



The Parish of Boxmoor

St John's Boxmoor,
St Stephen's Chaulden & St Francis' Hammerfield

The Parish of Boxmoor Meeting of Parishioners & Annual Parochial Church Meeting

in St John's Church, Boxmoor

Sunday 24 April 2022 at 11.00 am
following the Parish Eucharist

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The Parish of Boxmoor

St John's Boxmoor,
St Stephen's Chaulden & St Francis' Hammerfield

ANNUAL CHURCH MEETINGS

Sunday 24 April 2022

After the 10.00am Parish Eucharist in St John's Church

A G E N D A

The Goals in our 2021-2024 Mission Action Plan are:

- To ensure that within two years the parish will have arrived back at the "new normal" with activities on a broad front in better shape than they were before the pandemic.
- To have by June 2022 an enhanced ability with new equipment to stream services online with people fully trained to operate it.
- To create by June 2022 a parish contingency plan of actions that need taking in the face of another pandemic.
- The creation by end-2022 of a church-based Youth Club, meeting regularly, with a dependable attendance of more than ten.
- The Director of Music invited to present to the PCC a strategy for the future of the choir. This strategy to be in place and underway by June 2022.
- To restart, regrow, and nurture our Junior Choir, including a recruitment drive in our local primary schools, to begin by September 2021.
- To arrange and conduct a Discipleship course for existing members of the church, an Enquirers course for new people, and a Bible study course, before June 2022.
- To set a measurable target to reduce our carbon footprint by end-2022, to be achieved by end-2024, and to take part in the Eco-Church Initiative.

1. Apologies for Absence

Meeting of Parishioners

2. Election of Churchwardens

(To be entitled to vote one must either be on the revised Electoral Roll or live in the parish and appear on the register of local government electors).

A nomination for election form will be displayed on the church notice boards and available on the parish website until immediately before this meeting. There are two Churchwarden positions.

Annual Parochial Church Meeting

3. Minutes of the Annual Parochial Church Meeting held on 25 April 2021 with Vicar's report for 2020.

To accept these minutes and the Vicar's report as a true record of the last APCM.

4. Electoral Roll.

To receive the updated electoral roll, which has been displayed in our three churches before this meeting.

5. Proceedings of the PCC.

To receive a report on the proceedings of the PCC for 2021/2022

6. Safeguarding.
To receive a report stating that the PCC has complied with its duty to have due regard to House of Bishops guidance on *Safeguarding children and vulnerable adults*
7. Financial Affairs of the Parish.
To receive a report on the financial affairs of the Parish.
8. Presentation of the Annual Accounts for 2021 and Budget for 2022.
To receive the accounts for 2021 and budget for 2022.
9. Independent Examiner.
To appoint an independent examiner for the PCC accounts for the coming year.
10. Fabric, Goods & Ornaments.
To receive a report on the Fabric, Goods & Ornaments for 2021 from the Churchwardens.
11. Election of Lay Representatives to the PCC
(*To be entitled to vote one's name must appear on the revised electoral roll*).
There are five vacant places. A nomination for election form will be displayed on the church notice boards and available on the parish website until immediately before this meeting.
12. Deanery Synod.
To receive a report on the proceedings of the Deanery Synod.
13. Vicar's Report.
To receive a report from the Vicar on the calendar year 2021.
14. Any Other Business.
Any other legitimate APCM business.
15. Date of next APCM.
The next APCM has been provisionally set to follow the 10.00am Parish Eucharist on Sunday 23 April 2023 in St John's Church.

Special meeting of the Parochial Church Council

(Only members of the incoming PCC are entitled to vote)

16. Election of Lay Vice Chair
17. Election of Deputy Church Wardens. Two places to fill.
18. Election of Honorary Treasurer
19. Election of Honorary Secretary
20. Appointment of Standing Committee
(*The Standing Committee consists of the Chairman, Churchwardens, Deputy Church wardens, Treasurer and Secretary all ex-officio, plus two others*). Two places to fill.
21. Appointment of Electoral Roll Officer
22. Co-options to PCC
(*The incoming PCC is entitled to make up to three co-options, should they wish*)
23. Appointment of Sides People. To appoint the sides people for the coming year as proposed on the list of nominations below.
24. Any other legitimate PCC business
25. Date of next PCC meeting.
Members of the incoming PCC may care to note that its first substantive meeting will be on Tuesday 10 May 2022 at 8.00pm in St John's Church.

Richard Lyne
PCC Secretary

Sides people seeking appointment at St John's:

Rosie Akeroyd	Chris Angell	Sally Bates	Garth Bridgwood
Marion Cowe	Alan Darvill	Marian Davies	Jo Fisher
Philippa Graham	Mark Harbour	Catherine Holness	Marion Howard
Andreas Ioannou	Lorraine Ioannou	Noel James	Sheila James
Marion King	Graham Liddle	Annie Mitchell	Alan Munford
Yvonne Munford	Ian Packe	Janet Packe	Rob Porter
Yolanda Porter	Alan Proehl	Sue Proehl	Cathy Shaw
Di Tovey	Muriel Williams		

Sides people seeking appointment at other locations or services:

Paul Davies	Christingles only
Alison Hart	SJB baptisms only
Julie Barton	SFH
Trevor Standen	SFH
Yvonne Laidlaw	SFH & combined
Job Rombout	SFH & combined
Ken Farmborough	SSC
Jean Garner	SSC
Anne Lyne	SSC
Connie Shaw	SSC
Richard Lyne	SSC & combined



The Parish of Boxmoor

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The Goals in our Mission Action Plan are:

- Maintaining and growing our engagement with children and young people through Messy Church, Schools' work, Junior Church, Junior Choir, Youth work, Tiny Tots, Children in Worship.
- Communicating our common life in Christ by growing our 'e' presence and communications network.
- Holding bi-annual teaching/seminar series to encourage new and existing disciples in their journey of faith and discovery whilst also preparing candidates for Holy Baptism and Confirmation.
- Resourcing the Parish for the future by exploring parking solutions at St John's and developing a carbon neutral footprint.

MEETING OF PARISHIONERS AND THE ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING HELD IN ST JOHN'S CHURCH BOXMOOR FOLLOWING THE 10.00 AM SERVICE ON SUNDAY 25 APRIL 2021

Chair: The Reverend Michael Macey, Vicar of Boxmoor

Present: Clergy 1, Parishioners 37

As the post of Honorary Secretary remained vacant Chris Angell agreed to take the Minutes.

TOPIC	DISCUSSION	ACTION/ FOLLOW-UP
1. Apologies for Absence	Apologies for absence had been received from Sally-Anne Bates, Trevor Boyce, Katherine Cox, Glen Clayton, Jo Fisher, Mark Harbour, Nicholas King and Annie Mitchell.	
<u>Meeting of Parishioners</u> 2. Election of Churchwardens	Two nominations had been received to fill the two Churchwarden posts. These were for Job Rombout, nominated by Patricia Moran and seconded by Trevor Standen, and for Marian Davies, nominated by Di Tovey and seconded by Lorraine Ioannou. Both were declared duly elected.	
<u>Annual Parochial Church Meeting</u> 3. Minutes of the Annual Parochial Church Meeting held on 11 October 2020 with Vicar's report	The minutes of the APCM held on the 11 October 2020 and the Vicar's report were considered and agreed to be a true record. The chairman was authorised to sign them as such.	
4. Electoral Roll	The report from the Electoral Roll Officer, Ian Packe, was read out by the Vicar. Overall, the total number on the Electoral Rolls for our Parish of 3 churches was 180 in 2021 compared with 184 in 2020. This was made up of 16 in both years for St Francis and 164 for St John's and St Stephen's together for 2021 compared with 168 in 2020. The net decrease of 4 comprised a reduction of 7, mainly members moving away, with 3 new joiners. Ian was thanked for his work. He confirmed he was willing to continue in post and was duly re-elected.	

TOPIC	DISCUSSION	ACTION/ FOLLOW-UP
5. Proceedings of the PCC	As the post of Honorary PCC Secretary was vacant, the Vicar had provided a brief report of the proceedings of the Parochial Church Council during the year 2020/2021 (page 11 of the document provided for the Meeting). The report was accepted by the Meeting.	
6. Safeguarding	The Chairman drew attention to the Safeguarding Report on page 12. There were no questions or queries. Carole Lewis led a vote of thanks to Maran Davies "our brilliant Safeguarding Officer" for all her hard work.	
7. Financial Affairs of the Parish	Chris Angell, The Honorary PCC Treasurer, commented on his written report set out on page 13, correcting a typing error in line 5 where "2019" should have read "2020".	
8. Presentation of the Annual Accounts for 2020 and Budget for 2021	<p>Chris drew everyone's attention to the 2020 accounts on pages 15 to 21 for St John's and St Stephen's and pages 23 to 27 for St Francis and the respective 2021 budgets on pages 14 and 22, apologizing for the missing figure of £282,962 under Investment Assets in 2020 and subsequent incorrect totals on page 16 of the booklet. Roger Taylor, the Independent Examiner, confirmed that the underlying accounts were, however, complete and correct.</p> <p>Richard Lyne asked whether the £50,200 Parish Share for St John's and St Stephen's unpaid in 2020 would be written off. Chris explained that Parish Share was a requested amount and not a legal debt but that the Diocese would show it as outstanding for 3 years after which we could seek to have it "written off" through the Deanery. Chris thought it most unlikely that any further payments towards the outstanding sum could be made but emphasized that it was the PCC's intention to meet the 2021 request in full, if at all possible.</p> <p>The Chairman expressed his thanks to Chris Angell and Jo Fisher for their hard work on the accounts throughout the year. Acceptance of the accounts was proposed by Marian King and seconded by Carole Lewis and agreed.</p>	
9. Independent Examiner	The Chairman said that the accounts had been examined by Roger Taylor and, for the first time for many years, agreed before the APCM. Roger confirmed he was willing to undertake the examination of the 2021 accounts and was thanked for his work and duly re-appointed Independent Examiner.	
10. Fabric, Goods & Ornaments	The meeting received the churchwardens' report on the fabric, goods and ornaments on pages 28 & 29. The Chairman thanked the churchwardens for their report and for their support and guidance and expressed his thanks to all who were keeping the church and grounds well maintained.	
11. Election of Lay Representatives to the PCC	The Chairman thanked all those whose term of office had ended. There were five vacant places all for the full three-year term and five nominations had been received prior to the meeting – Anne Lyne proposed by Richard Lyne and seconded by Jean Garner, Dee Fisher proposed by Marian Davies and seconded by Chris Angell, Trevor Standen proposed by Yvonne Laidlaw and seconded by Job	

TOPIC	DISCUSSION	ACTION/ FOLLOW-UP
	Rombout, Chris Angell proposed by Graham Gibbs and seconded by Jane Prew-Bridgwood and James Proehl proposed by Marian Davies and seconded by Chris Angell. All five were duly elected.	
12. Election of Sides Persons	The Chairman drew people's attention to the list of nominations on page 29. The meeting agreed the list, apart from Beryl Taylor who wished to withdraw, and all those remaining were duly elected to resume their duties once lockdown restrictions were lifted. The Vicar thanked Marian and Paul Davies and others who had kept services going under Covid-19 restrictions and had undertaken extra cleaning responsibilities.	
13. Deanery Synod	The report on the proceedings of the Deanery Synod on page 30 was received.	
14. Vicar's Report	At the request of Carole Lewis, the Vicar read his written report from pages 31 to 33 of the booklet. Carole then proposed a vote of thanks to the Vicar, commending his energy and determination during recent very difficult times. The proposal was adopted with alacrity.	
18. Any other business	Marion Cowe proposed a vote of thanks to the churchwardens, particularly in keeping our churches open and safe as far as possible through the pandemic. The proposal was enthusiastically endorsed.	
19. Date of next APCM	The next APCM has been provisionally set to follow the 10.00am Parish Eucharist on Sunday 24 April 2022 in St John's Church .	
	The meeting closed at 11.40 am.	

VICAR'S REPORT ON 2020

(to be given at the APCM 2021)

2020 is perhaps a year best forgotten! A year when, for most of us, our lives were placed on hold as the Covid-19 pandemic plunged the world into chaos. Our common life was hugely impacted – as I will outline below – but we still managed to achieve quite a lot in an authentic, faithful, and ‘present’ way.

At the start of 2020 I recall commenting in the notices on Epiphany Sunday that I had enjoyed a good post-Christmas break and, feeling rejuvenated, was going to make 2020 count so it was time to buckle-up and get active. Things started out well even if the news coming out of China caused growing concern. We had a couple of fun and profitable Quiz evenings; we held our annual pancake party for children and instigated a pancake evening for adults... washed down with some punchy cocktails; and we started an excellent Lent Course on prayer, given by our then Associate Minister, The Reverend Canon Dr Ruth Goatly. Our Church Community was *alive and kicking*, excited about the future and willing to explore where God might be leading us. Conversations with partner organisations about starting a Youth Club were progressing well as indeed was our work with schools and children. We were monitoring the news on the spread of Coronavirus and taking the necessary precautions: suspending the chalice, sharing the peace in a contactless way, and even suspending public worship on Mothering Sunday whilst still keeping our church buildings open for private prayer.

But then the pandemic hit. On 23 March the Prime Minister addressed the Nation requiring that we “Stay at Home”. Lockdown 1.0 had begun. The Archbishops of Canterbury and York ordered that all churches were to be locked. Hastily, preparations were made for Holy Week and Easter to be celebrated at home; I set-up an Altar in my study so that, as I looked out over the Parish and prayed for you all, Christ could still be made present through the Holy Eucharist and bring his comfort and peace; and each week of the pandemic I have written to parishioners to keep you informed of developments and to encourage our now disparate but common life. Between us, Ruth and I established a ‘phone buddy’ network – primarily focusing on those whom the Government deemed most at risk and those whom we knew to be on their own (over time this network has grown to include most of our fellowship but not everyone) – as a means of remaining in contact and offering practical and emotional support.

Lockdown 1.0 was tough. It was a new and unwelcome experience for many. Many in employment were either made redundant, furloughed, or compelled to set-up offices in bedrooms; schools were closed and children were ‘home-schooled’; key-workers bravely went to work to feed the nation, look after key-worker children, or care for the sick and dying; non-essential medical appointments were cancelled; clubs and organisations were either suspended or went virtual with the help of Zoom and other internet video platforms; and all the while infection and death rates rose. But in the midst of this there were some shards of light: a beautiful spring; less pollution; time for families to reconnect; a more gentle pace of life. Daily walks became our means of exercise and a chance to see the outside world. And the Nation came together each Thursday evening to express thanks to, and solidarity with, all Key Workers – especially our NHS.

On reflection I think the Church locally responded as well as it could in these remarkable times. Our biggest instrument for mission – our church buildings – had been denied us. No one was allowed in to pray even though that was what we all wanted to do whenever we passed. Not being equipped to live stream services from the Vicarage our congregations either used the resources we provided, joined the Abbey in their virtual worship, or joined the nationally produced material. We established the means to continue fellowship with weekly coffee mornings and 'Happy Hour' drinks evenings on Zoom which proved popular. We amended our meeting structures so that meetings either took place on Zoom or were suspended. Among those meetings suspended was the full Parochial Church Council due to the large size of the council making a Zoom meeting unwieldy. Instead the Standing Committee assumed the responsibility of the PCC and thus met monthly to ensure that good governance of the Parish and sound financial oversight continued.

On Sunday 10 May the clergy were once again permitted the use of church buildings to enable worship at home. With the assistance of Keith Beniston our Director of Music – who has been a tremendous resource and committed colleague during the pandemic – we were able to record our Parish Eucharist and upload it to our website for the first time. Barring some minor technical difficulties, this was the first step towards something vaguely like worship as normal although our church buildings remained locked. Hampered by locked buildings but wanting to enable prayer we rearranged the porch at St John's so that prayer requests could be left and votive candles lit. A few weeks' later were able to open the church daily for private prayer. Risk assessments were completed, areas roped off, sanitiser stations installed and volunteers found to open and lock the doors each day. My sincere thanks to Marian Davies in particular, but also to Di Tovey, Paul Davies, Lorraine Ioannou, and Graham Gibbs who have undertaken this duty.

Then on Sunday 5 July we were finally permitted to open the doors for public worship once more, albeit with the now familiar restrictions of face coverings, track and trace, sanitiser, and social distancing. For those still shielding services continued to be recorded and posted on our website. Eventually, the choir was permitted to return and we enjoyed some memorable evening services sung by the choir, but congregations were still prohibited from singing.

Sadly, the autumn heralded another rise in infections and deaths and once again we went into lockdown – Lockdown 2.0! Again all public worship was suspended but our recorded services continued. Plans meanwhile were being finalised for how we could celebrate Christmas safely. We opted to ticket our Christmas services and to double our offering of services due to the limits social distancing placed on capacity. We planned for our Christmas Tree Festival to be partly outside – to bring Christ's light and hope to our community – and to enable some community carol singing. Mercifully, our planning paid off and although restrictions intensified we were still able to celebrate Christmas safely and together. Ticketing proved popular and was an easy to use system – some services were sell-outs! But alas the increased restrictions meant many stayed at home and attendance over Christmas was well-down on both previous years' and ticket sales.

With our buildings closed for much of the year and restrictions on gatherings our Halls have been used very little during 2020. This created an unwelcome dip in income and consequently

the Standing Committee of the PCC had to make the hard decision not to Parish Share. This is the first time in living memory we have had to do this. Thankfully our regular giving remained consistent and we were able to meet all other expenditure, but the pandemic has highlighted how perilous our financial position is. Moving forward we must try to ensure that our giving covers the actual costs of Ministry and any income from lettings is used for repairs or other desirable projects.

I should like to record my thanks once again to so many of our number who give considerable amounts of time and energy to ensure our common life continues – even in the midst of a pandemic. There are too many to name in person without this sounding like an Oscar's acceptance speech, but I should like to thank you all. From creating and distributing our parish magazine to cleaning churches, flower arranging to preaching, phoning buddies to making music, welcoming worshippers to weeding flower beds, teaching children to providing transport to church you all make our common life richer – THANK YOU.

In my previous annual reports I have often provided a comparison of the number of Occasional Offices that have taken place during the last year. Since our churches were locked for such a significant period these comparisons are fairly pointless this year but for interest we held 4 weddings, 7 baptisms, and 30 funerals. Of those funerals conducted by the Ministry Team we said farewell to some long-term members of the Church: Anne Higham, Stella Chandler, Linda Gair, Sheila Charge. Their funerals were conducted according to the regulations in force at the time meaning that very few mourners could attend their actual service but instead people lined the route or assembled (distanced) outside.

In 2020 we also said goodbye to two of our Ministry Team. In January Sheena Wilson, who had recently completed her training as a Lay Reader, moved to The Wirral and in November Ruth Goatly retired from licenced parochial ministry. Both contributed enormously to our common life and are much missed – their ministries among us have helped shape us and enabled us to be the people God is calling us to be moving forward.

Moving forward is not going to be an easy task. We don't know what the future holds or when society will fully re-open. Covid-19 shows no signs of departing although the arrival of effective vaccines is to be lauded and celebrated. The task we face as a Church community is one of rebuilding: rebuilding our fellowship and social activities; rebuilding our links with schools and societies; rebuilding confidence; rebuilding our finances. It will not be easy as we have all slowed-down a little due to lockdown. We have got used to doing less and perhaps do not want/or have the energy to do more again. Some of our organisers have already expressed a desire to step back from previously held roles, and to them we express our sincere thanks for all they have done for our common life.

The road ahead will not be smooth but I believe we have the vision to be a flourishing Church in this part of Hemel Hempstead. There will be difficult decisions to take but with prayer and consultation these decisions will be made. Your witness, your support of each other (and me), your generosity, and your faithfulness are an example to us all and are what is going to get us through this. May the Lord bless us in this task as we go about his work transforming communities, making new disciples, and going deeper into his love.

In Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mike". The letter "M" is large and stylized, with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending from the bottom of the "k" across the page.

The Reverend Michael Macey, Vicar

PROCEEDINGS OF THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL (PCC): 2021 – 2022

The Parochial Church Council (PCC) meets in principle on the second Tuesday of every other month. Written minutes are kept of all PCC meetings and these are distributed to all PCC members and to any parishioner on the church electoral roll upon request. A shortened version of the PCC minutes is published in the church magazine when possible and appropriate. Six ordinary PCC meetings, one extraordinary and one solely to appoint officers, were held during 2021 – 2022, with attendance by PCC members throughout averaging out at 75%. Attendance ranged between a majority of members who attended every meeting and one who attended none. There were six meetings of the PCC Standing Committee.

As a matter of regular routine the PCC approved minutes of previous meetings and monitored progress on action points. It also ratified decisions taken by the Standing Committee through approval of its minutes. Reports from the Vicar, Churchwardens and Treasurer have been received at each meeting. Progress on our new Mission Action Plan has also been monitored, a revised Plan having been adopted during the year. Reports have also been regularly received at each meeting from our daughter churches of St Francis and St Stephen and the PCC committees: Communications, Finance, Fundraising, St John's Hall, Missions, MASJ, Pastoral, Social, Worship and Youth. Regular reports have been received in addition on the activities of the Deanery, Pray Hemel and Churches Together.

Substantive ad hoc matters considered by the PCC during the year have included monitoring the pandemic and precautions against infection, the major project to install new streaming equipment into St John's (subject of the 2021 Easter Appeal), the reordering of the choir pews at St John's, reports from the parking working group, safeguarding (including new instructions from the diocese), the approval and implementation of a new Mission Action Plan, the planting of trees to mark the Queen's Platinum Jubilee, the future of the Parish Buddy Scheme post-pandemic, the acquisition of a defibrillator (subject of the 2022 Easter Appeal), and latterly our response to the Ukraine war and refugee crisis.

The parish finances have been closely observed by the PCC over a very difficult year due to the pandemic, and the determined fundraising during the last year applauded. The PCC has approved the annual accounts for 2021 and the budget for 2022 for presentation to the APCM.

Richard Lyne
PCC Honorary Secretary
March 2022

Safeguarding report for the year 2021

The following is in part a letter from the diocese regarding safeguarding and the changes which came into effect on the 1st January 2022.

The Church of England is making a significant change in its relationship with safeguarding. Safeguarding is at the centre of our faith, in our practice. In other words, safeguarding needs to become integral to the church's DNA rather than a bolt on, with good safeguarding behaviours flowing naturally and intuitively.

The church recognises that this will require a significant shift in the Church's culture.

Bearing this in mind, could all concerned please make an effort to do the training in basic awareness, which can be done online through the Church of England Training portal.

Marian Davies, Safeguarding Officer

Report on the Financial Affairs of the Parish 2021

The attached accounts for the year ended 31st December 2021 have been approved by the PCC for presentation at the APCM and independently examined by Roger Taylor. Both those for St John's and St Stephen's and those for St Francis' have been prepared in the format required by the Church Accounting Regulations 1997, detailing gross income and expenditure. A consolidated Parish Report and Accounts for 2021 will be prepared for submission to the Charity Commission. Results for 2021 and Budgets for 2022 are also provided in the simpler Management Accounts format.

My thanks go once again to Janet Packe for dealing with St John's weekly and miscellaneous takings; to Garth Bridgwood for performing the role of Covenants secretary; to Hilary Kemp for managing the office fees account; to Graham Liddle for managing St John's Hall bookings and income; to Alan Munford and Sally Bates for collecting revenues from Magazine sales and advertising respectively; to Jean Garner for looking after the St Stephen's Hall and Church income and expenditure; to Jo Fisher for maintaining the accounts for St Francis; to Paul Davies for managing the bookings of St Francis Church Hall; to all involved in Fundraising and finally to Roger Taylor for taking on the independent examination of the final accounts.

Our finances were again adversely affected by the ongoing Covid 19 pandemic, and the consequent restrictions imposed on our activities. Happily, the financial results for 2021 showed considerable improvement over those for 2020 for both St John's and St Stephen's and at St Francis', and all areas of income recovered to some degree. Halls reopened, services were resumed, Fee income rose and Fundraising resumed in earnest, whilst Planned Giving improved. Expenditure remained constrained and as a result the surplus built up over 2020 by withholding Parish Share payments for St John's and St Stephen's proved sufficient to avoid cashflow difficulties and enable a full Share to be paid in 2021. St Francis were again able to meet their Share in full.

Despite this both sets of accounts reveal a deficit on day to day activities (unrestricted funds) - £3,006 at St Francis and £10,147 at St John's and St Stephen's, which is not a sustainable position long-term.

Budgets for 2022 envisage further movement towards pre-pandemic levels of activity and a return to break-even. A further legacy and a major donation early in 2022 should ensure cashflow is not an issue this year. Much remains uncertain, however, with costs set to rise in many areas. Our fuel prices are fixed for 2022 but are likely to rise dramatically thereafter, and we may not have seen the last of pandemic restrictions – indeed some parishioners have yet to feel sufficiently confident to return to gatherings.

At St John's the Fabric Fund benefitted greatly from donations and legacies and as a result the boiler replacement project was completed, with all loans repaid, and sufficient funds were in hand to complete the Broadcast System early in 2022.

Chris Angell
Honorary Treasurer
March 2022

THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF ST JOHN'S BOXMOOR

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

	Note	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Endowment Funds £	TOTAL 2021 £	FUNDS 2020 £
Incoming Resources						
Incoming resources from donors	2a	93,782	-	-	93,782	88,217
Other voluntary incoming resources	2b	18,330	26,483	-	44,813	9,554
Income from charitable and ancillary trading	2c	18,291	-	-	18,291	18,734
Other ordinary incoming resources	2d	-	-	-	-	260
Income from investments	2e	3,270	1,250	-	4,520	4,376
Total Incoming Resources		133,673	27,733	-	161,406	121,141
Resources Expended						
Grants	3a	2,597	-	-	2,597	2,350
Activities directly relating to the work of the church	3b	127,089	5,399	-	132,488	71,905
Fund-raising and publicity	3c	4,676	-	-	4,676	1,582
Church management and administration	3d	9,458	-	-	9,458	10,098
Total Resources Expended		143,820	5,399	-	149,219	85,935
Net Incoming / (Outgoing) Resources		(10,147)	22,334	-	12,187	35,206
Gains and Losses on Investments						
realised		-	-	-	-	-
unrealised		-	-	44,681	44,681	21,750
Net Movement in Funds		(10,147)	22,334	44,681	56,868	56,956
Balances brought forward at 1st January 2021 (2020)		37,748	491,270	283,014	812,032	755,076
Transfers between Funds		-	-	-	-	-
Balances carried forward		27,601	513,604	327,695	868,900	812,032

THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF ST JOHN'S BOXMOOR

**BALANCE SHEET
AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2021**

	Note	2021 £	2020 £
Fixed Assets			
Tangible fixed assets	5a	493,474	493,474
Investment Assets	5b	327,643	282,962
		<u>821,117</u>	<u>776,436</u>
Current Assets			
Stock		-	-
Debtors	7	6,092	6,390
Short Term Deposits		52	52
Cash at bank and in hand		42,639	41,154
		<u>48,783</u>	<u>47,596</u>
Liabilities: Amounts falling due within 1 year	8	(1,000)	(12,000)
Net Current Assets		<u>47,783</u>	<u>35,596</u>
Long Term Loans		-	-
Net Assets		<u>868,900</u>	<u>812,032</u>
Funds	6 & 9		
Unrestricted		27,601	37,748
Restricted		513,604	491,270
Endowment		327,695	283,014
		<u>868,900</u>	<u>812,032</u>

The notes on the following pages form part of these accounts

Approved by the Parochial Church Council on 15th March 2022 and signed on its behalf:

M.Macey

Chairman

PCC ST JOHN'S BOXMOOR**NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2021****1. Accounting Policies**

The accounts are prepared on an accruals basis, in accordance with the Church Accounting Regulations 1997

The accounts also comply with the Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice (revised 2005); Charities Act 1993 (as amended by the Charities Act 2006) and Regulations made thereunder; and with applicable accounting standards.

The accounts are prepared under the historical cost convention

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Endowment Funds £	TOTAL 2021 £	FUNDS 2020 £
2. Incoming Resources					
<i>2a. Incoming resources from donors</i>					
Planned giving	74,102	-	-	74,102	71,628
Collections(open plate) at all services	13,317	-	-	13,317	8,526
Sundry donations	6,363	-	-	6,363	8,063
	<u>93,782</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>93,782</u>	<u>88,217</u>
<i>2b. Other voluntary incoming resources</i>					
Appeals	-	16,439	-	16,439	4,836
Legacies	5,000	10,000	-	15,000	-
Fêtes & other fund raising events	13,330	44	-	13,374	4,718
	<u>18,330</u>	<u>26,483</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>44,813</u>	<u>9,554</u>
<i>2c. Income from charitable and ancillary trading</i>					
Magazines	1,755	-	-	1,755	1,990
Coffee	335	-	-	335	450
Church halls lettings etc	5,628	-	-	5,628	4,211
Fees	9,264	-	-	9,264	9,987
Merchandising & Printing	1,309	-	-	1,309	2,096
	<u>18,291</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>18,291</u>	<u>18,734</u>
<i>2d. Other ordinary incoming resources</i>					
Insurance claims & settlements	-	-	-	-	260
<i>2e. Income from investments</i>					
Dividends and interest including any reclaimed tax	3,270	1,250	-	4,520	4,376
Total Incoming Resources	<u>133,673</u>	<u>27,733</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>161,406</u>	<u>121,141</u>

PCC ST JOHN'S BOXMOOR**NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2021****Notes to the Financial Statements (continued)
For the year ending 31st December 2021**

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Endowment Funds £	TOTAL 2021 £	FUNDS 2020 £
3. Resources Expended					
<i>3a. Grants</i>					
Missionary & charitable giving:					
Church overseas					
missionary societies	-	-	-	-	-
relief & development agencies	220	-	-	220	190
Home missions & other Church Societies	2,377	-	-	2,377	2,160
	<u>2,597</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>2,597</u>	<u>2,350</u>
<i>3b. Activities directly relating to work of the Church</i>					
Ministry: diocesan parish share	84,192	-	-	84,192	35,835
clergy expenses	3,177	-	-	3,177	1,759
Church - running expenses	22,107	-	-	22,107	18,193
Church maintenance & Repairs	3,353	5,399	-	8,752	4,140
Expenditure on parish magazine	1,047	-	-	1,047	1,000
Church hall running costs	1,127	-	-	1,127	1,972
Music	12,086	-	-	12,086	9,006
	<u>127,089</u>	<u>5,399</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>132,488</u>	<u>71,905</u>
<i>3c. Fund-raising and publicity</i>					
Costs of fêtes and other fund-raising events	4,676	-	-	4,676	1,582
<i>3d. Church management and administration</i>					
Administration:					
Printing & stationery	3,972	-	-	3,972	4,656
Telephones	346	-	-	346	333
Administrator	5,140	-	-	5,140	5,109
Loan interest & costs	-	-	-	-	-
	<u>9,458</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>9,458</u>	<u>10,098</u>
Total Resources Expended	<u>143,820</u>	<u>5,399</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>149,219</u>	<u>85,935</u>

4. Staff Costs

Music expenses include payments made to St John's Director of Music and Administration costs include payments made to the Parish Administrator. Church hall running costs include payments made to the Hall caretaker and Hall cleaner.

No National Insurance or pension contributions were payable in respect of any of them in 2021 or 2020

PCC ST JOHN'S BOXMOOR

**NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2021**

5. Fixed Assets for use by the PCC

5a. Tangible fixed assets

Buildings - St John`s Hall & West End £493,474 (2020 £493,474)

5b. Investments

14,010 shares in the CBF Investment
Fund (historical cost at
31st December 2021: £ 22,804)

Market Value	
2021	2020
£	£
327,643	282,962

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Endowment Funds £	TOTAL £
6. Analysis of Net Asset Fund				
Fixed Assets	-	493,474	327,643	821,117
Current Assets	33,693	20,131	52	53,876
Current Liabilities	(1,000)	-	-	(1,000)
Long Term Loans	-	-	-	-
Fund Balance	32,693	513,605	327,695	873,993

7. Debtors

	2021 £	2020 £
Prepayments of insurance	2,348	2,315
Gift Aid Claim	3,744	4,075
Other	-	-
	6,092	6,390

**8. Liabilities: Amounts Falling Due
Within One Year**

Creditors for goods and services	1,000	1,000
Parishoner loans	-	11,000
	1,000	12,000

PCC ST JOHN'S BOXMOOR**NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2021**

9. Fund Details	Balance at 31/12/21 £	Balance at 31/12/2020 £	Movement £
Restricted Funds			
Building Reserve	493,474	493,474	-
Fabric Fund	9,729	(11,494)	21,223
Music Fund	260	216	44
Discretionary	6,909	5,659	1,250
Social Committee	557	740	(183)
Wedding Advances	1,400	1,400	-
Holiday at Home	1,275	1,275	-
	<u>513,604</u>	<u>491,270</u>	<u>22,334</u>
Endowment Funds			
Centenary Fund	150,096	127,742	22,354
Rolph Bequest	49,206	43,020	6,186
Freeman-Rolph	128,393	112,252	16,141
	<u>327,695</u>	<u>283,014</u>	<u>44,681</u>

The movement on the Fabric Fund comprised:

	£
Opening Balance 1/1/2021	(11,494)
Loans converted to gifts	9,500
Donations	460
Legacies	10,000
Churchwardens' Appeal	6,479
Expenditure on Broadcast System	(4,768)
Expenditure on Repairs	(448)
Closing Balance 31/12/2021	<u>9,729</u>

PCC ST JOHN'S BOXMOOR**NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2021****10. St Stephen`s Income and Expenditure 2021**

Income	2021 £	2020 £
Collections	897	370
Planned Giving	3,335	3,228
Hall Lettings	743	345
Donations	20	115
	<u>4,995</u>	<u>4,058</u>
Expenditure		
Heat & Light	379	124
Insurance	633	615
Maintenance & Sundries	189	-
	<u>1,201</u>	<u>739</u>
Contribution to Boxmoor Parish	<u>3,794</u>	<u>3,319</u>

11. Missions and Charitable Giving 2021

Beneficiary	Gross Donation £	Collection £	Allocation from PCC £
Bibles for Children	500	96	404
Bishop's Harvest for the Hungry Appeal	220	220	-
Childrens' Society	556	556	-
Churches Together	60	-	60
DENS	740	740	-
St Mungos	521	521	-
	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
	<u>2,597</u>	<u>2,133</u>	<u>464</u>

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

	Note	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Endowment Funds £	Total 2021 £	FUNDS 2020 £
Incoming Resources						
Incoming Resources from Donors	2a	4,527			4,527	3,200
Other Voluntary incoming resources	2b	443			443	176
Income from charitable and ancillary trading	2c	2,977			2,977	2,848
Other ordinary incoming resources	2d				0	0
Income from Investments	2e	756			756	762
Total Incoming Resources		8,703	0	0	8,703	6,984
Resources Expended						
Grants	3a	481			481	176
Activities directly relating to the work Of the church	3b	11,228			11,228	10,813
Fund-raising and publicity	3c					
Church management and administration	3d					
Total Resources Expended		11,708	0	0	11,708	10,989
Net Incoming/(Outgoing) Resources		(3,006)	0	0	(3,006)	(4,004)
Gains and (Losses) on Investments						
Realised						
Unrealised				3,716	3,716	1,669
Net Movement in Funds		(3,006)	0	3,716	710	(2,335)
Balances brought forward at 1st January 2021 (2020)		22,061	1,300	25,844	49,203	51,538
Transfers between Funds						
Balances carried forward		19,055	1,300	29,561	49,914	49,203

BALANCE SHEET
AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2021

	Note	2021	2020
		£	£
Fixed Assets			
Tangible Fixed Assets	5a		
Investment Assets	5b	29,561	25,845
		<u>29,561</u>	<u>25,845</u>
Current Assets			
Stock			
Debtors	7		
Short Term Deposits		8,544	8,540
Cash at Bank and in hand		11,882	14,821
		<u>20,427</u>	<u>23,361</u>
Liabilities: Amounts falling due within 1 year	8	-	-
Net Current Assets		20,427	23,361
Long Term Loans			
Net Assets		49,988	49,205
Funds	6 & 9		
Unrestricted		19,055	22,061
Restricted		1,300	1,300
Endowment		29,561	25,844
		<u>49,916</u>	<u>49,205</u>

The notes on the following pages form part of these accounts
Approved by the Parochial Church Council on and signed on its behalf

Rev'd Michael Macey
Chairman

Notes to the Financial Statements
For the year ended 31st December 2021

1. Accounting Policies

The Accounts are prepared on an accruals basis, in accordance with the Church Account Regulations 1997

The accounts also comply with the Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice (revised 2005); Charities Act 1993 (as amended by the Charities Act 2006) and Regulations made thereunder; and with applicable accounting standards.

The accounts are prepared under the historical cost conventions

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Endowment Funds £	Total 2021 £	FUNDS 2020 £
2. Incoming Resources					
<i>2a. Incoming Resources from donors</i>					
Planned giving	2,932			2,932	690
Collections (Open plate) at all services	1,595			1,595	2,510
Sundry Donations				0	0
	<u>4,527</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>4,527</u>	<u>3,200</u>
<i>2b. Other voluntary incoming resources</i>					
Appeals				0	0
Legacies				0	0
Fetes & other fund raising events	443			443	176
	<u>443</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>443</u>	<u>176</u>
<i>2c. Income from charitable and ancillary trading</i>					
Magazines				0	8
Coffee				0	0
Church hall lettings etc.	2,977			2,977	2,840
Candles				0	0
Merchandising & Printing				0	0
	<u>2,977</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>2,977</u>	<u>2,848</u>
<i>2d. Other ordinary incoming resources</i>				0	0
		<u>0</u>		<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
<i>2e. Income from investments</i>					
Dividends and interest including any					
Reclaimed tax	756			756	762
	<u>756</u>			<u>756</u>	<u>762</u>
Total Incoming Resources	8,703	0	0	8,703	6,984

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2021

Notes to the Financial Statements (Continued)
For the year ending 31st December 2021

	Note	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Endowment Funds £	Total 2021 £	FUNDS 2020 £
3. Resources Expended						
<i>3.a Grants</i>						
Missionary & Charitable giving:						
Church overseas						
Missionary Societies						
Relief & development agencies						
Home missions & other Church Societies	10	481			481	176
		481	0	0	481	176
<i>3.b Activities directly relating to work of The Church</i>						
Ministry: Diocesan Parish Share		4,151			4,151	4,151
Ministry: Clergy Expenses		1,498			1,498	652
Church - running expenses		4,883			4,883	5,117
Church maintenance & repairs		695			695	893
		11,228	0	0	11,228	10,813
<i>3c. Fund-raising and publicity</i>						
Costs of fetes and other fund-raising events						
<i>3d. Church management and administration</i>						
Administration:						
Printing & Stationery						
Telephones						
Administrator						
Loan repayments & costs						
		0	0	0	0	0
Total Resources Expended		11,708	0	0	11,708	10,989

4. Staff Costs

There were no staff costs payable in respect of 2021

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2021

Notes to the Financial Statements (Continued)
For the year ending 31st December 2021

5. Fixed Assets for use by the PCC

5a. Tangible Fixed Assets

Buildings

5b. Investments

1,264 shares in the CBF Investment
Fund (historical cost at
31st December 2021 - £734)

Market Value	
2021	2020
£	£
29,561	25,845

6. Analysis of Net Asset Fund

Fixed Assets

Current Assets

Current Liabilities

Long Term Loans

Fund Balance

Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Endowment Funds	Total 2021
£	£	£	£
		29,561	29,561
19,055	1,300		20,355
			0
			0
19,055	1,300	29,561	49,916

7. Debtors

Prepayments of Gas & Electricity

2021	2020
£	£

8. Liabilities: Amounts Falling Due

Within One Year

No liabilities falling due within one year

9. Fund Details

Endowment Funds

Gulliver Bequest

Balance at
31/12/2021

£
29,561
29,561

10. Missions and Charitable Giving 2021

	Gross Donation	Collection	Allocation from PCC
Beneficiary	£	£	£
St Johns Boxmoor Christmas Tree Festival	45		45
Churches Together	20		20
	65	0	65

At the Carols by Candlelight in December 2021 The Hospice of St Francis collected £415.87

THE CHURCHWARDENS' REPORT ON THE FABRIC GOODS & ORNAMENTS

The Church Wardens Easter Appeal 2021 was to fund equipment enabling services to be streamed live, thereby enabling those unable to attend services to feel part of the worshipping congregation, as well as freeing up the Vicar and Director of music from the many hours spent recording and editing services to be sent out on Sundays. This system eventually went live just before Christmas.

We are very grateful to all the volunteers who have been maintaining the churchyard which has been looking most attractive.

More volunteers have been altering the choir stalls, this work will be finished when the weather is fine enough to work outside, the stalls should then be fit for purpose. We are very grateful to the volunteers who to begin with fortnightly and now weekly, keep the Church clean.

The annual checks on the fabric have been maintained.

PAT testing, fire appliance maintenance, lightning conductor check, the cleaning of gutters including high level and the drains have all been arranged on schedule.

Marian Davies
March 2022

Report of Deanery Synod proceedings (2021 - 2022)

This report covers the proceedings of the Hemel Hempstead Deanery Synod for the period from March 2021 to February 2022. During the year there were three Deanery Synod meetings, covering a variety of different topics. The key areas of discussion are reported below:

Tuesday 15th June 2021 at St John's Boxmoor

This was the first face to face meeting of Synod since before the start of the pandemic, and we celebrated this with a glass of fizz outside.

We split into 2 houses in order to elect Diocesan Synod representatives.

We welcomed Harry Steele, Associate Director of Leading Your Church Into Growth and the Church Growth Officer for Hertfordshire, and he gave an interesting talk on how we should look to emerge from the pandemic lockdown well and hopefully.

The Deanery Treasurer Peter Bladon reported on deanery expenditure (covering Zoom subscriptions for the churches) and on parish share payment status.

A short swap-shop of some upcoming events was shared, and the meeting ended with Compline outside.

Tuesday 19th October 2021 at Holy Trinity Leverstock Green

The Deanery Treasurer Peter Bladon reported on deanery expenditure (covering Zoom subscriptions for the churches) and on parish share payment status.

We had a sharing session with questions and answers: Parishes shared with each other how they have been encouraging people to come back to worship post pandemic; How and with what they are engaging and involving the online audience; We shared ideas that others can feel encouraged by and emerge hopefully with.

The meeting ended with a Taize style worship.

Tuesday 1st February 2022 at St John's Boxmoor

We welcomed the new Diocesan Secretary – David White. He introduced himself and shared some details of the purpose of the Diocesan Office and his role. The Rural Dean gave David an overview of the deanery. David then invited a Q and A from the synod members which covered strategy, covid recovery, and doing things differently post covid.

The Deanery Treasurer Peter Bladon reported on deanery expenditure for the prior year, parish share payments, and advised about the forthcoming review of parish share factors.

A sharing session followed – each parish shared one hope and one struggle they are experiencing.

The Rural Dean reminded members that our MAPs are still a very useful tool and encouraged parishes to revisit them.

The Rural Dean shared that our current Lay Chair – Rosina Gaddes – has decided to stand down, and he expressed our thanks for her service to the Deanery over the last 5 years. Synod will now need a new Lay Chair and members were encouraged to consider if there could be a suitable person in their parish to fill this important role.

Further Deanery meetings planned this year:

Deanery Synod

Tuesday 28th June

Tuesday 18th October

Standing & Pastoral Committee

Wednesday 8th June

Wednesday 28th September

Carolyn Andrews

Deanery Secretary

VICAR'S REPORT ON 2021

(to be given at the 2022 APCM)

I concluded last year's report by stating:

"Moving forward is not going to be an easy task. We don't know what the future holds or when society will fully re-open. Covid-19 shows no signs of departing although the arrival of effective vaccines is to be lauded and celebrated. The task we face as a Church community is one of rebuilding: rebuilding our fellowship and social activities; rebuilding our links with schools and societies; rebuilding confidence; rebuilding our finances."

As a Church community we are not afraid of taking on a challenge. In the last 20 years you have raised over a £1million and successfully seen many building projects come to fruition. But the early days of 2021 almost took us to our limits. Predictably, Covid-19 was once again out of control following a Christmas "break". The infection rate and mortality numbers were the highest recorded during this pandemic despite the vaccine becoming more widely available. Schools were ordered to close. And we too, once again, closed for Public Worship in the interests of public safety. In a change to Lockdown 1.0 St John's remained open every day for Private Prayer, with St Francis' available on a Wednesday afternoon – welcome oases of calm and peace – and were much used and appreciated by our local community. During this time services once again became virtual with services pre-recorded to our website.

Towards the end of March Public Worship resumed – although under quite strict restrictions. With singing prohibited indoors many of our main services during Holy Week and Easter had outdoor elements. This not only enabled us to sing together once again but it also served as a powerful witness to our community – The Church is still alive and kicking despite everything! Easter Sunday in particular was a real joy and, even though it was unseasonably cold, our hearts were warmed by the resurrection. In the following months, this mixed mode of events taking place both indoors and outdoors continued, firstly with an al fresco lunch for St John's Day and a thoroughly entertaining cricket match against the Boxmoor Occasionals/Odd Sods!

By the time summer appeared we were more confident about organising larger outdoor events and our Summer Fayre provided a welcome tonic of social interaction within our community and an opportunity for fundraising. Thankfully the sun shone upon our endeavours helping to create a relaxed and cheerful atmosphere. We had also grown in confidence indoors, with singing returning behind masks for the general congregation and Choral Evensong returning – sung by our splendid choir. Particular highlights included the Services of Thanksgiving for the life of Stella Chandler, and for Carole Lewis' 25th anniversary of public ministry as a Lay Reader.

In the autumn, more of our 'normal' activities resumed: Junior Choir and Junior Church returned following the example of Tiny Tots who resumed in May – holding their little service of actions songs outside (when possible) to enable singing without face coverings. Harvest Thanksgiving returned with a Quiz evening, School visits, and a bucket collection. The Royal British Legion Act of Remembrance at the War Memorial and in St John's resumed. Plans were put in place to maximise our outreach at Christmas whilst acknowledging that Covid infections might rise again. To that end we doubled-up on services to mitigate for loss of seating due to social distancing; all services over Christmas were ticketed using TicketSource; the Christmas

Tree Festival returned to something like its former glory with more trees inside and more trees were added outside to create a fabulous garden of light; and many services were live-streamed to our website. This all created a fair amount of extra work, and at times volunteers and helpers were distinctly lacking! But with the help of a few people going the extra mile it all came good. Our ability to live stream services was greatly increased by the installation of new cameras, microphones, mixing equipment, and internet access, for which the bulk of the work was completed just before Christmas. Thankfully the system worked well over Christmas and enabled those unable to join services in person to join live virtually.

Other signs that we were returning to something like normal included the PCC resuming its responsibility for governance by once again meeting in person. Our thanks to the Standing Committee for shouldering this responsibility during lockdowns via Zoom meetings. The PCC immediately set about planning for the future producing a Mission Action Plan to highlight our priorities over the coming years as we recover from the effects of the pandemic and strive to grow – spiritually, numerically, and financially. With prudent financial management and an increase in Stewardship thanks to a moderately successful Stewardship Campaign we were able to pay our considerable Parish Share once again, after defaulting by some £50,000 the previous year – 10% of the total diocesan deficit! Schools work returned with a number of schools either coming to church for visits or services or inviting me in to help with the curriculum.

As restrictions eased in 2021 so Pastoral Offices steadily returned to church. A growing confidence in being able to plan ahead led to 7 weddings, 14 baptisms, and 31 funerals or memorial services. This compares to 4 weddings, 7 baptisms, and 30 funerals (most of which were at the Crem) in 2020. It is interesting to note that despite the national death rate being so high in both these years our funeral ministry has shrunk. This has nothing to do with the ministry we offer (which we know to be greatly appreciated) but more to do with an increase in funerals conducted by Civil Celebrants and 'Straight to Crem' funerals where no funeral or minister is required. Inevitably we did say 'farewell' to some of our friends in 2021, amongst them Sheila Charge, Peter Wing, Kenneth Warby, and Baby Emily Cox. May they rest in peace and rise in glory.

2021 was another hard year but in amongst the gloom and difficulties were moments of joy and hope. The task of ministry and our common goal of witnessing to Jesus were made easier by our partnership in the Gospel. I should like to express my sincere thanks to our visiting clergy who enable worship to take place when I am either not available or leading worship in a different church; to Carole for her insightful preaching and considerable sharing of the pastoral load; and our Lay Leaders of Worship for their prayerful leadership of the flock at St Stephen's. I should also like to thank our churchwardens, Marian and Job, for the unstinting support I receive from them and who do an incredible amount for the life of the parish. My thanks and gratitude also go to myriads of others (the list is too long to name you all) who help our common task with children and young people, communicating our services/events and message, singing God's praise, maintaining and cleaning our churches and grounds, fundraising, enabling fellowship, financial planning, governance and safeguarding, administration and forward planning, pastoral care, and offering hospitality and welcome. However, I should like to offer particular thanks to Keith Beniston for not only being our superb Organist and Director of Music but also for the way he has enabled the ministry of the

church to be virtual. His ability to multi-task at the organ bench, juggling pre-recorded and live music, accommodating my whims and wishes, and editing and uploading services is really very impressive – and that's not to mention the way he leads our choir from strength to strength. Thank you to all of you for making our Parish the joy it is to minister within. I remain incredibly proud to be called to be your Vicar, and I hope and pray that I will continue to be able to serve with and among you for a long time to come. Please continue to pray for me in the ministry laid out before me.

All of the above only goes to show how far we have come in 2021 from the void which was created in 2020 when we were ordered to 'stay at home' and lock our churches. Rebuilding is underway. Of course more was going on behind the scenes than I am able to express succinctly here, and more will be required to counterbalance the effects of the pandemic but we need to remember this is a marathon not a sprint. It is likely that 2022 and the years that follow will throw-up new and unexpected challenges, not least as Covid-19 continues to evolve and mutate. But we will need to find ways to live with the virus, continuing to help and encourage those who are struggling and working towards a brighter, more hope-filled future. May the Lord bless us in this task as we go about his work transforming communities, making new disciples, and going deeper into his love. May the Joy of the Gospel be ours as we live the Easter faith, for:

Alleluia! Christ is Risen. He is Risen indeed. Alleluia!

In Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mike". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the right.