

Pastoral Report AGM March 2021

Brothers and Sisters in Christ

It has been a privilege to serve the church over the last 12 months.

This time last year we were moving towards the first lockdown. We were asking people to make good decisions about church attendance for their well being, we were closing down projects that had been running for 10 plus years and we were beginning to feel the stress and anxiety of COVID 19 creeping into our everyday lives. It was a very stressful time with lots of uncertainty and conflicting advice.

Who knew that a year later we would still be meeting remotely and for most of the year the vast majority of the worshipping community has been absent from the church?

New Rhythms and New Habits

Last year I wrote this in my AGM report

“We are the church, not the building or the sign over the front door, but we the people.

Over the last 12 months I have seen a church caring for each other, worshipping together, growing together, learning together. I have seen a church reaching out to people in need and welcoming people into our community. I have seen a church saturated in life - the good and the bad - yet being faithful to God and their faith. I have seen a church full of doubts (a good thing) and full of questions (a good thing). I have seen a church create new projects and maintain old ones.” (AGM Report Feb 2020)

What a difference a year makes?

2020 into 2021 saw a cataclysmic change in the life of the church in Bristol. Once a worshipping busy project filled church now devoid of people and presence due to external restriction we have never experienced before.

During this year we have had to lay down projects that had been a positive influence over the last 10 years in the lives of church members and local community. We have tried hard to work within the regulations but COVID 19 has made a deep impact on how we can reach out to each other and the world around us.

On a personal level I have felt this loss. I cannot explain how devastating it is to have to stop our older people, children and YP provision. These projects were very much part of my ministerial identity and mission passion. The emptiness was felt and still carried today.

I am sure the key volunteers have felt this loss as well.

There is a saying that it takes 10,000 hours to be a master of anything. I say this because there is 8760 hours in any calendar year and we are still facing restrictions into 2021.

We are getting good at not doing church! In fact we are becoming masters at it.

NB: When I say the word church I don't just mean Sunday morning worship I mean the weekly life of our faith community tribe in Bristol.

I raise this point to outline the fact that we have all been (and continue to be) moulded and shaped by COVID 19. We have changed. Our lives have changed. The church will have changed as we leave lockdown and resume our post-covid lives.

I am unsure what church will look like into the future. I am unsure what lasting impact COVID 19 will have on us.

I feel it is vitally important to raise this issue. We need to be realistic optimists about the future. Things have changed and we may not be able to do the things we once did. We might look different and have different faith objectives and aspirations.

I feel as a faith charity it is important to note this here to re align expectations and aspirations into 2021 and beyond.

I don't want to be downbeat. I want us to be realistic so that in this realism we can make sure we are building a new strong tomorrow in a SMART way.

The question is how do we care for ourselves? Hope do we love each other? How do we become a healthy holy faith community for ourselves and the world around us?

These are questions for us all. I am not the church. The church is not my project. It is our church. It is our project. It is our faith tribe.

The prayerful question we need to be asking is 'what can we do together to birth another wonderful era of worship and mission within Bristol Knowle Park Church?'

Over the next 12 months we will need to reconnect with each other, care for each other and become co-conspirators in Christ's mission to the world.

The word that has been bubbling up in me is BELONGING. In Galatians 6 it states

'Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up. Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers.'

It is good to reach out. It is great to 'mission'. It is great to do projects for all but I feel 2021 needs have an emphasis on us, especially those 'who belong to the family of believers'.

We need to create new spaces where we can once again feel the support and care of a Christ like minded community.

I will soon begin a conversation about what this will look like with the trustees. We will be looking at how we deliver our core faith provision to you to enable us to find a new expression of belonging in the our community.

This is a great opportunity to move forward into a new expression of worship, mission and community life. We need to hold onto what is good and holy but we also need to make sure we are responding to the post covid modern world around us.

Practical Highlights

Care and Well Being

It has been great to observe so much care and love for one another through Whats App's groups, anecdotal stories and door step pastoral visits throughout 2020. A big thank you to everyone who has been reaching out to each other during this year. We have a really positive core community of love in the church.

It has been amazing to see the outpouring of love towards Delzie (husband hospitalised with COVID) Nik (family bereavements and hospitalised with COVID) and Phillis (hospitalised with COVID). We hope and pray you will continue to heal and find a new freedom in Christ.

Church Renovations

We have used this time to do some essential work in the church. We have updated the decoration in Sanctuary area, we have added new radiators in the sanctuary and church hall space. We are beginning to update the front of the church with new signage and overall look of entrance (work to begin March 2021). We have added a green screen under the balcony and created a new storage space.

Big thank you to Spencer and Garrett for your help and work on this renovation.

These works have been done so that our building represents the people worshipping and missioning from it. It feels like a modern welcoming looked after space and we hope you will all like it when you return.

Also over 2020 I have taken over the Hall Hire from Helen Hayes (a massive thank you for all the years of hard work and organisation on this Helen it is deeply appreciated).

We have updated these spaces so we, as a faith charity, can utilise our building resource to create revenue beyond 2021 ensure the the work of the church continues healthily into the future.

During lockdown 1 we renovated the garden space at the Manse. We looking forward to hosting a few afternoon teas and BBQ's when we are able. Watch this space!

Online Provision

A year of COVID 19 has allowed to get off the hamster wheel of church life for a little while and learn new things to empower our ministry into the future.

The steep learning curve of online provision will set us in good stead for the future. We will always stream our services live from now on allowing people to engage with us remotely and in church.

Modern life will again come crashing down on us after lockdown ends in June and we need to be position ourselves appropriately as this unfolds.

Our online presence will ensure we continue to meet the spiritual needs of people near and far from the into the future in new and exciting ways.

We will look to invest in new technology to set this up and future proof the church into 2021 and beyond.

New Members

We would like to welcome Ebie, Ken and Val Baker as new members of the church.

Old/New Trustees and Key Volunteers

We would to thank Sandra and Elga for all the work they have done as trustees over the years as they stepped down in 2020.

Thank you to Sonya, Helen, Karon (co-opt) and Heather for ongoing work as Trustees during COVID 19.

I don't have enough space here to thank Sandra for her committed and passionate dedication to the church over the years.

You are a NAZARENE SUPERSTAR! Thank you and God Bless.

We would like to welcome Colin and Karon onto the church trustees committee.

We would like to thank Don, Ray and Sandra for all the hard work around the finances in 2020. It is deeply appreciated.

In Conclusion

I want to say a big thank you to those people who have been present and actively involved in the life of the church over the last 12 months. I particularly want to thank Ebie, Karon and Spencer. In different ways over these months you have all helped and encouraged the work of the church. You have helped encourage me and my family. It is appreciated.

I want to say thank you to Ralph and Richard for attending the church when it was possible. It really does help the online content when people are attending.

I want to say a deep thank you to Heather. She has been amazing throughout and supported me through some very difficult times during the year. She has had so much to cope with during the last 12 months and yet throughout she has been my rock in troubled times.

Finally, I want to express my deepest love and appreciation for my son, Gabriel. Gabriel is an exceptional young person who has stood with me through these Covid times. He has been my online co-worker and without him we would not have been able to provide the church with the quality of online provision we have tried to provide. He has been a wonderful help and continues to support the ministry of the church.

I hope and pray that we can navigate together, with the presence of God at our centre, 2021 and beyond. I hope and pray we will grow into a Christ centred Christ like community

Church of the Nazarene, Bristol Accounts for 2019 – 2020

Church Income

Slimming World	£ 3200.00
Offerings	£14452.00
Property Rental	£ 8147.00
Bookings	£ 1458.00
Gift Aid	£ 0.00
Loan Repayment	£ 1465.00
Asian Church	£ 1020.00
Covid Grant	£ 528.00
Refurbishment Goal	£ 300.00
Transfer in Anniversary	£ 1157.00
Transfer in Building	£ 2599.00

Total

£34326.00

Church Outgoings

British Telecom (Manse)	£ 750.00
British Telecom (Church)	£ 774.00
Salaries (MN)	£10207.00
Gas Service	£ 526.00
Nazarene Head Office	£ 2652.00
EDF (church)	£ 1222.00
Gas (church)	£ 1212.00
Cleaning	£ 1820.00
Wessex Water	£ 496.00
Council Tax (Manse)	£ 1811.00
Insurances/Licences	£ 297.00
Kids Club/Youth/Toddlers	£ 105.00
Maintenance Manse	£ 296.00
Expenses (MN)	£ 301.00
Utilities (Manse)	£ 1896.00
Tax / NI (MN)	£ 1012.00
Loans	£ 970.00
Vacuum	£ 149.00
Building Fund	£ 2400.00
IT repairs	£ 468.00
Business Waste	£ 204.00
New Boiler	£ 2599.00
Online Outreach	£ 1910.00
Crossways Expenses	£ 435.00
Training	£ 189.00
Covid Expenses	£ 144.00
Church Maintenance	£ 892.00
Donations (Food Bank)	£ 250.00
Wage Adjustment (MN)	£ 385.00
Wages (GN)	£ 100.00

Stationary

£ 9.00

Misc

£ 161.00

Total

£36642.00

Bank Balance

O/B	£17240.00
Credits	£34326.00
Outgoings	£36642.00

Closing Balance

£14924.00

Building Fund

Opening Balance	£22941.00
Credits	£ 2400.00
Debits (Trans current ac)	£ 2599.00

Closing Balance

£22742.00

Anniversary Account

Opening Balance	£2827.00
Credits	£ 0.00
Debits (Trans to current ac)	£1157.00

Closing Balance

£1670.00

for Knowle. I hope and pray we can heal together and grow together to create a solid foundation with Christ as our cornerstone to benefit each other and the world around us.

Faithfully Submitted

Matthew Norris
27th February 2021.

FINANCIAL STATEMENT OCT 2019-2020

Firstly I want to thank Don Nichol, Sandra and Ray for all their hard work on the accounts and financial procedures during a difficult year. It is much appreciated. Thank you.

As you can see from above accounts we broke even in this period. This includes the 2400£ that has left the main account and transferred into Building Account.

This is excellent news during a very difficult year.

We have had some new additional costs due to COVID. We have had some technology, copyright and worship presentation costs associated with online streaming.

We paid our BISD Budgets in full but due to uncertainties around the September/October period regarding our financial status we deferred on our Mission Budgets. We will look to do some belonging fundraisers as we leave COVID 19 lockdown to address this and hopefully one repay next year.

Gift Aid really helped boost our finances again this year and I encourage everyone who gives to contact us to arrange for your name to be included in gift aid. It really helps.

Generally costs have remained the same with a few savings due to COVID 19 around church utilities.

'New Boiler' costs - these costs include the present boiler being mended and new radiators added to sanctuary space.

We will look to increase Hall Hire income into 2021 and beyond. We lost a lot of revenue over this period due to lockdown.

In Conclusion

Again I want to say a big thank you to everyone who continued to pay tithes and offerings over last year. It really helped during a tough year. We want to encourage everyone to pay through BACS (if you can) it really helps us budget and make good decisions.