

ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING

The Parish Church of St Andrew

Sunday 11 July 2021
Written Reports for 2020



THE CHURCH OF ST ANDREW, SERVING
CHARVIL, SONNING AND SONNING EYE

Annual Parochial Church Meeting
To be held in St. Andrews Church, Sonning

11th July 2021

A G E N D A

1. Opening prayers
2. Appointment of Secretary
3. Election of Churchwardens and Deputy Church Wardens
4. Apologies
5. Minutes of 2020 Annual Parochial Church Meeting
6. Matters arising from Minutes
7. Vicar's Report
8. Treasurer's Report and PCC Financial Statements
9. Churchwardens' Report and presentation of Terrier
10. Election of members to the PCC
11. Election of Chalice Bearers
12. Election of Sides people
13. Electoral Roll
14. PCC Committee Reports
 - a) Buildings and Maintenance Committee
 - b) Social Committee
15. Appointment of independent examiner
16. Any other business
17. Closing prayers

Appendix 1 - Giving outside the Parish

**ANNUAL REPORT OF THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL (PCC)
OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF SONNING
For the year ended 31st December 2020**

**Incumbent: The Revd. Jamie Taylor,
The Vicarage, Thames Street, Sonning, RG4 6UR**

Independent Examiner: Banks & Co, Newbury, Berkshire

Aim and Purpose

To provide:

- Regular public worship that is open to all
- Sacred space for personal prayer and contemplation
- Pastoral work which includes visiting the sick and the bereaved
- The teaching of Christianity through sermons, courses and small groups
- The leadership of religious assemblies in schools
- The promotion of Christianity through the staging of events and meetings, and in the distribution of literature
- Promotion of the mission of the Church through provision of activities for all ages in our Parish
- Support of other charities in the UK and overseas

Objectives and Activities

The PCC is committed to enabling as many people as possible to worship in our parish and to become part of our parish community within Sonning, Sonning Eye and Charvil. The PCC vision is to:

- Serve better those who choose to worship with us and share a journey in faith
- Reach out and draw others to the knowledge and love of God
- Attend to the pastoral needs of those around us (As individuals and as an organisation)
- Preserve our Anglican heritage
- Engage with our local community and find new ways to serve it

When planning our activities for the year, the Incumbent and the PCC have considered the Commission's guidance on public benefit and in particular the specific guidance on charities for the advancement of religion. In particular, we try to enable ordinary people to live out their faith as part of our parish community through:

- Worship – Learning about the Gospel and developing their knowledge and trust in Jesus
- Mission and pastoral care – Giving to others and the provision of pastoral care for people living in the parish
- Buildings and Maintenance - To facilitate this work it is important that we maintain the fabric of our church
- Social – Arranging social events throughout the year

Administrative Information

The Parish of Sonning encompasses the thriving communities of Sonning, Sonning Eye and Charvil, located between Reading and Henley-on-Thames in a beautiful section of the Thames Valley. We have a growing congregation and are welcoming and uplifting, embracing the broad Anglican tradition.

The correspondence address is:

St Andrew's Church Office

Thames Street

Sonning

READING

Berkshire

RG4 6UR

The PCC is a body corporate (PCC Powers Measure 1956, Church Representation Rules 2006) and a charity registered with the Charity Commission. (Registered Charity Number: 1130763)

During the year, the following served the Parish:

Incumbent (and Chairman)	Revd Jamie Taylor
Associate Vicar	Revd Kate Toogood
Licensed Lay Minister	Bob Peters
Youth Minister	Chris West
Churchwardens (normally 5 year term)	Perry Mills Stuart Bowman
Deputy Churchwardens	Mark Jordan (<i>retired APCM 11 October 2020</i>) Liz Nelson Sue Peters Simon Darvall (<i>appointed APCM 11 October 2020</i>) Molly Woodley (<i>Emeritus Deputy Warden from APCM 2019</i>)
Treasurer	Richard Moore
Secretary	Hilary Rennie
Representatives on the Sonning Deanery Synod (normally 5 year term) (Total elected: 4)	Bob Hine Mark Jordan (<i>retired APCM 11 October 2020</i>) Rory Symes Molly Woodley
Other PCC Members (normally 3 year term)	Rachel Argent (<i>re-appointed APCM 11 October 2020</i>) Helen Craig (<i>appointed APCM 11 October 2020</i>) Sandra Grist Tom Jeffery Emma Leggett Jenny Sawyer Alison Smyly (<i>re-appointed APCM 11 October 2020</i>)

The PCC only met on 2 occasions during the year due to the Covid pandemic and the average attendance at these meetings was 67%

COMMITTEES

The PCC operates through a number of committees, which meet between the full meetings of the PCC. These are:

Standing and Finance

This is the only committee required by law and has power to transact the business of the PCC between meetings, subject to any directions given by the Council. Members are the Incumbent, the Churchwardens, the Treasurer and the Secretary.

Buildings and Maintenance

This committee attends to matters relating to stewardship of the church buildings and fabric. Chairman: Perry Mills

Mission and Pastoral

This committee attends to matters concerning external giving from the Parish. Chairman: Revd Jamie Taylor

Social

This committee is responsible for arranging social events.
Chairman: Sue Peters

The Parish Magazine

Delivered free to every house in the parish.

Editor: Bob Peters

Advertising and Distribution: Gordon Nutbrown

ELECTORAL ROLL

At the APCM in October 2020 there were 229 people on the Electoral Roll. The total number on the new 2021 Electoral Roll is 226.

THE VICAR'S REPORT

2020 is not a year any of us will look back on with great fondness. As a church, we were forced to close our doors to all visitors, including me! This was a silly overreaction from panicky Archbishops and I actually now wish that we had ignored their instructions, but hindsight is a wonderful thing. The problem with locked doors was that it presented an image of a frightened church in retreat. Happily for us at St. Andrew's this couldn't have been further from reality. We realised in those first few days of lockdown that we needed to do something different to meet the challenges of this unprecedented situation and so the St. Andrew's Shepherds were born. Liz Nelson did a sterling job in getting it off the ground and about 70 parishioners volunteered, and the benefits are still being felt now.

Many of us had to adapt, with varying degrees of success and frustration, to Zoom meetings and church went on-line, something that, whilst necessary at the time, is not, in my view, a medium that lends itself to the worship of Almighty God. The sight of the Archbishop of Canterbury officiating on Easter Sunday from his kitchen table when he has two chapels in Lambeth Palace is a case in point.

The Sunday Club and STAY on Sunday leaders adapted magnificently, as did the choir, and so some degree of continuity was achieved when some churches just went to sleep and have yet to wake up from what I can see. We were saddened to have to suspend Rendezvous and STAY on Friday but simply had no choice. It all seems a blur now, but I am so pleased we stuck our necks out to carry on with Christmas 2020 when every other church in our locality, including St. George's, Windsor, had shut up shop, even though carrying on was legal. Good for us I say!

I have complete admiration for all my colleagues through this period and thank them warmly for their work and ministries and also for their support for me, something that has been particularly welcome in this period. Hilary adapted brilliantly to working from home and keeping everyone connected through news sheets and emails and I have heard from many of you just how much you have appreciated this.

We were very pleased to welcome the new digital organ in July 2020 and, although still not being used to its full potential because of Covid, it is proving to be a marvellous addition to our worshipping life. I am grateful to the historic old Vicarage Maintenance Trust who paid their remaining

funds over to this project of about £30,000. The sponsor a stop campaign has yielded another £21,600, the Listed Places of Worship Scheme covered the VAT of £12,000 and the Blue Coat School donated £2,000, leaving the PCC to pay just under £8,000.

The dreaded death toll in the early days of lockdown failed to materialise in this parish, something that is a huge relief to us all. I was asked to count out remaining grave spaces by the local authority in March last year, which was a sobering task, but, thanks be to God, we haven't lost a single member of the congregation to the virus. As most of us have now had both jabs, let us hope that a corner is being turned and that normal life can resume shortly.

Jamie

TREASURER'S REPORT

Financial Review

The PCC ended the year with a total net income of £50,636 compared to £4,895 for the previous year.

Total income for the year was £324,511. There were grants received of £127,888, which included £84,750 from The Bull Inn Ecclesiastical Trust and £30,168 from The Sonning Vicarage Maintenance Trust in respect of the digital organ project. A legacy of £24,224 was received during the year. Planned Giving increased over the prior year, as more givers moved to standing orders. Income from collections and weddings was down due to the restrictions on services in place during the year. Restricted Investment Income of £6,541 was received, mostly for the Churchyard and St Andrew's building maintenance.

Major items of expenditure in 2020 included £73,500 on the purchase and installation of a new digital organ. Church service and mission costs were lower during the year due to the various restrictions in place.

The Parish Share contribution was maintained at £80,000.

Depreciation for the New Hall Building, the Youth Minister's House, and Equipment was £37,033.

The cost of producing the Parish Magazine continues to be covered by the revenue from advertising and the cost of distribution continues to be funded from General Funds. Magazine production costs were lower during the year due to a move to digital printing.

Reserves policy

It is PCC policy to maintain a balance on Unrestricted and Undesignated Funds (if possible), which equates to at least three months normal Unrestricted payments to cover emergency situations that may arise from time to time, and £58,000 is held in a Designated General Reserve Fund for this. The Reserve increased in 2020 to £58,175.

Richard Moore - Honorary Treasurer

CHURCHWARDENS' REPORT

Unprecedented times has become the normal narrative when describing the previous twelve months or so, and sadly we can offer no alternative definition to summarise the headlines of the Warden's Report.

It has been both incredibly challenging and rewarding to have been part of the St Andrews team during this period. The challenges have been obvious, as we have ebbed and flowed with the dynamics of the lockdowns and the impact on our ability to worship collectively.

Yet rewards have arisen out of these challenges, and there are key people who we would like to acknowledge and convey our thanks and gratitude to:

Jamie, Kate, Bob and Westy first and foremost for their continued spiritual leadership throughout the pandemic; ensuring that from the youngest to the oldest, all of our congregation had the opportunity to remain engaged in worship and connected to their parish church.

Liz Nelson was integral in the introduction the St Andrew's Shepherds, an initiative that has brought light and comfort to so many during the long periods of national lock down.

Caroline and her technical skills and facilitating the Zoom Sunday Services. Chris for ensuring that music could return to the church at the earliest opportunity. Thanks also to Alison and Magnus Smyly for ensuring Sunday Club continued during lock down and to Hilary for her continued excellence in ensuring the administration of the parish is seamless. Lastly, thanks to the limited number on the Welcome Team who have ensured that worship has been safe and as normal as possible – Hilary, Simon Darvall, Richard Moore, Helen Craig, Liz Nelson, Nick Sawyer and Sue Peters.

Stu Bowman and Perry Mills - Churchwardens

SAFEGUARDING REPORT

The PCC has complied with the duty to have due regard to the House of Bishops' Safeguarding Policy and Practice Guidance. The PCC has adopted the model Parish Safeguarding Policy from the Diocese of Oxford. The PCC has a policy on recruitment and follows the safer recruitment advice for paid and volunteer roles. Safeguarding training has been provided to those in paid and volunteer roles. Safeguarding concerns were raised with the Diocese on one occasion in 2020. This was investigated by the Oxford Diocese Safeguarding Team and the Archdeacon of Berkshire's Office and found to be unsubstantiated with no on-going safeguarding risk.

Rachel Argent, Safeguarding Officer

BUILDINGS & MAINTENANCE COMMITTEE

Not surprisingly, with us all having to stay away for months on end as part of our lockdown response, it's been much quieter in terms of works, general or non-scheduled maintenance, being carried out.

As you'd expect, all essential servicing and scheduled maintenance works have been kept up to date and apart from a watching brief to make sure all our buildings are safe, we really have had a lot less to do.

We've extended some security protection to our Mower store and have undertaken some general tidying of various trees and bushes in and around the churchyard.

We're still trying to assess the rising damp issues in the church and we've some enquiries out to a few qualified specialists to meet with us to inspect and advise.

Perry Mills - Chairman

SOCIAL COMMITTEE

Due to the Covid pandemic there have been no social events in the year to 31 December 2020. We hope to resume social events as soon as Government restrictions are lifted.

Sue Peters

OTHER REPORTS

Due to the Covid pandemic reports are not being presented for the various activities usually running at the church in more normal times. Reports for these activities will be presented at the 2022 APCM when Government restrictions have been fully lifted.

THE PARISH OF SONNING - Giving outside the Parish 2020

It was agreed at the PCC on 27 January 2016 that the list of recipients presented to that meeting would remain largely the same for 5 years, unless there were significant reasons for any variation, with a view to

supporting smaller, largely local, organisations and giving amounts that would be more significant to them.

A range of areas are covered, including Christian outreach, older people, children and families, health and homelessness. The PCC is also committed to supporting the worldwide church and in view of the continuing situation in the Middle East we are supporting Foundation for Relief and Reconciliation in the Middle East (FRRME), a UK based Christian charity which aims to rebuild lives and restore hope in the Middle East.

At the same time, it was agreed to maintain a small reserve, from which specific requests might be met during the year.

Donations made during 2020 were as follows:

Charities in the parish and local area:

Age Concern Twyford & District	£ 750
Sonning School and School House Trust	£1,500
Woodley Foodbank	£ 750
Yeldall Christian Centre	£ 750
Total of charities serving the parish and local area	£ 3,750

Charities serving the wider local area:

Berkshire Clergy Charity	£ 750
Christian Community Action (CCA)	£ 750
Parents and Children Together (PACT)	£ 750
Salvation Army, Reading	£ 750
Faith Christian Group	£ 750
TVC Air Ambulance	£ 750
Total of charities serving the wider local area	£ 4,500

Charities serving internationally:

Chernobyl Children's Lifeline (Ukraine)	£ 750
FRRME	£2,000
Karuneipuri Orphanage (India)	£1,000
Charities serving internationally	£ 3,750

TOTAL GIVING OUTSIDE THE PARISH 2020 **£12,000**