribution requested by the Diocese for 2020 was £85,200 (£7,100 per month) but only £15,300 was paid. The decision to continue to contribute at a lower rate than hoped to the Diocese Common Fund was taken after a great deal of thought and prayer by the PCC. It was accepted as necessary to allay fears of running out of cash at key points in the past year with the reduced hall income and other financial constraints. The budget for 2021 slightly increases our payment of Common Fund given the significant needs of the Diocese and our healthier reserves. Gift expenditure also includes grants totalling £8,778 payable out of the money received from the Church Revitalisation Trust.

Development Expenditure totalled **£686** in 2020; (2019: £36,398) This simply covered the hire of a container as temporary storage space. All development works were put on hold due to Covid. Further grants and congregational income will help to fund the most significant building project in the church in a generation, however patience and wisdom will need to be expressed in order to see this happen without straining the finances further.

An assessment by the Diocesan parish property adviser in January 2020 advised that the church building will require between **£750k and £1m spending on the fabric** in the next 10 years (before any re-development of the internal space).

Overall St Peter's spent **£123,695** in 2020, down from £241,883 in 2019, primarily due to the Covid pandemic delaying essential repair and development work and the cash reserves being riskily low (not compliant with the PCC policy on reserves), leading to the PCC's difficult decision to lower Common Fund contributions.

As a result the PCC has reported a surplus this year of **£25,188** (2019: a deficit of £47,562). The PCC's net assets have increased by this amount to £1,006,086; this includes £970,000 in respect of the Church Hall and cash of £47,152, of which £31,344 is unrestricted.

Policy on reserves

The PCC have determined that the charity should aim to hold unrestricted cash of no less than £25,000 (which equates to about 3 months' of unrestricted expenditure) so that the charity could continue to operate should income and / or expenditure vary adversely. At the year-end, the charity held unrestricted cash of £31,344 and the charity is complying with its reserves policy. We are pleased to have reached this target by the end of 2020, albeit with severe limitations on important expenditure because of the pandemic and loss of hall rental income. Reserves will be continually reviewed by the Finance Working Group and the 2021 budget aims to keep the level of reserves as close to the policy as possible, whilst trying to increase Common Fund contributions and necessarily increasing ministry costs with new staff.

Risk assessment and mitigation

The financial risks which the church faces are considered at least bi-monthly by the church's Finance Working Group, a sub-committee of the PCC, made up of the Incumbent, Church Warden and at least one other member, supported by the Operations Director and the former Treasurer.

Measures are proposed by the Finance Working Group and implemented by the PCC or staff team to ensure that appropriate financial systems, policies and procedures are in place to manage and mitigate financial risks. As an organisation with a low level of reserves, there is a financial risk which is managed by strong financial systems and controls. As a matter of general policy, independent professional advice is taken where appropriate.

Investment and cash flow policy

As mentioned above, the policy of St Peter's has been to minimise reserves and hence it rarely has excess funds to invest. The majority of available cash was transferred to the main bank account in order primarily to control levels of reserves more easily, also to ensure cash flow remains liquid with continuing larger payments expected due to the Development work.

Grants policy

The task of deciding how to distribute grants for mission giving is done by the Incumbent with reference to the PCC standing committee. Grants are awarded to organisations and church members working in mission based on an evaluation of each case. All giving follows St Peter's mission policy of Worship God, Make Friends and Change the World. There are currently no PCC related trusts. There is significant crossover of people and resource in the work of Spear Bethnal Green and the Henry Fawcett Fund, so transactions regarding these organisations will be highlighted in the accounts to ensure transparency. We received grants totalling £15,973 (£13,400 in 2019) from HFF for various social transformation work done by St Peters in its general mission in 2020, specifically helping to fund the operations director and parish chaplain roles.

Health and Safety and Employment Law Policy

The church employs full-time and part-time staff, and the premises are in regular use by several people including children and vulnerable adults. Employment Law and health and safety measures are adhered to, and assistance in these matters is sought from the Diocese of London and independent professional advisors.

Sustainability policy

St Peter's encourages the adoption of sustainable practice in all areas of church life and work, to contribute to the overall reduction in carbon emissions as a means to contributing to the reduction in carbon emissions in dealing with the growing evidence for manmade climate change. Measures taken include: - recycling, energy audits, encouraging the use of public transport, cycling and walking. Energy costs in 2020 were reduced by minimising use of heating, power and lighting during lockdown.

Plans for future periods

We hope that 2021 will see some measure of return to 'normal' ministry of St Peter's Bethnal Green as in-person worship resumes, repairs can be carried out, and we hope and pray, new opportunities for rental income emerge for the crypt and the church hall.

Financing the ministry of St Peter's church in and out, and stewarding our buildings within our 2021 vision of 'Hospitality, Hope and Healing', means providing a warm, welcoming building; people resourced to care for one another and assist God's restoration amongst and through us, and a community resourced to bring and proclaim hope. This looks like:

- 1) Raising income for the church through:
 - a. Congregational giving where possible (sustaining around £90k annual giving through regular and one-off donations). We prioritise this because giving is a blessing - it's good for us!
 - b. Grants: In addition to support from the Henry Fawcett Fund (governed by the Vicar and Churchwardens for the benefit of the parish) (c£20k) and from an anonymous benefactor (£10k), we have been awarded £23.6k from the Cultural Recovery Fund of the National Lottery Heritage Fund. As well as supporting running costs, this funding enables us to address urgent building repairs that were not included in our 2021 budget.
 - c. Hall rental income – we are unlikely to see a significant step up in 2021 (because the market has dipped significantly). We should secure £6,000 from renting the side rooms out, but we pray that we can secure a long-term rental agreement which includes some investment in essential capital investment as well as recurrent income (ideally to the tune of £80k per year from 2022 onwards). The diocese is now helping us sort out the unresolved legal issues remaining from when the adjacent land was sold in the '80s and helping us find a new agent.
 - d. Crypt rental – this will unfortunately be much lower than the fortuitous agreement we had with Mander Organs as direct neighbours. But we hope to raise at least £5,000 over the year and much more in terms of relationships and ministry possibilities through supporting an immersive theatre company who hope to begin performances as soon as Covid allows. If this goes well the income should double in 2022.

2) Spending more on:

- a. Staff: we are unlikely to have a funded ordinand to replace Tessa which means extra capacity for worship, pastoral support, growth and work with children and youth is critical for growing the church's ministry. We aim to spend around £20k on new staff as well as continuing to fund our operations director, David Bishop.
- b. Essential repairs outlined in the Diocesan quinquennial (5 yearly) inspection report, hopefully within £13k, plus additional repairs towards the £1m required if we get funds (including from the Recovery Fund).
- c. Supporting the Diocesan Common Fund which, critically, pays Heather's stipend (salary equivalent) and helps St Peter's with advice on our estate. We aim to spend £24k on this.
- d. We'd like to be able to cover core non-staff related ministry costs too – up to £10k.

3) Spending less on:

- a. Heating
- b. Printing,
- c. Takeaway pizza (for training, for re:verb)
- d. Storage (container hire).

A new budget has been approved for 2021, which requires the expenditure on activities and ministries of St Peter's to be wholly covered by the cash received. It is to be flexed every half-year.

The Finance Working Group notes specifically that a yearly increase in *Giving Income* would not only be gratefully welcomed but would allow for further mission projects and important immediate development work.

The PCC responsibilities in relation to the financial statements

The PCC is responsible for preparing the Annual Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

Charity law requires the PCC to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of the affairs of the charity as at the balance sheet date and of its incoming resources and application of resources for the financial year. In preparing these financial statements, the PCC are required to:

1. select suitable accounting policies and apply them consistently;
2. observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP;
3. make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
4. state whether the applicable accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements; and
5. prepare the financial statements on a going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in operation.

The PCC is responsible for keeping proper accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Charities Act 2011 and the Charity (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Approval

This report was approved by the PCC and signed on their behalf by:

The Rev'd Heather Atkinson, Vicar

Date: 21 October 2021

David Bishop, on behalf of the
Finance Team

Date: 21 October 2021

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT
TO THE MEMBERS OF THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF
PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF ST PETER WITH ST THOMAS BETHNAL GREEN
('the Charity')

I report to the members of the PCC (who are also the charity's trustees) on my examination of the accounts of the Charity for the year ended 31 December 2020 on pages 23 to 31 following, which have been prepared on the basis of the accounting policies set out on pages 25 and 26.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As members of the PCC you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ('the Act').

I report in respect of my examination of the Charity's accounts carried out under section 145 of the Act and in carrying out my examination I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

Independent examiner's statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe:

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the Charity as required by section 130 of the Act; or
2. the accounts do not accord with those records; or
3. the accounts do not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair' view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Ajay Rajani FCIE
Stewardship
1 Lamb's Passage
London
EC1Y 8AB

25 October 2021

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF ST PETER WITH ST THOMAS BETHNAL GREEN

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

	Note	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2020 £	Total Funds 2019 £
INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS FROM:					
Donations and legacies	3	94,313	27,057	121,370	162,587
Charitable activities	4	929	-	929	2,411
Other trading activities	5	24,218	-	24,218	24,278
Other income		2,366	-	2,366	5,044
Total income and endowments		121,826	27,057	148,883	194,320
EXPENDITURE ON:					
Charitable activities	6	93,512	24,063	117,575	235,763
Raising funds	7	6,120	-	6,120	6,120
Total expenditure		99,632	24,063	123,695	241,883
Net income/(expenditure)		22,194	2,994	25,188	(47,563)
Transfers between funds	15	690	(690)	-	-
Net movement in funds		22,884	2,304	25,188	(47,563)
Reconciliation of funds:					
Total funds brought forward		4,952	975,946	980,898	1,028,460
Total funds carried forward	15	27,836	978,250	1,006,086	980,897

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year.

All income and expenditure derive from continuing operations.

The notes on page 25 to 31 form part of these accounts.

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF ST PETER WITH ST THOMAS BETHNAL GREEN

BALANCE SHEET

AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2020

	Note	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2020 £	Total Funds 2019 £
FIXED ASSETS					
Tangible assets	10	1,214	970,000	971,214	971,144
		<u>1,214</u>	<u>970,000</u>	<u>971,214</u>	<u>971,144</u>
CURRENT ASSETS					
Debtors	11	2,067	3,815	5,882	6,390
Cash at bank and in hand	12	31,344	15,808	47,152	13,493
		<u>33,411</u>	<u>19,623</u>	<u>53,034</u>	<u>19,883</u>
CREDITORS: Amounts falling due within one year	13	(6,789)	(11,373)	(18,162)	(10,130)
		<u>(6,789)</u>	<u>(11,373)</u>	<u>(18,162)</u>	<u>(10,130)</u>
Net current assets / (liabilities)		<u>26,622</u>	<u>8,250</u>	<u>34,872</u>	<u>9,753</u>
TOTAL NET ASSETS		<u>27,836</u>	<u>978,250</u>	<u>1,006,086</u>	<u>980,898</u>
FUND BALANCES	15				
Unrestricted Funds		27,836	-	27,836	4,952
Restricted Funds		<u>-</u>	<u>978,250</u>	<u>978,250</u>	<u>975,946</u>
		<u>27,836</u>	<u>978,250</u>	<u>1,006,086</u>	<u>980,898</u>

The financial statements were approved by the members of the PCC and were signed on its behalf by:

Rev Heather Atkinson

Date: 21 October 2021

Charity number: 1154668

The notes on page 25 to 31 form part of these accounts.

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF ST PETER WITH ST THOMAS BETHNAL GREEN

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2020

1 Statutory Information

The Parochial Church Council of St Peter with St Thomas, Bethnal Green is a charity registered with the Charity Commission in England & Wales. The charity's registered number and principal address can be found on the Charity Information page.

2 Accounting Policies

These financial statements are prepared on a going concern basis, under the historical cost convention. The financial statements include all activities for which the PCC is legally responsible; the activities of informal gatherings of church members and groups that owe their main affiliation to another body and are excluded.

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with The Church Accounting Regulations 2006, the 'Statement of Recommended Practice: Accounting and Reporting by Charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102)' ('the Charities SORP'), with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland ("FRS 102") and with the Charities Act 2011. The charity meets the definition of a public benefit entity as set out in FRS 102.

The Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 (the '2008 Regulations') requires charities to prepare their accounts in accordance with 'Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice effective from 1 April 2005' but this accounting standard has since been withdrawn and has been replaced by the Charities SORP mentioned in the preceding paragraph. The charity has prepared these financial statements in accordance with the new Charities SORP; this departure from the 2008 Regulations is believed to be necessary for these financial statements to give a 'true and fair view'.

The principles adopted in the preparation of the financial statements are set out below.

a) Going concern

The PCC have assessed whether the use of the going concern basis is appropriate and have considered possible events or conditions that might cast significant doubt on the ability of the charity to continue as a going concern. The PCC have made this assessment for a period of at least one year from the date of approval of the financial statements. In particular the PCC have considered the charity's forecasts and projections and the possible implications should projected income and / or expenditure vary unexpectedly. The PCC have concluded that there is a reasonable expectation that the charity has adequate resources to continue to operate for the foreseeable future. The charity therefore continues to adopt the going concern basis in preparing its financial statements. In making this assessment the trustees have considered how COVID-19 might affect projections.

b) Income

Income (which includes planned giving, collections and other donations) is recognised in the period in which the charity becomes entitled to receipt, the amount receivable can be measured with reasonable certainty, and receipt is probable. For the most part income is generally recognised when it is received by, or on behalf of, the PCC. Income is only deferred when the charity has to fulfil conditions before becoming entitled to it or where the donor has specified that the income is to be expended in a future period.

Income from donations and legacies includes:

- i) Recoverable gift aid. This is recognised when the related donation is received. Gift aid that has not been recovered by the balance sheet date is included as a debtor.
- ii) Donated goods. Goods donated for distribution to beneficiaries are recognised as income when receivable at fair value (being an estimate of the amount it would cost to purchase those items). A corresponding expense is recognised when those goods are distributed.

The charity relies on volunteers to carry out many of its activities. However, in accordance with the SORP, the value of these services has not been included in these financial statements as they cannot be reliably measured.

Income from charitable activities represents income receivable from goods, services and facilities supplied in furtherance of the charity's charitable objects. It includes income from weddings and funerals and from church events and courses.

Income from other trading activities represents income receivable from activities undertaken to generate funds for the charity and comprises income receivable from letting property.

c) Expenditure

Expenditure, including irrecoverable VAT, is recognised when it is incurred or, if earlier, when a legal or constructive obligation for a payment arises provided that it is probable that settlement will be required and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably.

Contributions in respect of the diocesan parish quota are included in the Statement of Financial Activities for all amounts agreed to being payable for the financial year. Any contributions that have not been paid over by the year end are included as a creditor.

The charity makes grants to other institutions and individuals to further its charitable objectives. Grants payable are recognised as constructive obligations arise, which is generally when the charity expresses a commitment to the recipient that can be measured reliably and then only to the extent that any conditions associated with the grant are outside of the control of the charity.

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF ST PETER WITH ST THOMAS BETHNAL GREEN

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2020

c) Expenditure continued

Governance costs, which are included in expenditure on charitable activities but are identified separately in the notes to the accounts, includes costs associated with the independent examination of the financial statements, compliance with constitutional and statutory requirements and any other expenditure incurred on the strategic management of the charity.

d) Fund accounting

Unrestricted funds are funds which are available for use at the discretion of the PCC in furtherance of the general objectives of the charity. Restricted funds are donations which are to be used in accordance with specific restrictions imposed by donors; they include donations received from appeals for specific activities or projects.

e) Tangible fixed assets

Consecrated and beneficed property is not included in these financial statements by virtue of s.10(2) of the Charities Act 2011. All expenditure on consecrated or beneficed buildings is written off in the year in which it is incurred.

Movable church furnishings held by the incumbent and Churchwardens on special trust for the PCC and which require a faculty for disposal are capitalised in accordance with the policy set out below. These items are regarded as inalienable property and are listed in the church's inventory which can be inspected at any reasonable time. Inalienable property acquired prior to 2010 has not been capitalised as there is insufficient cost information available.

Items purchased or donated for the charity's own use are capitalised when the cost of purchased items, or the fair value of donated items, is more than £500 and the item is expected to benefit the charity over more than one accounting period. Depreciation is charged on a straight line basis so as to write down the value of each asset to its estimated residual value (if any) over its expected useful economic life. To achieve this objective the following rates of depreciation are charged:

Freehold land	Is not depreciated (because it is not consumed by use)
Freehold buildings	Over 50 years after taking account of the building's residual value
Equipment	Over 3 to 7 years

The trustees used an insurance valuation to help estimate the market value of the charity's freehold property on 1 January 2014 (being the date of transition to FRS102) and, as permitted by FRS102, its estimated market value on that date has been treated as being the property's deemed cost. The members of the PCC consider the residual value of the freehold building to be very high and believe that any provision for depreciation would not be material; consequently no depreciation has been charged in these accounts.

The carrying values of tangible fixed assets are reviewed for impairment in periods when events or changes in circumstances indicate that the carrying value may not be recoverable.

f) Leased assets

Leases which do not transfer substantially all the risks and rewards of ownership to the charity are classified as operating leases. Operating lease payments are recognised as an expense on a straight-line basis over the lease term (unless another systematic basis is more representative of use).

g) Pension scheme arrangements

The charity operates defined contribution pension schemes for its employees. Obligations for contributions to these schemes are recognised as an expense when the liability arises. The assets of these schemes are held separately from those of the charity in independently administered funds.

h) Taxation

The charity has taken advantage of the various reliefs from taxation available to charities and no tax is payable on the charity's income.

i) Financial instruments

The charity's financial assets and financial liabilities all qualify as basic financial instruments, as defined by FRS102. Except for loans, basic financial instruments (which includes cash, debtors and creditors) are measured initially at transaction value and subsequently measured at their expected settlement value (normally the amount of cash that the charity expects to pay or receive). The charity recognises liabilities for loans at amortised cost using the effective interest method (i.e. it excludes any interest that may be charged on the loans in future years).

j) Exemption from preparing a cashflow statement

The charity has taken advantage of an exemption conferred by the Charities SORP and has not prepared a cash flow statement.

k) Critical accounting estimates and areas of judgement

The members of the PCC do not consider that there are any material sources of estimation or uncertainty at the balance sheet date that could result in a material adjustment to the carrying values of assets and liabilities in the next reporting period.

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF ST PETER WITH ST THOMAS BETHNAL GREEN

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2020

3 Donations and legacies

	2020	2019
	£	£
Regular giving	63,477	76,206
Ad hoc giving	5,351	14,840
Church collections	893	8,036
Income tax recoverable	12,817	19,903
Grants	38,832	43,126
Donated goods	-	476
	<u>121,370</u>	<u>162,587</u>

The donated goods received in the previous year comprised food and other items collected for the Tower Hamlets and Hackney foodbanks.

4 Income from charitable activities

	2020	2019
	£	£
Fees for weddings, funerals etc	929	2,411
	<u>929</u>	<u>2,411</u>

5 Income from other trading activities

	2020	2019
	£	£
Church hall lettings	1,132	360
Crypt lettings	16,902	21,878
Rents received	6,184	2,040
	<u>24,218</u>	<u>24,278</u>

6 Charitable expenditure

	2020	2019
	£	£
a Costs incurred directly on specific activities		
Ministry expenses		
Diocesan parish quota - common fund	15,300	62,100
Diocesan service fees	-	603
Staff costs	37,216	50,037
Ministry expenses	6,040	16,891
Donated goods distributed	-	476
Church running costs		
Property expenses	28,602	52,483
Insurance	7,954	7,967
Office expenses	7,971	2,606
Depreciation	620	598
Governance costs		
Independent examiner's fee	2,400	1,650
Major project expenditure		
Site development	686	36,398
	<u>106,789</u>	<u>231,810</u>
Grants payable (note 6b)	10,786	3,953
	<u>117,575</u>	<u>235,763</u>

The fee payable to the independent examiner for preparing and examining the accounts was £2,400 (2019: £1,650 was charged for examining the accounts).

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF ST PETER WITH ST THOMAS BETHNAL GREEN

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2020

6b Grants payable

	Institutions £	Individuals £	2020 £
Grants for the relief of poverty	9,070	1,716	10,786
	<u>9,070</u>	<u>1,716</u>	<u>10,786</u>

The charity's principal grants to institutions comprised:

	2020 £
St Johns Hoxton	8,515
Grants to institutions for less than £1,000 each	555
	<u>9,070</u>

7 Cost of raising funds

	2020 £	2019 £
Rents payable	6,120	6,120
	<u>6,120</u>	<u>6,120</u>

8 Analysis of staff costs, the cost of key management personnel and trustee remuneration

	2020 £	2019 £
Gross wages and salaries	35,642	48,531
Social security	305	81
Pension costs	1,269	1,425
	<u>37,216</u>	<u>50,037</u>

The average monthly number of employees during the year was 1.7 (2019: 2.7). This equated to 1.3 (2019: 2.2) full time equivalent staff. Most of the charity's activities are carried out by volunteers. No staff received salaries at a rate of more than £60,000 per annum.

Rev Heather Atkinson (who is a clergy member of the PCC) receives a stipend from the Diocese and so she is not an employee; some of the Parish Quota paid to the Diocese is used to help meet the cost of this stipend. Rev Heather Atkinson is provided with accommodation (which is customary for clergy); the PCC paid expenses totalling £324 (2019: £1,102) in respect of this accommodation.

No member of the PCC received employment benefits in either the current or preceding year.

9 Acting as agent

The PCC collects rent for the London Diocesan Fund, which it then pays over. As the charity is acting as agent, the rent and the onward payments are excluded from the Statement of Financial Activities. During the year this rent and the onward payments amounted to £16,836 (2019: £16,494) and £16,950 (2019: £16,456) respectively. No amounts were owed to the London Diocesan Fund at the year-end (2019: £114).

10 Tangible fixed assets

	Freehold Property £	Worship and Office Equipment £	Total 2020 £
Cost			
At 1 January 2020	970,000	3,692	973,692
Additions	-	690	690
At 31 December 2020	<u>970,000</u>	<u>4,382</u>	<u>974,382</u>
Accumulated depreciation			
At 1 January 2020	-	2,548	2,548
Charge for the year	-	620	620
At 31 December 2020	<u>-</u>	<u>3,168</u>	<u>3,168</u>
Net book value			
At 31 December 2020	<u>970,000</u>	<u>1,214</u>	<u>971,214</u>
At 31 December 2019	<u>970,000</u>	<u>1,144</u>	<u>971,144</u>

Freehold property comprises the church hall at Warner Place.

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF ST PETER WITH ST THOMAS BETHNAL GREEN

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2020

11 Debtors

	2020	2019
	£	£
Income tax recoverable	2,067	3,180
Prepayments and accrued income	3,815	3,210
	<u>5,882</u>	<u>6,390</u>

12 Cash at Bank and in Hand

	2020	2019
	£	£
Cash at bank with immediate access	47,122	13,463
Petty cash	30	30
	<u>47,152</u>	<u>13,493</u>

13 Creditors: liabilities falling due within one year

	2020	2019
	£	£
Other creditors	1,545	5,701
Accrued expenses	3,544	4,429
Parish quota	1,700	-
Grant obligations	8,778	-
Deferred income	2,595	-
	<u>18,162</u>	<u>10,130</u>

Deferred income relates to income received for a church retreat that was due to take place in 2020. Due to COVID-19, this has had to be postponed and is now due to take place in October 2021 when the related income will be recognised.

14 Pension commitments

During the year employer's pension contributions totalling £1,269 (2019: £1,425) were payable to defined contribution personal pension schemes. No pension contributions were owing at the balance sheet date (2019: £nil).

15 Restricted funds

During the year the movements in the charity's funds were as follows:

	Opening balance 2020 £	Incoming resources 2020 £	Outgoing resources 2020 £	Transfers in the year 2020 £	Closing balance 2020 £
Church Hall fund	970,000	-	-	-	970,000
Organ fund	1,629	-	-	-	1,629
Access fund	3,734	-	(430)	-	3,304
Staff fund	-	5,000	(5,000)	-	-
Spear fund	-	7,616	(7,616)	-	-
Love Your Neighbour fund	-	9,240	(8,778)	-	462
Retreat fund	-	1,944	-	-	1,944
Hardship fund	-	1,413	(1,413)	-	-
Other small funds	583	1,844	(826)	(690)	911
	<u>975,946</u>	<u>27,057</u>	<u>(24,063)</u>	<u>(690)</u>	<u>978,250</u>

During the year the charity purchased fixed assets that satisfied the restriction placed on some of the restricted income received by the PCC and £690 was transferred from restricted funds to unrestricted funds.

Analysis of net assets by fund

The assets and liabilities of the various funds were as follows:

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	2020 £
Tangible fixed assets	1,214	970,000	971,214
Debtors	2,067	3,815	5,882
Cash at bank and in hand	31,344	15,808	47,152
Creditors falling due within one year	(6,789)	(11,373)	(18,162)
	<u>27,836</u>	<u>978,250</u>	<u>1,006,086</u>

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF ST PETER WITH ST THOMAS BETHNAL GREEN

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2020

15 Restricted funds continued

In the previous year the movements in the charity's funds were as follows:

	Opening balance 2019 £	Incoming resources 2019 £	Outgoing resources 2019 £	Transfers in the year 2019 £	Closing balance 2019 £
Church Hall fund	970,000	-	-	-	970,000
Organ fund	1,629	-	-	-	1,629
Access fund	10,633	29,726	(30,690)	(5,935)	3,734
Staff fund	-	5,000	(5,000)	-	-
Spear fund	(438)	8,400	(7,327)	(635)	-
Other small funds	(160)	1,076	(762)	429	583
	<u>981,664</u>	<u>44,202</u>	<u>(43,779)</u>	<u>(6,141)</u>	<u>975,946</u>

Analysis of net assets by fund

In the previous year, the assets and liabilities of the various funds were as follows:

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	2019 £
Tangible fixed assets	1,144	970,000	971,144
Debtors	6,390	-	6,390
Cash at bank and in hand	7,547	5,946	13,493
Creditors falling due within one year	(10,130)	-	(10,130)
	<u>4,952</u>	<u>975,946</u>	<u>980,898</u>

The **Church Hall** fund is in respect of the church hall at Warner Place. The custodian trustee is the London Diocesan Fund and the PCC cannot sell the property without the consent of the London Diocesan Fund.

The **Organ** fund was created from grants and donations received for the church organ.

The **Access** fund was created, principally, from grants and donations received to improve disabled access to the church site.

The **Staff** fund was created from grants and donations received to help meet the cost of employing staff.

The **Spear** fund was created from grants and donations received to help fund the work of Bethnal Green Spear Trust.

The **Love Your Neighbour** fund was created from a grant received from the Church Revitalisation Trust to help provide essential services to vulnerable people. Since the year end the charity has received further grants totalling £55,760 making the total amount received £65,000. 95% of the amount received has been distributed as grants to organisations that provide these essential services. These organisations are St Matthews (which runs the Bethnal Green Food Bank), St John's Hoxton (which runs a Debt Advice Centre) and Spear Bethnal Green (which offers employment coaching for young people).

The **Retreat** fund was created from grants and donations received to help meet the cost of a church retreat.

The **Hardship** fund was created from grants received to help individuals experiencing financial hardship.

The **Other** fund was created by a number of small grants and donations given for a variety of different projects.

16 Transactions with related parties

During the year the PCC received grants totalling £15,973 (2019: £13,400) from the Henry Fawcett Fund, a registered charity established for the relief of poverty in the parish. The vicar and the PCC's two church wardens serve as trustees of the Henry Fawcett Fund and the Henry Fawcett Fund is regarded as being a related party.

During the year the charity received donations totalling £14,655 (2019: £21,887) from related parties (which includes members of the PCC, any other members of key management and anyone closely connected to them).

Except for the reimbursement of expenses incurred when acting as agent for the charity, or incurred when undertaking duties associated with serving as clergy, no expenses were paid to (or for) members of the PCC.

17 Common fund contribution

In some previous years the PCC has been unable to pay in full the common fund contribution it had offered to the Diocese. The shortfall, which for accounting purposes is not a liability, amounts to £65,000. If the PCC's finances improve, then there may come a time when the PCC would consider making additional payments to the Diocese to make good some, or all, of the shortfall.

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF ST PETER WITH ST THOMAS BETHNAL GREEN
DETAILED STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES WITH COMPARATIVES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2020

	Note	Unrestricted Funds 2020 £	Restricted Funds 2020 £	Total 2020 £	Unrestricted Funds 2019 £	Restricted Funds 2019 £	Total 2019 £
INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS FROM:							
Donations and legacies	3	94,313	27,057	121,370	118,385	44,202	162,587
Charitable activities	4	929	-	929	2,411	-	2,411
Other trading activities	5	24,218	-	24,218	24,278	-	24,278
Other income		2,366	-	2,366	5,044	-	5,044
Total income and endowments		121,826	27,057	148,883	150,119	44,202	194,321
EXPENDITURE ON:							
Charitable activities:	6	93,512	24,063	117,575	191,984	43,779	235,763
Raising funds	7	6,120	-	6,120	6,120	-	6,120
Total Expenditure		99,632	24,063	123,695	198,104	43,779	241,883
Net income/(expenditure)		22,194	2,994	25,188	(47,985)	423	(47,563)
Transfers between funds	15	690	(690)	-	6,141	(6,141)	-
Net movement in funds		22,884	2,304	25,188	(41,844)	(5,718)	(47,563)
Reconciliation of funds:							
Total funds brought forward		4,952	975,946	980,898	46,796	981,664	1,028,460
Total funds carried forward	15	27,836	978,250	1,006,086	4,952	975,946	980,898