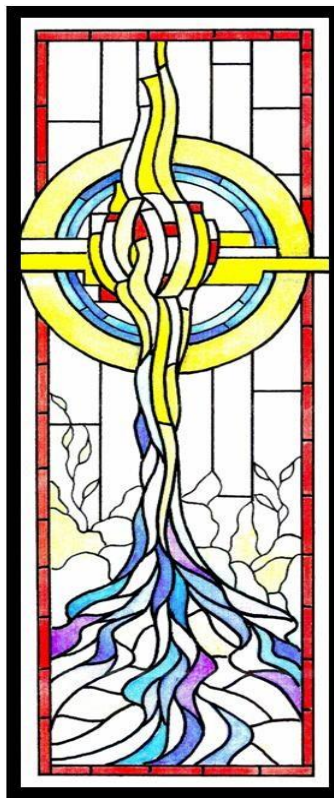


**The Annual Report on the activities of The Ecclesiastical Parish of
St Mary & St Peter, Staines
Registered charity number 1181133
For the year ended
31st December 2020**



**St. Mary's Church, Church Street, Staines, TW18 4YF
St. Peter's Church, Laleham Road, Staines, TW18 2DX**

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for St Mary and St Peter
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Find us also on: Face Book:

Friends of St Mary's, Staines

St Peter Church, Staines

Heaven@11 at St Peter's Church, Staines

The APCM for the Parish of St Mary and St Peter, Staines

To be held on Sunday 16th May 2021 at 12:00am in St Peter's Church, Staines

Agenda:

1. Prayers.
2. Apologies for Absence.
3. **Parish of St Mary and St Peter, Staines: Vestry Meeting**
 - 3.1 Approval of Minutes of the meeting held on 4th October 2020
 - 3.2 Election of Church Wardens
 - 3.3 Any other business
4. **Annual Parochial Church Meeting for the Parish of St Mary and St Peter, Staines.**
 - 4.1 Apologies for absence
 - 4.2. Approval of the Minutes of the APCMs held on the 4th October 2020 for the Parish of St Mary and St Peter, Staines.
 - 4.3. Reports on the Year ending 31st December 2020 (See APCM booklet for reference)
 - i. Electoral Roll Report followed by a minute's silence for the deceased.
 - ii. Vicar's report
 - iii. Church wardens' reports
 - iv. PCC Secretary's Report
 - v. PCC Treasurer's Report and Presentation of Accounts for the year ending 31st December 2020.
 - vi. Deanery Synod Report
 - vii. Safeguarding report
 - viii. Annual reports on the activities of the parish.
5. Elections to the Deanery Synod
6. Elections to the PCC
8. Appointment of an Independent Examiner to the Council
9. Ratification of Leadership Teams
10. Any other business
11. Closing Prayers.

PARISH OF St. Mary and St. Peter Staines
Minutes of the Vestry and APCM Meeting
Held at St. Peter's Church on Sunday 4th October 2020 at 11:00am

1. Prayers:

Rev. Jonathan welcomed and thanked everybody for attending and opened the meeting with Prayers.

2. Apologies for Absence:

The meeting was attended by 54 people. Apologies were received from Chris and Sue Miles, Vera Varndell, Sue Docherty and Hugh Owen.

3. Parish of St. Mary and St. Peter Staines Vestry Meeting:

- I. The minutes for the Vestry meeting held on 28th April 2019 were approved.
 - II. They were Proposed by Anna Leach and seconded by Hugh Thomas.
 - III. Election of Church Wardens: Michael Moulton and Joanne Williams for St Peter's and Anna Leach for St. Mary's, all were duly elected and appointed. The post of second Church Warden at St. Mary's remains vacant.
 - IV. Any other Business. There was no other business.
- MEETING CLOSED

4. Annual Parochial Church Meeting for the Parish of St. Mary and St. Peter Staines

- 4.1 **Apologies for Absence:** Beth Scott, Chris and Sue Miles, Vera Varndell, Sue Docherty and Hugh Owen.
- 4.2 Approval of the Minutes of the APCM held on 28th April 2019 for the former Parish of Staines and the Parish of St. Mary and St. Peter Staines. These were proposed by Anna Leach and seconded by Jane Bental. The minutes were approved by a majority show of hands
- 4.3 **Reports on the Year Ending 31st December 2019 (See APCM booklet for reference)**

5. Electoral Roll Report followed by a minute's silence for the deceased:

The numbers on the Electoral Roll are:

St. Mary's 33 (a decrease of 2 from last records).

St. Peter's 120 (an increase of 6 from last records).

Making a total of 153.

Those on last year's Electoral Roll that have since died:

Stuart Scott, Shirley Carlton, Erla Brown, David Matthews, June Tiddy and Shelagh Kyle.

Those who have moved away:

Mark and Diane Brady and Pat Pettitt; we wish them well in their new homes.

During 2019 we had 2 baptisms and no weddings at St. Mary's and 19 baptisms and 2 weddings at St. Peter's.

Proposed by Betty Sanders and seconded by Nick Wood-Dow. Approved.

I. Vicar's Report:

Jessica Espley asked if a copy of the APCM booklet was available; she was advised to contact Viv Dover in the Church Office who would email her a copy on request, or it could be read on the web-site, it had also been advertised. Rev. Jonathan said that printing has been limited because of the risk of contamination due to Coronavirus, he also mentioned that a printed copy of the APCM booklet and 2019 accounts was available at the back of the Church. There were no other questions.

II. Parish Reorganisation and Interregnum Report:

No questions were asked.

III. Church Wardens Reports:

No questions were asked.

IV. PCC Secretary's Report:

No questions were asked.

V. PCC Treasurer's Report and Presentation of Accounts for the year ending 31st December 2019:

The Chairman thanked Rebecca for all her hard work and for the great financial saving to the Parish by agreeing to do the accounts for free. Rebecca said that it had taken her a long time to finalise the accounts, partly because of working restrictions due the COVID-19, but mainly because of the adjustment needed for the valuation of the Church Hall and flat, which had significant effects on the figures. It also took time for the accounts to be audited.

Rebecca was given a gift of appreciation by the Parish.

Rebecca and Rev. Jonathan will be attending a Diocesan Common Fund 2021 meeting.

Comments from the floor:

Clarification was asked regarding the availability of the accounts and it was confirmed that they had been available in both churches and by email on request for two weeks before the meeting.

A question was also raised about whether it was necessary to vote on the accounts and the Chair confirmed that they simply had to be proposed, seconded and accepted, the accounts have already been approved by the PCC and now they are only being presented to the APCM.

Philip Cambary also thanked Rebecca and he reminded everyone that the accounts are always historic.

Conclusion – Philip Cambay proposed to approve accounts for 2019 and Michael Moulton seconded the proposal. This was approved by the majority.

VI. Deanery Synod Report:

No questions were asked.

VII. Safeguarding:

No questions were asked.

VIII. Annual Reports on activities of the Parish:

The Chairman thanked Jennifer Fraser in her absence for the music in the Parish during 2019.

6. Elections to the Deanery Synod:

Jane Bental, representing the Heaven@11 congregation, was proposed by Jean Huggins and seconded by Lesley Matthews. Nick Wood-Dow representing the St. Peter's 9:30 congregation, proposed by Elizabeth Wood-Dow and seconded by Vera Varndell. The Chairman left the opportunity open for somebody to take up the role of Deanery Synod Representative for St. Mary's congregation. Jane and Nick were elected and appointed as Deanery Synod members.

7. Elections to the PCC:

Five positions on the PCC were available and there were five nominations:

St. Mary's – Jessica Elizabeth Espley, proposed by Anna Leach and seconded by Nick Wood-Dow. Betty Sanders – Proposed by Anna Leach and seconded by Wendy Ransom.

St. Peter's – Kathryn Anne Ellidge, proposed by Michael Moulton and seconded by Jane Bental. Wendy Ransom, proposed by Michael Moulton and seconded by Murray Ransom. Vivien Anne Talkington, proposed by Lindy Moulton and seconded by Tim Franck.

All were duly elected.

8. Co-options to the PCC:

Nobody was co-opted to the PCC.

9. Appointment of an Independent Examiner to the Council:

Richard Longley ACA is to continue in his role as Independent Examiner to the Council. Richard was proposed by Philip Cambray and seconded by David Jennings. Richard was duly appointed.

10. Ratification of Leadership Teams:

St. Mary's – Anna Leach, Charles Salkield, Betty Sanders, Beth Scott and Colin Verge.

St. Peter's – Michael Moulton, Joanne Williams, Stuart Ellidge, Tim Franck, Lindy Moulton, Barry Purdon, Murray Ransom, Hugh Thomas and Mark Walker.

Rev. Jonathan Samadi will chair both Leadership teams.

Proposed by Jane Bental and seconded by Lesley Hall.

All ratified.

11. Vicar's thoughts on year ahead and reorganisation of the PCC:

Rev. Jonathan drew attention to the difficulties this year because of the pandemic, emotionally, physically, and spiritually, he was especially grateful to all those helping to run the Parish. He recognised the difficulties and differences of opinions surrounding the PCC decision to make the paid post of Director of Music redundant but emphasised that change was inevitable considering the difficulties of the Parish. He thanked those who stood firm in all the difficulties that the Parish has had to deal with.

Serving the Wider Community – Rev. Jonathan said that he wanted to be able to work more with young people and he hopes this will be possible in the future.

Reorganisation of the PCC – Rev. Jonathan said that at the next APCM he would ideally like to reduce the number of PCC members to 12; however, he proposed that there should be two elected PCC representatives from each congregation – 2 from St. Mary’s, two from St. Peter’s and 2 from Heaven@11. Plus 4 Church Wardens and up to 3 Deanery Synod members. Plus Rev. Jonathan and any other Minister. He believes that this will be a more manageable and effective number. Proposer – Michael Moulton. Seconder David Jennings.

42 were in favour of this proposal and three against. This was duly approved.

12. Any Other Business:

Sue Hobart asked for it to be noted that this was the first time in over 100 years that St. Peter’s did not have a 4-part choir. Rev. Jonathan said that we will rely on volunteers for music in-order to serve God and currently we have put together a new worship team for the Parish which is very capable of leading sung worship in both Churches.

Lesley Hall asked who will be looking after the organs in each of the Churches and why we have an organist from Margate. Rev. Jonathan said that the organs will be regularly maintained and serviced twice a year in each Church. The organs will also be played at least twice a month in each Church. He expressed his gratitude to Bob Dick, a member of his former parish who feels moved by God to support him in his ministry with us and is willing to travel regularly from Margate to play the organ at our services.

David Jennings asked if we will be continuing with the Alpha Course – Rev. Jonathan said that it is the intention to carry on with it, either in person or on-line, whatever is possible in the present climate.

13. Closing Prayers:

Rev. Jonathan Closed the meeting with Prayers.

The meeting ended at 11:57am

Signed.....Rev. Jonathan Samadi.

Date.....

VICAR'S REPORT

2020 was one of the most difficult years in the modern history for many people around the world. Many suffered the effects of Covid-19 in the personal, family and community life in all kind of ways.

The churches in England were closed for the first time in over 800 years. And after over a year, the worldwide church is still struggling with the negative effects of the pandemic in a variety of levels.

In our own parish, we started the year with facing difficult realities in the parish life including the need for a change in our financial strategy. This led the PCC to make a series of difficult decisions to cut expenditure in every possible way in order to reduce the ever growing financial deficit. One of the most difficult decisions was making the paid post of director of music redundant which initially caused some understandable disagreements yet by God's grace and your faithfulness we managed to stay united and strong through a very challenging time.

Soon after this, we had to close our churches in March because of the government and CofE order, and couldn't have any gatherings until 4th July which was the first date we were allowed to go back to public worship after more than three months.

During the first lockdown, we continued our Sunday services online through our parish's Facebook pages and had many from the parish and beyond joining us in worship and prayers.

We also managed to put together a "buddying Scheme" through which the older members of our congregations were paired with a younger person or a family to make sure no one is isolated and those who need any help are able to find support during the lockdown. This was well received and we had so many positive feedback from both older and younger participants who found this as a new opportunity for friendship and fellowship.

After returning to public worship in July, we carried on with our services every Sunday, inline with the government and CofE guidelines for the safety of our parishioners. During this time, I was able to invite a number of faithful parishioners to join me in shaping a new Worship Choir for the parish with the aim of improving our sung worship both spiritually and technically. I asked Jo Gardener to help us in this task with her skills and experience and also a number of musicians joined us to support as volunteers to whom I am immensely grateful.

I am sure many of you would agree that our new Worship Choir is in great internal harmony and has brought the joy of worship to our congregations even during the three lockdowns when they had to record their voices in their homes.

Towards the end of the year, we had planned our Carol Service and all Christmas services well in advance but the devastating high numbers of infection due to a new variety of Corona virus forced us to cancel all our Christmas services. I should confess that 18th December was the most difficult day for me since the beginning of the pandemic as I had to make this difficult decision together with our PCC in very short period of time immediately after the government's announcement.

But with the help of our new Worship Choir and H@11 band, we were able to offer an online Carol service and Christmas services which were well received and was watched at least few hundred times.

In the end, I would like to thank all of you for your faithful support for the parish and God's precious church. Your commitment and faithfulness is a great inspiration for my ministry.

My special thanks to Rev. Christopher Henley for his four years of service to the parish, all leaders, staff, volunteers, Church wardens and the PCC members for their time and efforts during a very challenging and difficult year. I am also grateful to Rev. Sue Wood and her husband Mike for their continued support for the parish.

Praise God that nothing can separate us from His love and from one another even the despair and frustration of a global pandemic.

With love and prayers
Rev. Jonathan Samadi

CHURCHWARDENS' REPORT ON THE FABRIC OF ST. MARY'S CHURCH AS AT END DECEMBER 2020.

Worship

In early February 2020 storm Ciara brought down a very large bough from a tree just outside the Vestry; it fell neatly between the tombstones causing no damage. The year ahead was to bring many other unforeseen events, but St Mary's has not stopped worshipping.

In mid-March the Stay-at-Home Lockdown meant that Fr Christopher Henley's last service before he moved to St Philip & St James, Whitton, was a live-streamed service from an almost empty St Mary's, setting the scene for next few months.

The church reopened for individual prayer on Sundays in June, and we were also able to open up for the anniversary of the Papa India air disaster on June 18th. Congregational worship did not resume until July. And then, it was tremendously disappointing to have to cancel all our Christmas services at short notice as the December Tier 4 Lockdown took us all back to our Facebook screens.

Covid adjustments

Considerable efforts have been put in place to ensure our services would be available online during lockdown, and then to ensure that we were Covid-safe when we reopened our church building.

All our services have been livestreamed, using mobile phone technology and Facebook livestreaming. A mobile Wi-Fi connection was installed at St Mary's in October, making the live-streaming of services much easier, and a mobile phone tripod helps with picture stability. We've also purchased a projector to enable us to support a move to a paperless service, which was felt to be particularly appropriate to reduce Covid risk.

Health and safety has been a key priority during 2020 to enable us to come together in our church building whenever possible, while also managing risk. We have one way systems, contact tracing and sanitiser in place at St Mary's, supported by a hard working St Mary's team of volunteers, without whom it would have been impossible to manage the many regulations we needed to implement.

Community

Lockdowns prevented Carers & Toddlers, along with some other groups, from holding their meetings at St Mary's. As a support group, Alcoholics Anonymous was permitted to resume its meetings in July, using the church main building to enable social distancing; those isolating at home were also supported by AA Zooming each meeting. The introduction of the Wi-Fi greatly facilitated this.

With so many local residents furloughed or working from home St Mary's churchyard became a popular location for a breath of fresh air, a more tranquil location than the neighbouring Lammas Park.

Lockdown and social distancing worsened the paranoia of the homeless gentleman, who first appeared at St Mary's in June 2018, leading to his arrest in October. This serendipitous answer to prayer resulted in him eventually being housed and receiving the appropriate care.

Church Fabric

Routine inspections continued through Covid with no serious problems being shown up. Modification have been carried out on the sound system to make livestreaming easier. In October, work was carried out on the Vestry roof to remedy a developing problem; storms have a tendency to find the weaknesses in the building as it approaches its bicentenary.

Anna Leach

CHURCHWARDENS' REPORT ON THE FABRIC OF ST. PETER'S CHURCH AS AT END DECEMBER 2020.

**We started 2020 looking forward to the Proms, then lock-down.
Covid 19 dominated most planned events during the year.**

The Fabric of St. Peter's Church

The building remains waterproof and the boiler keeps it warm for the few church services we have been able to hold. The boiler has been serviced and is OK. The lightning conductor was checked in early December and is working.

The gutters have all been cleaned and the downpipes cleared. A few broken tiles have been replaced. The green baize on the dais is starting to show signs of heavy usage and the support structure needs to be repaired.

On 5th August Nicolas Weedon arrived at St Peter's to carry out the Quinquennial Inspection, as required by the Diocese. The report was received in late September. The main areas of concern related to various vegetation growing up around the church. Most of these concerns have now been addressed.

Services

From the end of March during the first lockdown all services were put on -line. On Easter Sunday Jonathan led an on-line service from the Church lawn with the crosses as a backcloth.

Due to lock down we missed out on events such as Rogation Sunday & Petertide, but took advantage of reduced restrictions to celebrate Harvest Festival, when various food gifts were collected by Manna for distribution to those in need and our Gift Day, when toys were collected and given to the Salvation Army for distribution. We also had a collection for Christ Church Istanbul, when some £700 was raised in total. We also held our annual Service of Light in memory of those who had died.

Christmas.

We are especially grateful to Colin Squire for giving us a lovely shapely Christmas tree this year. Once up it was soon decorated with lights and prayer balls. This year the tree was moved to the other side of the church to allow space for our Worship choir in the Lady Chapel. We have also put-up strings of lights between the pillars in the church, which has resulted in a more friendly and warm feeling in the building.

Following the many comments of support of the lighted star on the church last year, we asked Hugh to leave it shining for the whole of the lock-down.

A few local churches asked to use St Peter's for their pre-Christmas services, so that they could accommodate their congregation and maintain social distancing. They later decided to put their services on line. We put our Nine Lessons & Carols, Mid-night Mass and Christmas Day service online.

Other Events in St Peter's.

On a few occasions during the first lock-down the church was opened for private prayers. Afterward this we opened for our usual services but with everyone observing social distancing. During the second lock-down period all services were streamed on-line.

In July Chris Bannister advised the Bishop that she was standing down as a Church Warden for St Peter's. Chris has been a Church Warden for over six years, and we are grateful to her for all she has done for the Parish.

At a specially convened APCM on 4th October, Jo Williams was elected as a Church Warden for St Peter's.

For many years there have been complaints about the chairs in St Peter's being uncomfortable. We were given a number of throws which slightly eased the pain. However, the woodworm has been busy at work. Some 30 chairs have had to be disposed of as considered unsafe for use. In June Jonathan was offered 100 chairs from a church which no longer needed them. The Standing Committee rapidly accepted this offer and the chairs duly arrived and were stored in the hall. Jo Williams was then asked to explore the potential market for old church chairs. This was resolved in 2021.

Church Hall.

Very sadly towards the end of February we lost our hall caretaker. David Matthews, David had been our caretaker for many years. and was liked and respected by all hall users. I think he enjoyed the daily challenge of keeping everyone happy and the halls in working order. He is missed.

By the end of March, with the exception of the Nursery, all regular hall usage had ceased, as a consequence of the present situation, we have not attempted to replace David.

We were pleased to be able to respond to requests from the Blood Transfusion service and let the halls so that urgently needed Blood Donors could donate.

For a few weeks Ben Dryer came along and cleaned the halls on a Saturday, this was part of his Duke of Edinburgh challenge. All the doors in the large hall have been re-painted.

The Parish Office.

The office was open as usual at the start of the year but from April onwards it had to close. Leanne was placed on furlough and Viv Dover came in for a short while each week to deal with the post and other urgent matters. Wendy offered to continue dealing with the booking etc free of charge.

The Gardens.

After many years' service the church lawn mower passed into retirement. An appeal was launched to fund the purchase of a new mower. The response was over whelming, and a new mower is now hard at work. With the agreement of those who donated the surplus money went towards resurfacing part of the hall car park, which had become dangerous with deep potholes.

We have planted a hedge dividing off the lawn from Peterhouse, this will provide some additional privacy to those in the vicarage and Peterhouse.

Following an approach from Jill Meads to tidy up the two small gardens at the west end of the church and thanks to generous donations from members of the congregation we employed a professional gardener to completely clear both areas, leaving the yew tree and a magnolia. Once clear of weeds this will be re-planted. Thanks to the efforts of Tony Harman, we were awarded a small grant from the "Better Neighbourhood Grant" which helped cover the above work.

We are now looking at various options to convert a part of the lawn into a peaceful and restful prayer garden, for those who welcomed an opportunity to have a peaceful moment and quiet prayer.

Michael Moulton & Jo Williams.

Parochial Church Council of St Mary and St Peter, Staines Secretary's Report

What a year it has been, our lives have been turned upside down because of the pandemic and we had to find a new way to worship when most of our Churches closed to keep people safe. I am so glad that we live in an age of technology that has allowed us not only to keep in touch but also enabled us to join in services from the comfort of our homes through live online streaming.

Zoom meetings became the norm for many meetings, including the weekly Prayer group and the occasional coffee morning and I can report that we have managed to have 6 Standing/Finance committee meetings as well as 5 PCC meetings.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Reverend Jonathan and all those who have worked so hard to hold our Parish together by ensuring the joint services and H@11 went ahead each week.

Becoming PCC Secretary has been a very new and interesting experience and I want to especially thank Reverend Jonathan and Lindy Moulton for the support they have given me and all the kindness and patience they have shown me in adapting to this role. Let's all hope and pray the worst of the pandemic is over and that we can look forward to worshipping and singing together in Church again – without masks!

Vivien Talkington

TREASURER'S REPORT TO THE 2020 ACCOUNTS

This can be read in the "Report of the trustees and financial statements for the year 31st December 2020 for the Parochial Church Council of the Ecclesiastical Parish of Staines."

SPELTHORNE DEANERY SYNOD REPORT

The Spelthorne Deanery Mission took place in February 2020. This was preceded by a few preparatory training events initiated by the former Area Dean, Rev Andy Saville. There were many meetings, social events and school visits throughout the Deanery and Bishop Graham Tomlin spoke at a lot of these meetings. Generally the mission was an encouragement to all those who participated and a challenge to us all to do more in future.

Normally Synod meetings provide an opportunity for sharing news and enjoying fellowship with the clergy and lay representatives from the 11 churches within Spelthorne Deanery. Despite the national lockdown restrictions from March 2020, the Synod successfully continued with a programme of meetings remotely on zoom.

Fr Joseph Fernandes, the incumbent of St Hilda's Ashford, was appointed as Area Dean in March 2020. Revd Allen Bower was licensed as the new Vicar of St Saviour's, Sunbury in September. There were several Annual Finance meetings hosted remotely over zoom by Archdeacon Richard Frank and Rev Mary Spredbury (Diocesan Finance Officer) during the summer. Each Church Treasurer and PCC representatives were able to participate.

In June, the Bishop of London, Rt Rev and Rt Hon Dame Sarah Mullally gave an inspiring talk on the Diocese of London's vision for the next decade and then participated in a Q&A session on current topics. She noted that there had been some very positive effects of the lockdown period for example many churches have developed good on-line services, small home groups had been supporting each other well using zoom meetings and many families, including her own, have been able to spend time together regularly for prayer and Bible reading. Referring to Life after Lockdown she mentioned that various changes are inevitable and we will not go back to a pre-lockdown "normal".

In the 2030 Vision Bishop Sarah said a principal objective would be for the Church to be there for every Londoner.

The main ambitions of the vision are that we believe God is calling us to grow as:

- Confident Disciples
- Compassionate Communities
- Creative Growth in numbers

Referring to Acts 2:42– 7, she noted that the believers knew each other well, they shared things in common and then God added to their number.

At the Synod meeting in November, Bishop Graham Tomlin elaborated further on the Diocese of London Vision 2030. His introductory comments were that this is a vision with a big but not impossible ambition. The vision is that every Londoner (Spelthorne resident) should encounter the love of God in Christ and that this vision should be inspired by prayer. During the course of the presentation Bishop Graham made extensive references to Acts Chap 2 and how we need our church communities to become younger, safer and more racially diverse.

Father Joseph Fernandes
Spelthorne Area Dean

Norman W Head
Spelthorne Deanery Lay Chair

SAFEGUARDING REPORT

In March 2020, Safeguarding Officer Kathryn Ellidge renewed her Basic Awareness/C0 safeguarding training. The safeguarding training website and in person training were unavailable for part of 2020, delaying completion of other training. In December it was agreed that all PCC members would complete Basic Awareness Safeguarding Training. Church Wardens, Heaven@11 leaders and those taking communion/visiting in the community would complete basic, foundation and leadership safeguarding training.

Developing a Safer Culture

Safeguarding is a standing agenda at PCC meetings.

‘Promoting a safer church’ posters are displayed on the notice boards.

The Safeguarding Policy Statement for 2020 was signed and has since been displayed in the churches and on the Parish website.

The annual Parish Safeguarding Audit was completed and submitted to the diocese in May 2020. The audit showed us to be compliant in most areas, with some work needed in the areas of renewing safeguarding training and DBS checks for the relevant people.

One safeguarding incident was raised with the Diocese in 2020; there were no serious safeguarding issues.

Ongoing/Working Towards

Safeguarding training is underway and is to be completed by necessary roles all in the parish during 2021. DBS applications are to be completed.

Compliance Statement

The PCC has given due regard to guidance issued by the House of Bishops on matters relating to the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults.

Other

Beth Scott has stepped down as safeguarding officer for St Mary's. Many thanks to Beth for the time she has given to this role over the last few years.

The Parish Safeguarding Officer is Kathryn Ellidge. If you have any safeguarding concerns or queries, please contact Kathryn on 01784 421704 or email kathryn@ellidge.co.uk

REPORTS ON GROUPS AND LIFE WITHIN THE PARISH of ST MARY AND ST PETER, STAINES



Report on Planned Giving for 2020

We launched the Parish Giving Scheme (PGS) in this parish in mid-2019 to facilitate regular Planned Giving by our church members.

Six months later, by the end of 2019, there were 50 members enrolled, giving regular donations totalling £2,763.00 per month. Gift Aid was being received of £625.00 per month where qualified. At that point there were also still 14 members giving a total of £1,492.00 per month directly to the parish by bank standing order. Gift Aid of £328 per month, where qualified, was claimed on these. The number of members in Planned Giving by either method totalled 64.

At the close of 2020 there were 51 members enrolled with PGS giving £4,278.00 per month with Gift Aid received of £1,009.00 per month. There were fewer bank standing order donations still in force giving a reduced total of £457.00 per month, plus relevant Gift Aid of £90.00 per month.

The above is a snapshot of monthly giving at the beginning and end of the year. Bank standing order donations for Manna are excluded. During the year, there were leavers and joiners, as well as reductions and increases in amounts donated by members. Please refer to the accounts for actual donation totals.

Barry Purdon
Planned Giving Liaison
office@stmaryandstpeterstaines.co.uk

Heaven@11 – 2020 Annual Report

As with everything else in life, Heaven@11 didn't run entirely according to plan in 2020! Things started brightly as we commenced the year with a series of services covering the lives of Jesus' Disciples. January and February went broadly to plan and we even managed to host a Film Club, showing the live-action version of Aladdin starring Will Smith.

Sadly, lockdown hit and plans had to change very quickly. After a couple of weeks to find our feet, the Team took the decision to attempt to pre-record the services and upload them to the Facebook page each Sunday morning. The first video service was uploaded on 22nd March and set the pattern for how Heaven@11 would continue for much of the rest of the year: broadly following the format used in Church, but with voiceovers and pre-recorded songs.

Jon Bental deserves a formal "thank you" from us all for taking the time to educate us on how to create videos and also for identifying music sources that we could use without falling foul of copyright law. Speaking as someone who was banned from uploading videos to Facebook for getting it wrong, his guidance was very valuable!

Our Spring term continued on the theme of "Journeys" which allowed us to explore the uncertainties everyone was facing due to the unknowns of Covid, followed by a Summer theme on the Parables – some of which were traditional favourites but with a few lesser known ones thrown in for good measure. Around this time, Jo Gardner helped the band to record a version of 10,000 Reasons (thanks Jo!) which was very well received and we also held a quiz night over Zoom.

The service took a break over the Summer Holidays, returning online in September for two weeks before a welcome return to physical services towards the end of that month. No-one was sure how many people would choose to attend, and I can remember how pleased we were to see the Church Hall fairly bustling (although appropriately distanced, sanitised and masked!) The theme during this period was Faith, and we heard accounts of lives lived in faith – including personal testimony from our own team members. Although services continued in person, other activities needed to take place online and so the Travelling Crib was replaced by The Light Of Advent, where candles were lit and prayers shared over video calls, allowing some measure of contact to continue between members of the congregation.

Despite the restrictions imposed by Covid, we once again managed to hold a Nativity with starring performances from the families in the congregation. Jon Bental again provided the technical expertise, this time turning his hand to Green Screen techniques as we transported our intrepid reporters from their homes in Staines-upon-Thames to ancient Bethlehem! The finished service was as fun as ever and it showed that adversity truly is the mother of invention – thanks must go to Angela Yardy at Best Children's Nativity for the script and inspiration.

2020 was not the year any of us planned, but Heaven@11 managed to stay active online and in person. We have been pleased to see the numbers of people accessing the video services but more pleased to see how many have returned to St Peter's as the Parish has been able to re-open for business. Fingers crossed that 2021 is a less "interesting" year!

Stuart Ellidge

St Peter's Church Altar Servers

Covid restrictions have meant we have not been able to have the normal team of three servers to assist the Eucharist.

However, following the example of two of the disciples, who made the preparations for the Last Supper (Luke 22, 7-13), we have been able to continue to offer a ministry. When the rules have allowed the church to open to celebrate Communion, one of the team has always been present to help lay out articles for the altar and carry out the necessary hygiene precautions.

Tim Franck
Verger

Parish Prayer Group

The parish prayer group used to meet up fortnightly in one of the parishioners homes and was lay led prior to the pandemic which was a great blessing and support to the ministry of our churches. But with the start of the pandemic we were forced to hold our prayer meetings on Zoom and I took the responsibility of organising and leading them. The positive side of online prayer meetings was that we were able to meet as often as every week and this turned to be a precious opportunity for catching up with each other and having fellowship in God's word and pray for the needs of the world, the nation, the community, the parish and for one another.

Our online prayer meetings took place from the end of March to early July and after that we were able to hold our meetings in St Peter's by keeping social distance and following the Covid guidelines. These meetings were especially blessed by having Bob who played the piano for us and helped us to worship in Spirit and also by getting a larger number of parishioners joining us. With the start of the second lockdown, we were forced to return to our online prayer meetings and we continued this to the end of the year.

My special thanks Jane Bental, Betty Sanders and Lindy Moulton for leading the prayer meeting prior to the pandemic and to all those who faithfully attended our prayer meetings and blessed the ministry of the parish with their prayers and intercessions.

Rev. Jonathan

Span Carer and Toddler Group

The SPAN carer & toddler group, which usually meets at St Mary's church on Wednesday mornings between 10- 12 throughout the year, has sadly been unable to meet during the pandemic.

We have seen some of our group members whist out walking and on social media. They are missing the group and look forward to getting together again, when safe to do so.

We also look forward to welcoming new members.

St. Mary's Flowers

It has been a somewhat disjointed year, with a reduced service schedule, but we have tried to maintain a high standard and have had flowers in the church every week, apart from Lent and Advent. Many thanks to El, Sharon, Hazel and Ella, for their support and enthusiasm throughout.

Once again Easter lilies were one of the highlights, with the fragrance lasting for a few weeks, with eighty being donated in memory of loved ones. Some were displayed on pedestals and other in vases around the church.

Of course Christmas arrangements, much of which were red and gold made quite an impact. We've tried to fit colours in according to the church calendar, so thanks to those who have noticed and encouraged us.

Our greenery has come from gardens and the churchyard and all the flowers have been donated, and we have enjoyed ourselves and look forward to a wedding this year, which will be our first since 2016

Thanks again,
Jessica Espley

The Parish Bar

There was only one event in 2020, the Proms, and I would like to thank Tim and our small team of willing volunteers, who helped serve wine. Profits from this event amounted to £400 which was paid to the Parish.

After that the bar remained closed for the rest of the year.

Fortunately, we did not hold a large stock of produce after the Proms, but we have had to dispose of any out of date stock, such as beer and some soft drinks. This has either been sold, donated or disposed of. The year-end stock, at cost price, is valued at just over £113. Cash retained, amounts to £677. This will be used to purchase stock when we can re-open.

For the first time since running the bar we were unable to make any additional donation to the Parish, but hopefully we will be back in business later in 2021.

Michael Moulton

St. Mary's Bell Ringers

Bell ringing at St Mary's proceeded as normal up until lockdowns commenced in March of 2020. The St Mary's bell ringing band continued to practice on a Friday night (7.30-9pm weekly), and ring for Sunday services (10.30-11.15am). Sadly, since March, because bell ringing is an indoor activity with limited space, it has not been feasible for us to meet as a band.

Since March 2020, the bells have been chimed at St Mary's for those services taking place there. We also chimed for the wedding of Reverend Pamela Barrie's son, which took place at St Mary's in July. We have also chimed for the Church of England month of prayer, when a band of St Mary's congregation volunteers came together to enable us to chime a single bell each evening during November. We are always recruiting! If you are interested in seeing what ringing involves, having a go (those aged 10+) or finding out more, please contact the Tower Captain: Anna Leach, 07970 724026, ecvai@hotmail.com

Anna Leach

REPORTS ON GROUPS ASSOCIATED WITH THE PARISH OF ST MARY AND ST PETER, STAINES

DayBreak (Staines Parish Community Care Trust)

DayBreak was open between January and mid-March 2020 operating on Mondays and Tuesdays each week, providing an important service to the local community and a demonstration of Parish outreach. We provide day respite care for older people and some younger disabled adults living in Spelthorne.

Unfortunately, DayBreak closed in March 2020, because of the coronavirus pandemic and at the time of writing this report has still not re-opened. We are following government guidance and Spelthorne Borough Council's advice about when it will be safe and practical to re-open.

Until the closure our Care Manager, Sally Kidd, was continuing to develop the service to meet best practice elsewhere and increase awareness of the service with local professionals and the wider community. As a result of the financial pressures on the charity we had to offer redundancy to our Deputy Manager, Linda Dadge in October 2020, who had been with us for eight years and Linda will be sadly missed when we re-open.

Sally has kept in touch with our guests, their carers and our volunteers during the year and everyone is keen to attend when this is possible.

We have used a significant amount of our reserves during closure as initially we 'topped up' staff salaries to their full amount from the 80% government furlough scheme and there were ongoing costs such as insurance even though we were closed. We will need to review our charges and overall financial position before we re-open.

We were fortunate to receive funding again from Spelthorne Borough Council for 2020/21, but it was not possible to apply for funding while we were closed. The Parish support us in many ways, including free use of St. Peter's Church Hall on Tuesdays and Peterhouse for our office facilities.

I would like to thank all of the trustees (Revd. Jonathan, Geraldine Forster, John O'Hara, Sinead Mooney and Mobin Salahuddin) for their knowledge, time and commitment. I also want to thank our Honorary Treasurer, Philip Cambray for his considerable work for DayBreak.

Tracy Luck
Chairman of the Trustees

Manna, the Food Bank in Staines

Manna, the Food Bank in Staines, has been operating since 2012. Until March 2020 it ran under the auspices of the Parish of St Mary's and St Peter's. In March 2020 Manna became an independent charity – Charity Number 1188762, just at the beginning of the first lockdown due to Covid 19.

Due to the pandemic it took a while to extract the Manna funds from the Parish accounts but this was achieved in August 2020. We are grateful to the PCC and in particular the treasurer for facilitating this process.

All involved in Manna know that the need for our services will continue for some time to come, especially since the Covid pandemic, and we will continue to provide food and household items for those in urgent and immediate need. We give thanks to the Parish for continuing to supporting Manna.

Elizabeth Wood-Dow
Chair of Trustees
Manna Foodbank <https://www.mannafoodbank.co.uk/>

Girlguiding at St. Peter's during 2020



2020 started the same as every other year.

All three units joined in with the District Thinking day event in February, held in St Peter's hall. This was based on the first six of the UN's Sustainable Development Goals. Rainbows, Brownies & Guides were also in the early stages of planning Sleepovers, Holidays & Camps – then Covid & Lockdown happened in March and everything stopped ... or did it?

The Rainbow, Brownie & Guide leaders, undaunted by the new challenges thrown at them by Covid in 2020 have carried on Guiding wherever, whenever and however they could. They have met on Zoom, running Virtual meetings, sleepovers and camps. When possible they have met outside on the lawn for face-to-face meetings and also in the hall, always ensuring that all face-to-face meetings were Covid safe and kept to the Girlguiding rules. The units would like to thank the Church for allowing them to use the lawn so that they could meet (outdoors) face to face when they were allowed to.

Even though the units could not get out and about on trips and adventures does not mean that they stopped, they just happened virtually. Girlguiding UK, Girlguiding Laser & Girlguiding Surrey West have all been running events virtually for the girls to attend and the units have also visited or have been visited by various providers/organisations on zoom. The Guides have had a Harry Potter tour in Edinburgh, a coding session delivered by Microsoft and have had a drumming session by Rhythmicity. The Brownies have been visited by the RNLI and they also visited a Lancashire farm. They saw newly born goat kids, plus sheep dogs in action.

Whilst a difficult year, all three units have carried on with the Girlguiding programme. We have had Rainbows, Brownies & Guides complete Skills Builders, Unit Meeting Activities and interest badges. As well as themed awards, Bronze, Silver & Gold section awards.

The Guides favourite Zoom activity has been cooking. It started with small things like microwave mug cakes but then progressed to more adventurous sessions like how to make a basic tomato sauce and 3 different ways to use it. (Pizza, pasta bake and spaghetti bolognese – yes all 3 were made in a one hour zoom session) – The best part for the leaders, not having to clear up afterwards!

The Brownies highlights have been their virtual sleepovers, where the girls have built and slept in dens inside their homes. Breaking out of virtual escape rooms together as well as doing crafts.

The Rainbows have enjoyed a wide range of activities online, but they have especially loved doing puzzles and scavenger hunts. They have managed to complete a couple of easy escape rooms. They completed a Fairy challenge during the summer holidays and have enjoyed doing some zoom cooking.

Remembrance Day parade could not take place as normal but a Guide from St Peter's and her younger sister, a Brownie from 8th Staines Brownies, laid Girlguiding's wreath on our behalf on the 8th November in the afternoon.

Girlguiding, even during the pandemic, has continued to run successfully at St Peter's, although the Rainbow unit is run by a district team due to a lack of adult volunteers. This is a constant challenge, not just for Girlguiding but for all voluntary groups.

If you are interested in volunteering please email

Teresa@atrss-collins.co.uk or kathypurdon32@gmail.com or visit the Girlguiding web site at www.girlguiding.org.uk

We are all looking forward to getting back to "normal" at some point in 2021.



Traidcraft has continued as an organisation but I have not been able to have stalls in church during the pandemic. However I had a good response to the Real advent calendar and Real Easter egg, which I sold via Facebook and delivered to the buyer's house. The communities supported by Traidcraft and Traidcraft Exchange are hard hit by the pandemic, so every sale helps. I have continued to buy items for personal use and at one stage, Traidcraft was my sole source of toilet rolls!

Jane Bental

The Chaplaincy in Istanbul, founded in 1582.

Greetings from Christ Church in Istanbul from Canon Ian Sherwood.

I'm not sure how to cover the past year. Life here started out quite well earlier in the year but has gradually become more disturbing and, let's face it, Istanbul without trips to restaurants and cafes is a real dampener. As with you it has been very different. Istanbul has been more relaxed than London, but things have changed drastically. It has been tragic to see businesses folding because of unconscionable and irrational approaches to the virus.

We have kept the church services going and the hostel remains open for our refugees. With fewer people in attendance, a few longterm congregants were very fearful of the virus and evaporated into the suburbs, whereas newer faces appeared and helped revive our ordinary life as a community. Weekends are subject to frequent curfews.

We have spent about 800 pounds Sterling a month on our charitable outgoings (one-off grants to families, and the usual grants for the two longterm residents at the hostel, as well as to short term residents). These grants are used either for immediate one-off need, or to sustain refugees (Pakistani Christians) that actually help maintain and keep the chaplaincy open, welcoming, and functioning for worship.

Other than that, Turkey becomes increasingly a despotic state. Apart from the usual Covid narrative there is an ever deepening police state with a collapsing economy. Many are now out of work, and one feels embarrassed to talk about it knowing how similar troubles are felt all over the world.

Weekends are usually locked down. I make a lunch every Sunday for any refugees staying here for the weekend as we cannot go out. We still have two longterm men and various others that work and sleep in factories but enjoy staying elsewhere with other Pakistani Christian exiles when they can, so we accommodate them here. We continue to assist with reasonable grants. In Sterling, over recent months we have spent the equivalent of 445 pounds per month. The TL rate has sunk very low and as most of this money is raised in TL it is a miracle we have continued thus far. Most of the economically more sturdy congregants have departed so your gift recently came as very welcome news. Thank you. Please thank your friends in the church community for their kindness - not least in assuring the few refugees in our care of your support. They are grateful. I am grateful.

God bless the way before you,
With love and thanks
Canon Ian Sherwood, Istanbul