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*The Benefice of  
Staplegrove with  
Norton Fitzwarren*



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**CHURCH OF  
ST JOHN THE EVANGELIST  
STAPLEGROVE**

**DIOCESE OF BATH & WELLS**

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**ANNUAL REPORT – 2020/2021**



## The Rector's Welcome

Welcome to this year's Annual Report, in which we look back at an extraordinary year. In fact, with last year's Annual Meeting having been postponed until 21 October, in effect it reviews only a few months.

Nevertheless, quite a lot has happened in that time, not least my own appointment and arrival. Equally, the reports reveal that, in different ways, the life of the church has been able to continue, albeit in a limited and different fashion, despite the considerable challenges presented by the Covid-19 pandemic.



St John's owes a huge debt of gratitude to those who have worked so hard to maintain the life of the church in recent months. This has not been an easy task, accentuated of course by the period of vacancy without an incumbent.

It is especially heartening to see that the level of voluntary giving has been largely sustained, despite the relative lack of services and enabled in part through automated giving, which is a tribute to the commitment of our Church community. Sacrificial giving is a vital part of our Christian discipleship and witness.

David Greig retires as PCC Treasurer at this year's annual meetings, and I know that many people are enormously grateful for the time and attention he has devoted to the role in recent years. At the same time, we wish his successor well in the role, David Bridges.

Looking forward, it is certain that we are in for interesting times! As I write, we are delighted that regular services have resumed in the benefice and we pray that our worship provision will continue to grow, along with the wider life of the churches, as we follow the Government's and Church of England's advice.

One thing is for sure: Church will be different for a long time yet – maybe even permanently – as we adapt to living with the pandemic. All things need to be seen through a new perspective and much that we have taken for granted for so long may need to be reconsidered.

The good news is that Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and for ever. God is with us now just as much as he ever has. The Risen Jesus burst from the empty tomb to bring us new life: not that we should remain the same but be transformed continually more and more into his presence – as individuals and a collective Church.

The coming twelve months promise to be a time of opportunity, with new possibilities. Some of what we do may be largely familiar and some may feel rather different. As always, we must fix our eyes and ears on Jesus to seek his will, and if we do so faithfully then we can't go far wrong.

To this end, my intention is to hold a benefice vision event later in the year, when we pray that restrictions will allow a physical meeting, so that we can seek God's will and discern his purpose for us all going ahead as we emerge through, with – and hopefully from – the Covid-19 pandemic.

God bless you!

**Church of St John the Evangelist, Staplegrove**

**ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING**

**21<sup>ST</sup> APRIL 2021 BY ZOOM**

**AGENDA**

***Vestry Meeting***

- 1 Welcome by the Rector
- 2 Prayers
- 3 Minutes of last year's meeting – 21st October 2020  
- *See page 3*
- 4 Election of Churchwardens

***Annual Meeting***

- 1 Minutes of last year's meeting – 21st October 2020  
- *See pages 4 - 5*
- 2 Reports and matters arising  
- *See pages 6 - 17*
- 3 Elections  
- PCC Members including Assistant Wardens
- 4 Appointments  
- Independent Inspector of Accounts
- 5 Any Other Business
- 6 Closing Prayers

## Church of St John the Evangelist, Staplegrove

# ANNUAL REPORT 2020/2021

## List of Contents

### Minutes of last Annual Meeting – Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> October 2020

a - Vestry Meeting	page 3
b - Annual Meeting	pages 4,5

### Reports

1. Electoral Roll	..	page 6
2. Parochial Church Council	..	page 6
3. Finance	..	page 8
4. Church Fabric	..	page 8
5. Stewardship	..	page 9
6. Traidcraft	..	page 10
7. Staplegrove Parish Journal	..	page 10
8. Churchyard	..	page 11
9. Health and Safety	..	page 11
10. Hospitality	..	page 12
11. Church Flowers	..	page 12
12. Staplegrove Mothers' Union	..	page 12
13. Youth Mission Group	..	page 13
14. The Bellringers	..	page 13
15. Men's Society	..	page 14
16. Staplegrove Strollers	..	page 14
17. Women's Group	..	page 14
18. Taunton Food Bank	..	page 14
19. Fundraising		page 15
20. Parish Website		page 15
21. Taunton Deanery Synod	..	page 16
22. Pastoral		page 16
23. Worship		page 16
24. Community Activities		page 17

**The Parish Church of St John the Evangelist, Staplegrove**  
**Annual Parochial Church Meeting**  
**21<sup>st</sup> October 2020**

**Chair:** Alec James (Church Warden)

**Present:** Alec James and 26 parishioners  
William Allen, Ann Bridges, Paul Carter, Lesley Clark, Michael Clark,  
Marjorie Connell, Stafford Coombes, Alison Cursham, Martin Cursham, Sue  
Derham, Les Derham, Janet Darby, Mike Hansford, Mike Hawkins, Graham  
Hobrough, Brenda Kenny, John Kenny, Felicity McGill, Jim Read, Moira  
Read, Lynn Trigg, Peter Trigg. Gerald Weaver, Chris Young, Iona Young

**Apologies:** David Bridges, Gillie Greig, David Greig, Joan Bird, Heather Williams, Mike  
Stevens, Pat Stevens, Derek Senior, Margaret Senior, Suzi Allen

### **VESTRY MEETING**

**1 Prayer:**

Felicity McGill opened the meeting with prayer. All said the Lord's Prayer

**2 Minutes of Vestry meeting of 30<sup>th</sup> April 2019:**

William Allen asked that Suzi Allen's name should be corrected.

Graham Hobrough proposed that the minutes of the last meeting be accepted. Mike Hansford seconded, and the motion was carried unanimously. Alec James signed the Minutes as a true record.

**3 Election of Churchwardens**

<i><b>Posts</b></i>	<i><b>Nominees</b></i>	<i><b>Proposed</b></i>	<i><b>Seconded</b></i>
Churchwarden	Alec James	Mike Hansford	Felicity McGill
Deputy Warden	Chris Young	Graham Hobrough	Paul Carter
Assistant Warden	Stafford Coombes	Graham Hobrough	Felicity McGill

No other nominations were received.

All nominations were carried unanimously.

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## ANNUAL MEETING

### 1 Minutes of the Annual Parochial Church Meeting of 30<sup>th</sup> April 2019

Alec James proposed the minutes be accepted. Paul Carter seconded, and the motion was carried unanimously. Alec James signed the Minutes as a true record of the Meeting.

Sue Derham proposed a vote of thanks for all of those on the PCC and particularly Gerald Weaver who had worked so hard during the Vacancy.

### 2 Reports

The following comments were made on the Reports:

#### 3 Finance

3.1 Graham Hobrough said that it was unusual in Accounts not to be able to compare this year's and last year's figures.

3.2 Alec James proposed that the Accounts should be accepted. Seconded by Mike Hansford and approved unanimously. Alec James signed the accounts.

#### 8. Churchyard

8.1 Alec James thanked those parishioners who looked after the Churchyard. There had been a wonderful response to the Autumn Working Party. He said that the Horse Chestnut by the drive would be felled this winter because it was infested with a beetle.

#### 15. The Bellringers

15.1 Mike Hansford was asked about the funding for the rehangings of the bells. He said that it was covered with no expense to the PCC. He said that Heather Williams would like parishioners to be involved in some way and was preparing a quiz. There would be updates about the bells in the Journal.

### 3 Elections

<i>Position</i>	<i>Nominees</i>	<i>Proposed</i>	<i>Seconded</i>
Deanery Synod positions: (2.5 year)	Paul Carter	Felicity McGill	Iona Young
Deanery Synod position (2.5 year)	Gillian Greig	Iona Young	Stafford Coombes
PCC Member (2.5 years)	David Bridges	David Brennand	Paul Carter
	Moira Read	Gerald Weaver	Paul Carter
PCC Member (2.5 years)	Iona Young	Sue Derham	Felicity McGill
PCC Member (1.5 years)	Felicity McGill	Graham Hobrough	Iona Young
PCC Member (.5 years)	Marjorie Connell	William Allen	Mike Stevens

PCC Member (.5 year)	Vacancy – Janet Darby will be co-opted at the first PCC Meeting
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No other nominations were received. All nominations were carried unanimously.

***PCC members for 2020/2021***

Alec James (Chair),

Paul Carter, Stafford Coombes, Gillian Greig, Mike Hansford, Alec James, Moira Read, Chris Young, William Allen, Jim Read, David Bridges, Iona Young, Moira Read for the PCC, 1 vacancy (.5 years). 1 vacancy for vacant Deanery Synod post.

***Deanery Synod Member for 2020/21***

Paul Carter, Gilliam Greig and 1 vacant post.

**4 Appointments**

***Independent Examiner of Accounts:***

Alec James proposed we should use Mike Chapman of St. Andrews as an Independent Examiner of the Accounts. This was seconded by Graham Hobrough and carried unanimously.

**5 Any Other Business**

5.1 Graham Hobrough proposed thanks to everyone who worked so hard to run St John's during the Vacancy. They were applauded.

Alec James closed the meeting with the Grace.

## REPORTS for 2020/2021

Due to shielding by parishioners and the Covid restrictions during 2020/21 the Evergreens and the Choir have nothing to report.

### 1. ELECTORAL ROLL

The number of parishioners on the Electoral Roll now stands at 100 members. The figure is less than last year's Roll of 109, which is sadly due to some parishioners moving away and the death of others. Our Electoral Roll is however healthy when compared with other Churches in Taunton.

*Gillian Greig – Electoral Roll Officer*

### 2. PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL

Church members who served on the Council from 30<sup>th</sup> October 2020 were:

- The Churchwarden Mr Alec James\* (Chairman),
- Deputy Churchwarden Mr Chris Young\*
- Assistant Churchwarden Mr Stafford Coombes\*,
- Minutes Secretary Mrs Felicity McGill\*
- Hon Treasurer Mr David Greig\*
- Deanery Synod Representatives: Mrs Gillian Greig, Mr Paul Carter, 1 vacancy
- Elected members: Mr Alec James, Mr Chris Young, Mr Stafford Coombes
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- Mrs Gillian Greig<sup>1</sup>, Mr Paul Carter<sup>1</sup>, Mrs Moira Read<sup>1</sup>, Mrs Iona Young<sup>1</sup>, Mr David Bridges<sup>1</sup>, Felicity McGill<sup>2</sup>, Jim Read<sup>2\*</sup>, William Allen<sup>2</sup>, Mr Mike Hansford<sup>3</sup>, Marjorie Connell<sup>2</sup>, plus 1 vacancy
- Co-opted members (term ends 2021) Mr David Greig, Mrs Janet Darby

Notes:

<sup>1</sup>- term of office ends 2023; <sup>2</sup>- term of office ends 2022; <sup>3</sup>- term of office ends 2021

Those marked \* served on the Standing Committee during their term of office.

### Objectives and Activities

St John the Evangelist, Staplegrave PCC has its Primary Aims:

- To be a sign of the Good News of Jesus Christ and his love for the world.
- To nurture the Christian Faith through friendship, caring, sharing and teaching within the fellowship of the Church.
- To encourage and enable individuals to respond by faith to the message of Jesus and to follow him.

Further, the PCC has the responsibility of co-operating with the incumbent, the Reverend Paul Irving (from his licensing date on 17<sup>th</sup> March 2021), in promoting, in the ecclesiastical parish, the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical. It also has maintenance responsibilities for the Church and its Churchyard.

The PCC would like to thank Gerald Weaver, Church Warden who resigned on 30<sup>th</sup> September 2020 and Mike Stevens (Assistant Warden) who resigned at the Annual Meeting, for their work as part of the Church Warden's team. The PCC would also like to thank David Greig for his tireless work as Treasurer during the last ten years.

## Review of the year

The Council did not hold the meetings after 26<sup>th</sup> March due to lockdown restrictions, although it did meet on 16<sup>th</sup> September prior to the election of the new PCC. The new council met on 4 occasions: 28<sup>th</sup> October; 9<sup>th</sup> December, 20<sup>th</sup> January and 10<sup>th</sup> March. Following its approval by the PCC, a signed copy of the minutes was posted on the noticeboard in the Church porch and on the Church website. PCC Meetings were held in Church and by Zoom,

The Standing Committee of the Council met on four occasions prior to the Annual Meeting on 21<sup>st</sup> October: 14<sup>th</sup> July, 18<sup>th</sup> August, 16<sup>th</sup> September and 14<sup>th</sup> October 2020.

It met on four occasions after the Annual Meeting: 25<sup>th</sup> November, 6<sup>th</sup> January, 24<sup>th</sup> February and 31<sup>st</sup> March. Standing Committee meetings were held at 1 Lawn Road, Staplegrove (thank you to Chris and Iona Young for their kind hospitality), in Church and by Zoom.

The following appointments were made, and committees approved by the Council:

• Hon Treasurer	Mr David Greig
• Hon PCC Secretary	Mrs Felicity McGill
• Building & Property Committee coordinator	Mr Gerald Weaver
• Churchyard and Grounds Committee coordinator	Mr Stafford Coombes
• Electoral Roll Officer	Mrs Gillian Greig
• Independent Inspector of Accounts	Mr Mike Chapman
• Fundraising Events Coordinator	Mrs Marjorie Connell
• Health & Safety Officer	Mr Jim Read
• Journal Editor	Mr William Allen
• Advertising	Mrs Mandy Govett
• Pastoral Coordinator	Mrs Alison Cursham
• Safeguarding:	
➤ Child Protection Officer:	Glenys Armstrong (Bath and Wells)
➤ Advocate for Children & Vulnerable Adults:	Mrs Iona Young
• Hospitality Coordinator	Vacant
• Staplegrove School - Governor	Mrs Iona Young
• Stewardship Officer	Mr Chris Young
• Tower Captain	Mr Mike Hansford
• Village Hall Representative	Mr Stafford Coombes
• Website	Mrs Felicity McGill
• Youth Ministry & Mission Committee Coordinator	Mrs Iona Young

At the first meeting of the PCC, the following Sidesmen/Sideswomen were appointed:

Monica Allbut, Jenny Paull, Valerie Farrow, Chris Young, Ivy Weaver, Jim Read, Janet Darby, Graham Hobrough, Gillian Greig, Stafford Coombes, Paul Carter, Alison Cursham, Barbara Slocombe, Iona Young, Rona Graham, Danny Markland, Angela Thow

During the year the business of the Council included reviews of the following standing items:

- Choir
- Church finances and stewardship
- Church building & property
- Churchyard and grounds

- Fundraising Events
- Health & Safety
- Journal and Advertising
- Mother's Union
- Pastoral
- Safeguarding (including the updating of the policy in January 2020)
- School (including the provision of Bibles to school leavers)
- Hospitality
- Staplegrove School
- Tower
- Website
- Worship
- Youth Ministry & Mission (extension of Messy Church)

*Felicity McGill – PCC Secretary*

### **3. FINANCE**

Our closing balances on 31<sup>st</sup> December 2020 were

Natwest Current account	£16,579
CCLA General Savings account	<u>£29,111</u>
<b>Total</b>	<b>£45,690</b>

2020 was an exceptional year as we had the lockdown starting in March. We also had no incumbent. Even so we had £5053 more in the account at the end of the year and then at the beginning. Much of this is from legacies. We have started 2021 with ample funds and on the whole we are in a good financial position.

We have made good progress in our campaign to reduce the amount of money that is actually handled by Church members. The main advantage of this during the lockdown has been that it reduces the risk of infection. In due course we hope that we will have moved to a virtually paperless system.

The refurbishments of the Bell Tower are well in hand but there has been little progress over the last few months in the installation of the new glass door.

*David Greig – Treasurer*

### **4. CHURCH FABRIC**

At the quinquennial inspection of the Church fabric undertaken by our Church architect in 2016, a list of items requiring attention over the 5-year period up to 2021 was prepared and the final items on the list were completed in autumn 2020. A new inspection has just been undertaken and the Church architect's report is awaited. When this is received a work programme will be developed and funds allocated by the PCC to keep the building in good repair. However, discussions with the architect while his inspection was carried out have made it clear that the Church is in good order and all work is likely to be of a minor nature.

*Alec James – Churchwarden*

## 5. STEWARDSHIP

Thanks to all who gave financial support to St John's in 2020, we could not carry on without your generous donations. The PCC is very grateful to those who support the Church financially by paying through a bank standing order. This also makes my task significantly easier!

As the pandemic took hold it became clear that services would be cancelled, fund-raising events would be curtailed and that this would take its toll on our finances. To try and minimise this loss I wrote to regular givers last May to ask if they might think about the fund-raising events, they might have supported and donations they might have made at services and to contribute this to Church funds to help minimise the shortfall. It's not easy asking more from our supporters when they are already so generous, especially when the Church has been closed for long periods, so thanks to all those who responded, and this plea realised the massive sum of £4,864.

Thanks also to all those who supported our Harvest Gift Day, Saturday 5 October 2020, which raised a further £2,290.

The government's Gift Aid scheme allows the Church to reclaim 25p in every pound donated to the Church by those who have confirmed they are UK taxpayers. About 91% of the £27,882 donated in 2020 by using weekly giving envelopes or by monthly bank standing order, which includes the May special appeal, came into this 'tax efficient' category, as HMRC describes it. A further £2,718 was donated using the yellow envelopes which include a Gift Aid declaration.

When giving by using a bank standing order, please feel free to pick up one of the small cards available in the Porch to put in the collection plate for your regular giving to be blessed.

The 'Gift Aid-Small Donations Scheme' (GASDS) allows the Church to claim a similar tax refund to the Gift Aid claim, for cash collections at services, for our Gift Day, and other cash donations clearly supporting the Church, even though no Gift Aid declaration is attached. The rules are quite strict and some donations that could be classed as 'voluntary contributions' are not eligible to be included in the GASDS claim, including cheque payments. The claim is made on a tax year basis and in 2020 a claim for £1,356 was paid for eligible cash donations within the 2019-20 tax year. With the Church closed for much of the 2020-21 tax year our GASDS claim will be much lower for the 2020-21 tax year.

To prepare the claim for a tax refund HMRC requires quite a complicated record system to be maintained. My sincere thanks go to all those who count cash collections at services and complete this tedious and complicated process, but it is all worthwhile.

2020									
	Direct Giving	# Weekly Envelopes	Gift Aid Envelopes	Small Donations	Gift Day not GASD	TOTAL:	Not 'Tax Efficient'	Tax Efficient	2020 HMRC Payments
1 Jan - 5 Apr	£ 9,436	£ 258	£ 785	£ 1,011	-	£ 11,490	£ 927	£ 10,563	£ 3,744
6 Apr - 30 Jun	£ 7,242	£ 277	£ 1,330	£ -	-	£ 8,848	£ 655	£ 8,193	£ 3,285
1 Jul - 30 Sep	£ 5,406	£ -	£ 77	£ 228	-	£ 5,711	£ 535	£ 5,176	£ 1,969
1 Oct - 31 Dec	£ 5,714	£ 331	£ 526	£ 416	-	£ 6,986	£ 666	£ 6,321	£ 1,969
Jan -Dec 2020	£ 27,796	£ 865	£ 2,718	£ 1,655		£ 33,034	£ 2,783	£ 30,252	£ 8,998
Gift Day	£ 1,565	£ 30	£ 435	£ 80	£ 180	£ 2,290	£ 240	£ 2,050	
TOTAL	£ 29,361	£ 895	£ 3,153	£ 1,735	£ 180	£ 35,324	£ 3,023	£ 32,302	
Not 'Tax Efficient'	£ 2,464	£ 379	-	-	£ 180	£ 3,023			
Tax Efficient'	£ 26,897	£ 517	£ 3,153	£ 1,735	-	£ 32,302			

Chris Young - Stewardship Secretary



## 6. TRAIDCRAFT

In 2020 your benefice Traidcraft stall, both real and virtual, and annual Fairtrade Fortnight Big Brew coffee morning raised £632.14 in profit and donations for the Traidcraft Exchange charity, the development and campaigning charity arm of Traidcraft plc. To show why they need to exist and what they do, we've borrowed the following from their website:

### **We bring people together, to fight injustice in trade.**

*In its simplest form trade should be beneficial for everyone involved. Goods and money are exchanged, and everyone is better off.*

*But global trade doesn't work this way - instead it feeds the rich and exploits the poor. It traps people in poverty.*

*It's our mission to challenge the way global trade works - to use the power of trade to create lasting solutions to poverty.*

*With your support, we can work towards a future where everyone gets a fair income for their work, no matter what country they live in.*

Thank you for your continuing support of your Traidcraft stall. Please give us a call (01823 279686 or readjim@hotmail.com) if you need items or a catalogue and we will be back in Church as soon as we safely can.

Moira and Jim Read

## 7. STAPLEGROVE PARISH JOURNAL

The new Advertising and Distribution Managers, Mandy Govett and Sandy Robertson, are settling well into their jobs. We have a new advertiser, St Margaret's Hospice Funeral Service, who has taken a full page, and in these difficult times, the Journal is reaching its subscribers.

Unfortunately, we have had one complaint about inclusion on the "please pray for" list and GDPR means that we need to adopt a compliant policy. I feel very strongly that prayer is one of the central tenets of our faith and prayer for those in sickness or distress has been shown to be beneficial. Over the years, many hundreds of people will have gained comfort and support from the prayers of the parishioners and I believe that communal prayer will tend to unite the Parish, so I would counsel against simply shutting the system down.

In this matter, I see compliance with GDPR as basically about informed consent. If we or, in particular, Alison Cursham is strict about getting consent from the individual before adding his/her name to the "please pray for" list, I cannot foresee another problem.

The Editor will be having a socially distanced get-together with our Rector so that his ideas and wants can be incorporated into the Journal.

*William Allen, Journal Editor*

## **8. CHURCHYARD**

Over the past year the Churchyard has been well-maintained. Thank you especially to Richard Jowett and David Bailey for their care to maintaining the grass and around the graves, also to the volunteers who look after the flower beds and the working parties who manage the hedges and clear the leaves. David Bailey also worked at the north end of the site, removing laurels which were causing problems to a neighbouring property.

The daffodils in "Marion's Bank" have looked wonderful this year and it would be nice to be able to plant a few more next year so that the bank is full of colour in spring.

*Stafford Coombes and Alec James*

## **9. HEALTH AND SAFETY 2020** - Please don't turn the page, this certainly involved you this year!

2020, our third full year of the re-ordered Church! In January 2020 the words "Covid secure" were not part of health and safety or everyday speech. We were really fortunate that the design of the Church enabled it to be "Covid secure" without, to quote Gerald Weaver, "making it look like a crime scene". A one-way system, spaced out chairs, appropriate signage, automatic hand sanitisers and service booking systems, not to mention the congregation getting to grips with the social distancing rules, were all part of the job for the greater Church team. Many thanks to you all for playing your part in that team.

Now in 2021, with most of us somewhere in the vaccination queue and with a roadmap to follow, we are looking forward to the return of those Church activities that we couldn't do. In the short term don't forget your mask, remember the 2m rule and be prepared for activities to happen in a slightly different way.

If you ever have any health and safety concerns, please contact the Church Wardens or me.

*Jim Read - Safety Officer*

## **10. HOSPITALITY**

We have been unable to provide coffee after Services during 2020 and several regular events had to be cancelled: tea and chat, our Harvest Supper and Mulled Wine and Mince Pies after the Carol Service. We hope that we can start again later in the year, but we are still looking for a Hospitality Coordinator – there must be someone out there who would be willing to take on this role!

*Felicity McGill*

## **11. CHURCH FLOWERS**

It has been a very challenging year for Church flowers but a big thank you to all the lovely folk who made displays at home to decorate the Church at Harvest and Christmas 2020. We celebrated in style!

We look forward to better times again when we can get together and celebrate in our lovely Church.

*Janet Darby - Co-ordinator*

## **12. STAPLEGROVE MOTHERS' UNION**



As we all know it has been a strange year because of the Covid-19 pandemic. For most of the time Church services have not been possible, the Church closed and meetings of the MU not able to be held. However, following the onset of the Covid regulations and restrictions, during one period in the summer we managed to set up a monthly prayer session on a Wednesday afternoon in St John's Church. We have also been using technology to follow MU services and prayers from around the UK and the world. In November, Staplegrove Church School children supplied Poppies from their own Remembrance services to be displayed in St. John's. In December, members were able to watch, and join in with, a Global Service from Ireland, Guyana, Argentina York, Gloucester and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (the wonders of modern technology!) as part of our yearly 16 days of Activism against gender-based violence. Members have been following the main MU website and Cathedral prayers. In February 2021 a zoom Wave of Prayer service took place and in March after International Women's day members came together by zoom to unite in seven days of prayer to pray for women and girls worldwide. The MU also provided material for the Mothering Sunday Service which welcomed our new Rector and later that same morning a short zoom session prayed for women of faith with other members. Many thanks go to Moira and Jim for enabling us all to be part of so much during these trying times.

MU charity work has continued and as you will have seen the Staplegrove knitting group has continued their extraordinary hard work supplying clothes for needy families. At present we are also knitting bunting to decorate the churchyard for the installation of our new Rector. Our local fundraising has been curtailed this year; but December's fundraising was MU's nationwide The Big Give Challenge. This has raised over £62,424 for literacy and numeracy work in the Democratic Republic of Congo and elsewhere. Many thanks to all locally who donated.

With the good news about the various vaccines now being given out, we hope that we may be able to start meeting again later in the year. We shall be asking the speakers

from last year's programme is they can join us and if possible as part of our general fund raising, there will be a craft afternoon open to all to raise funds for MIND. We also hope that we could start up the New Members' sessions we planned for last year to encourage others to join us in the work of the MU and maybe reintroduce some evening meetings for those who cannot attend afternoon sessions.

*Margaret Senior and Moira Read*

### **13. YOUTH MISSION GROUP**

Unsurprisingly there is no new information to report for the work of the YMG since our last Annual meeting. We are hopeful that as restrictions are eased, we will be able to plan some activities for later in the summer.

We have kept in touch with the school during this time and we were pleased to be able to display Remembrance Poppies and Christmas decorations made by the children on the Tree of Life. The school are also very keen to have more 'Open the Book' sessions in the summer term so offers of help will be welcome.

If you have ideas about future developments for youth work or would like to help, please get in touch, we would love to hear from you.

*Iona Young*

### **14. THE BELLRINGERS**

I was reading last year's annual report and was surprised that at that point we had not really seriously come to terms with the fact that a year later we would have had the bells out of the tower and probably returned. I write this in February when the bells were removed before Christmas and are now at Taylors foundry and the tower looks very bare without them. However, I can say that a tremendous amount of work has gone into the tower since the bells have been missing.

A new floor was made under the old bell frame to allow the bells to be lowered. The walls have been pointed where the old A frames were. The lower section of the tower has been repointed as well. A new windowsill has been constructed and new louver opens have been made. The ceiling in the ringing chamber has been replaced, but the drafty door still remains. This is an on-going concern for the ringers. It seems a shame that whilst the Church has had a fantastic make over the poor old ringing room still leaks and allows mess to blow under the poorly fitting door, is freezing in the winter and the ringers get cold feet and chilblains. Never mind, we are long suffering people and know that one day a new or improved door may be fitted.

As is the case with annual reports, I need to thank people for their efforts over the past year. All the ringers have 'stepped up to the plate' as they say. The support has been great. I must single out Heather for her fantastic quiz, which raised nearly £1000 for the bell fund. Also, all the other ringers who helped distribute the quiz sheets round the village. A great all-round effort, well done all.

By the time you read this, I have every confidence that the bells will be back in the tower. It has seemed very strange not having any ringing anywhere for the past year and it is to be hoped that the vaccine roll-out will allow us back to something approaching normality soon. I have always said that ringing is the outward sound of the Christian Church. It has been missing for far too long.

To finish, my thanks to everyone who has helped Jill and I in the tower in any shape or form during the restoration. It has been very much appreciated, Thank you.

*Mike Hansford - Tower Captain*

## **15. MENS' SOCIETY**

We did manage just 2 Men's Society lunches in 2020 at 'The White Horse' under social gathering rules when groups of 6 were allowed.

*John Kenny*

## **16. THE STAPLEGROVE STROLLERS**

The pandemic certainly limited our plans for walking in 2020. However, we were able to meet for three circular walks from the Church car park last autumn. In September we were able to support the 'Ride and Stride' initiative, raising funds for the Somerset Churches Trust who so generously supported St John's by helping to fund our reordering, with one group walking to St Mary's at Kingston and another to All Saints' at Norton. In October a walk through Long Run Meadow to French Weir where we had refreshments outside at the Weir Café and in December we were able to walk through Norton, to the Hill Fort returning via Langford.

These walks pointed up just how loyal the Strollers are to the cause even when restrictions limit our plans and we look forward to being able to walk, talk and enjoy refreshments further afield as restrictions ease through the spring and summer.

*Chris and Iona Young*

## **17. WOMEN'S GROUP**

2020 was a very strange and difficult year for everyone but especially for the Women's Group as we very sadly lost our leader Marion Coombes. She is deeply missed by us all, both as a friend and for her enthusiasm for the group which was second to none. We are trying to look forward to 2021 with more positive thinking and can hopefully meet soon for those much-needed coffees and outings that we all enjoy so much. Among the many cancelled outings was a visit to Cannington walled garden, lunches at Pickeridge Golf Club and The Maypole Inn, tea at Monks Yard, and Bossington to name but a few. Hopefully we can re-arrange many of these outings and continue to enjoy the friendship and comradeship of the Women's Group for many years to come.

*Pamela Sharpe & Frances Markland*

## **18. TAUNTON FOOD BANK**

Thank you all for your continued support for Taunton Food Bank during the last year. As ever it has been much needed and appreciated.



The last year has been a difficult time for the Foodbank which has maintained its service throughout the year thanks to the hard work of Sue Weightman, the project manager and all the volunteers. 2020 has been the busiest year ever for Taunton Foodbank. Over 3,000 food parcels have been distributed, an increase of 44%

from previous years, providing 82,000 meals to local people in crisis. The estimated value of food donated was £143,000, an increase of 58% from previous years.

During the year the volunteers aged over 70 and those others who are vulnerable have been stepped down. The regular collection of the Staplegrove contributions was taken over by Moira and Jim Read and we are very grateful for all their help.

As the Church has been closed for most of the time, at present there is only one collection box in Staplegrove. The Staplegrove Village store now the Welcome COOP Store has continued to have a box for donations and for this again we are very grateful. The Foodbank collection box is at the left-hand side of the entrance by the lottery display board.

At present we are still supplying the clients with their food boxes at the door of Taunton foodbank. Wellington is also providing food this way. It seems to be working well at present. We are monitoring it each week. The Halcon Link Centre and several volunteers are helping with any client that is unable to get to the Foodbank because of self-isolating. Numbers of clients have increased over the year and are still increasing.

Some of our volunteers have stepped back again during this lockdown, understandably, but we continue to open, and the website has the opening hours. Please keep giving locally. Items needed at present are: Long Life Fruit Juice, UHT Whole Milk, 80s Tea Bags, Sponge puddings, Tinned Rice Puddings, Toilet Rolls, Biscuits.

Many thanks for all your continuing support at this difficult time. If you want any more information, please see the Foodbank website or contact me.

*Margaret Senior 01823 252724*

## **19. FUNDRAISING AND SOCIAL ACTIVITIES**

Following the successful 'Lychgate Stall' held at Beverley which raised £1280 for Church funds despite the Covid restrictions, we will resume sales with coffee/tea in the Churchyard, hopefully from Saturday 26th June.

Further fundraising events, such as The Strawberry Tea, will be arranged when circumstances allow. It was very encouraging to welcome a number of new supporters last year and we hope they will continue to come when we move back to the Church this year.

*Marjorie Connell –Co-ordinator*

## **20. PARISH WEBSITE**

The St John's website continues to provide an additional resource to the Journal for members of the Parish and in particular visitors who want to know more about our church. During the pandemic we were able to provide up to date information about the changes to Services when we had to close the Church without notice. There were over 22,700 hits on the site during the last year, so we must be doing something right! If you haven't yet looked at our site yet the address is <https://www.achurchnearyou.com/church/11357/>.



*Felicity McGill*

## **21. TAUNTON DEANERY SYNOD**

Regrettably Taunton Deanery Synod were unable to meet due to the pandemic and whilst they held the last meeting on Zoom, neither Gillie or myself were able to take part.

We look forward to a return to three meetings a year and developing our Parish MAP (Missionary Action Plan) with our new Rector.

*Gillian Greig & Paul Carter – Repts*

## **22. PASTORAL**

During the past year with the Pandemic a network of people has kept me informed about needs or requests for prayers for their neighbours or church members. I am grateful for this as I know that many are spending time talking on the phone or talking on doorsteps to make sure all feel loved and cared for.

As we gradually come out of lockdown we will hope to start visiting again and people will meet each other at Church services and the many hospitality groups held for all the community.

I believe this pandemic as awful as it, has been has brought the best out in so many people. There is a real sense of loving, helping and caring all around and this is heart-warming.

*Alison Cursham*

## **23. WORSHIP**

The first lockdown restrictions meant that we were unable to open the Church between March and July 2020, when we were able to open on a Wednesday and Sunday for private prayer. Our first Service celebrated Lammas Day. This was held in the Churchyard and enjoyed by over 50 people. Socially distanced Services commenced in Church in September when we set up a booking system to ensure that we could hold Services safely. We continued Services and private prayer until the second lockdown in November when we closed again. We did however manage to hold our Remembrance Sunday Service in the Churchyard led by Graham Hobrough and once again this was well attended. During December we held weekly Services, including an evening Carol Service led by the Rev David Ager in our beautifully decorated Church and a Christmas Day Service led by the Archdeacon, the Venerable Simon Hill. Once again in January because of the rising number of Covid cases we were encouraged to close our doors again. On Mothering Sunday, the last Sunday before our new Rector joined us, we once again held a well-attended Service in the Churchyard, which was led by the Rev Alaistair Wallace, when we clipped the Church and joined in a Service put together by the Mother's Union.

I would like to thank the Church of St Andrews, Rowbarton for their weekly Newsletters, and Alison and Martin Cursham for their weekly prayers. Also, the Clergy who have led our Services during the Vacancy. I would especially like to thank the Services team who have planned the Services and made difficult decisions: Jim Read, for keeping us up to date with information from the Church of England and ensuring that we are socially distanced, Moira Read for booking and cancelling Priests, Chris Young who ensured that we were able to listen to digital hymns during our Services. I would also like to thank the parishioners who took the bookings, Lesley Clark and Jim Booth who played the organ,

Alec James and his team for setting up the Church and Mike Hansford for providing socially distanced bellringing. That is a lot of thank-you's, but it really hasn't been an easy year.

*Felicity McGill*

*on behalf of the Services Team*

## **24. COMMUNITY EVENTS**

2020 was all about our community support and members of St John's proved they are good at this. A What's App Friendship Group was set up with over 25 members, this was very active and a lifeline to some folk who were shielding. We must thank Jim and Moira Read (and Frances and Danny Markland) who provided a weekly Fruit and Veg collection service from Granny Smiths. Sue and Les Derham and their egg-collecting Service and there were countless local initiatives which I know nothing about. Folk also grew daffodils at home which were displayed in the Churchyard and then planted in 'Marion's Bank' and over twenty people knitted bunting (thanks to Martin and Alison Cursham) which decorated the Churchyard to welcome the Reverend Paul Irving and his family to the Parish. A big thank you to everyone and hopefully we will be able to get together in our lovely Church during 2021.

*Felicity McGill*

**The Parochial Church Council  
St John the Evangelist  
Staplegrove**

**Audited Financial Statements**

**For the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> December 2020**

**Diocese of  
BATH AND WELLS**

***Treasurer* David Greig**

***Independent examiner* Michael Chapman Treasurer St  
Andrew's Church Taunton**

## Assets and liabilities

<b>Account</b>	<b>Opening ACTUAL Balance</b>	<b>MONEY In</b>	<b>MONEY Out</b>	<b>Closing ACTUAL Balance</b>
	£40,637	£95,620	(£90,567)	£45,690
Natwest Current account (Cash)	£11,703	£92,442	(£90,567)	£16,579
CCLA General 601086001 D (Cash)	£28,933	£178		£29,111

There are no unreconciled cheques. Therefore the “actual” balance is the same as the closing balance on the Bank Statement.

There are no restricted funds

There were no transfers between accounts in 2020.

## Assets

The total amount in the Accounts is the total of the figures in the last column of the above table. That is £45,690

Tangible fixed assets are set at £10,000 and are the nominal amount of owned by the PCC although the PCC owns an unvalued parcel of land to the North of the Graveyard.

There are no liabilities at 31<sup>st</sup> December 2020

# Accounts list for 2020

The last column is the 2019 figures for comparison

<b>Total Income/Expenditure</b>	<b>5,053.52</b>	<b>(1,027.26)</b>
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## Receipts

01	Tax efficient planned giving	26,277.50	29,536.90
02	Other planned giving	444.50	628.00
03	Other collections at services	2,869.29	3,024.75
04	Other Giving & Donations - Recurring	335.68	280.70
05	Other Giving & Donations - Non-Recurring	6,761.90	5,082.90
06	Special Appeals	3,045.00	2,827.00
07	All tax recovered through Gift Aid	8,532.48	14,273.39
08	Legacies received	3,000.00	500.00
09	Recurring Grants	535.00	535.00
10	Non-Recurring Grants	-	-
11	Fund Raising Events	1,058.80	4,405.26
12	Dividends & Interest	203.14	260.90
13	Income from Properties	240.00	-
14	Total Parochial Fees Income	7,095.12	14,204.93
15	Bookstall, Magazine etc	2,098.80	5,102.50
16	Hall Lettings	120.00	634.00
17	Income from other Church Activities	1,280.00	-
18	Insurance Claims	-	-
19	Reimbursement of costs by other Parishes	-	-
20	Sale of Fixed Assets	-	-
21	Service Fee Reimbursement by DBF	-	-
22	Other Income	3,042.07	1,576.15
<b>Total Receipts</b>		<b>66,939.28</b>	<b>82,872.38</b>

## Payments

30	Fund Raising Costs	-	(92.50)
31	Donations/Grants to Charities & Mission Giving	205.10	(118.79)
32	Parish Share	(46,596.84)	(40,757.40)
33	Salaries & Wages	(1,300.00)	(1,000.00)
34	Clergy Expenses	(1,689.41)	(1,143.78)
35	Other Expenses	(170.00)	(505.00)
36	Clergy Housing costs	-	-

37	Local Mission and Evangelism Projects	-	-
38	Children/Youth Work costs	-	(395.08)
39	Insurance costs	(1,122.64)	(1,121.37)
40	Cleaning costs	(441.00)	(1,611.00)
41	Minor Repairs/Routine Maintenance	(2,956.25)	(3,818.67)
42	Administration costs	(177.65)	-
43	Other Church Expenses/Provision of Services	(1,402.59)	(5,357.94)
44	Churchyard Maintenance	(3,155.82)	(8,304.27)
45	Flowers	(57.82)	(218.82)
46	Music costs	(465.18)	(801.13)
47	Heating & Lighting costs	(2,642.38)	(2,605.00)
48	Water Rates	-	-
49	Costs of Trading	(1,718.99)	(2,485.99)
50	Governance Costs	-	-
51	Parochial Fees Remittance to DBF	(1,436.00)	(5,130.00)
52	Parochial Fees Remitted to visiting Minister	-	-
53	Parochial Fees Remitted to other 3rd party	-	-
54	Parochial Fees Remitted to other PCC	-	-
55	Service Fee Remittance to visiting Minister	-	-
56	Payment of costs to other Parishes	-	-
57	Deanery Costs	-	-
58	Sundry Expenses	(3,125.00)	(91.60)
59	Major Repairs/Redecoration to Church Building	6,366.71	(7,916.50)
60	Major Repairs/Redecoration to other properties	-	-
61	Alterations/Extensions to Church Building	-	(424.80)
<b>Total Payments</b>		<b>(61,885.76)</b>	<b>(83,899.64)</b>

## Treasurer's Comment on the Accounts

These are contained within the Annual Report