

**THE PARISH OF FARNBOROUGH
IN THE DIOCESE OF ROCHESTER, KENT**

ST. GILES THE ABBOT
with
ST. NICHOLAS

**ANNUAL REPORT OF THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st DECEMBER 2020.**

**RECTOR:
THE REVD. MATTHEW HUGHES**

**ASSOCIATE RECTOR:
THE REVD. STEPHEN BROADIE**



Sunday 23rd May 2021

PARISH OF FARNBOROUGH
ST. GILES THE ABBOT and ST. NICHOLAS

Vestry Meeting

1. Election of the Churchwardens and Deputy Wardens:
- | | | |
|----------------|-------------------|------------------------------------|
| Churchwardens | Philip Lovelock | (St. Giles) |
| | Claire Couldridge | (St. Nicholas) |
| Deputy Wardens | Peter Russell |) St. Giles - 8.00 a.m. |
| | Sue Rennie |) St. Giles - 10.00 a.m. |
| | Janet Palmer and |) |
| | Sally Attwood |) St. Giles - 11.15 a.m. |
| | Andrew Bailey |) St. Giles - 6.30 p.m. |
| | Sheila Munns |) St. Giles - Thursdays 10.00 a.m. |
| | Nick Jolliffe |) St. Nicholas |

Proposal that we allow all of our Readers to be members of Farnborough P.C.C. (It is customary across the Diocese that licensed Readers are allowed by virtue of their office to be full members of their P.C.C. This needs to be agreed at the AGM or Vestry Meeting).

ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING
SUNDAY 23rd MAY 2021 - 4.00 p.m.

OPENING PRAYERS

May this meeting be in the name of the Father,
and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Let us bless the Lord

Thanks be to God.

READING: *Ephesians 4: 1-16*

I therefore, the prisoner in the Lord, beg you to lead a life worthy of the calling to which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, making every effort to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to the one hope of your calling, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all and through all and in all. But each of us was given grace according to the measure of Christ's gift. Therefore it is said, 'When he ascended on high he made captivity itself a captive; he gave gifts to his people.' (When it says, 'He ascended', what does it mean but that he had also descended into the lower parts of the earth? He who descended is the same one who ascended far above all the heavens, so that he might fill all things.) The gifts he gave were that some would be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until all of us come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to maturity, to the measure of the full stature of Christ. We must no longer be children, tossed to and fro and blown about by every wind of doctrine, by people's trickery, by their craftiness in deceitful scheming. But speaking the truth in love, we must grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, from whom the whole body, joined and knitted together by every ligament with which it is equipped, as each part is working properly, promotes the body's growth in building itself up in love.

PRAYERS

Leader: Loving God, we thank you for the fellowship of the Church - for the privilege of belonging to your people and sharing in the ministry of the Body of Christ. Unite us in love,

All: **and send us out in faith.**

Leader: We thank you for the fellowship of our Churches - for the friendship, encouragement, support and inspiration we gain from them, and for the ties that bind us together in Christ. Unite us in love,

All: **and send us out in faith.**

Leader: We thank you for one another - for the various gifts you have given us as a family and for the quirks and characteristics which make us what we are. Unite us in love,

All: **and send us out in faith.**

Leader: We thank you for the history of our Churches - all those who have run the race before us and to whom we owe our being here now. Unite us in love,

All: **and send us out in faith.**

Leader: We thank you for those whose work among us we recognise today - all who have offered spiritual guidance, nurture and inspiration, and all who have offered a practical ministry, sometimes unseen, unnoticed. Unite us in love,

All: **and send us out in faith.**

Leader: We thank you for the possibilities you set before us - new avenues of service inviting our response, and new opportunities for witness waiting to be grasped. Unite us in love,

All: **and send us out in faith.**

Leader: We thank you for those who will take up office as a result of this meeting - using their talents, their time and their energy both here among us and, above all, in the cause of Christ. Unite us in love,

All: **and send us out in faith.**

Leader: Loving God, we thank you for the fellowship of the Church - for the privilege of belonging to your people - and we ask you to help us honour that calling through all we are and do. Unite us in love,

All: **and send us out in faith.**

Leader: Through Jesus Christ our Lord.

All: **Amen.**

LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come; thy will be done; on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

A G E N D A

1. **Apologies for absence**
2. **Minutes of the Annual Parochial Church Meeting** held at St. Nicholas on Sunday 18th October 2020, *(pages 5-8)*
3. **Matters arising**
4. **Reports**
 - (a) Electoral Roll, *(page 8)*
 - (b) Annual Report on the proceedings of the Parochial Church Council, *(pages 9-11)*
 - (c) Churchwardens' Reports including St. Giles Churchyard Report, *(pages 11-13)*
 - (d) Deputy Churchwardens' Report on the goods and ornaments of the churches in the Parish, *(pages 13-14)*
 - (e) The Parochial Church Council Consolidated Accounts for the year 2020 including Financial Statements for St. Giles the Abbot and St. Nicholas *(pages 14-17)*
5. **Safeguarding**
6. **Elections**
 - (a) Members for the P.C.C.
St. Giles **FOUR** vacancies
St. Nicholas **NO** vacancies
 - (b) Deanery Synod Members - **TWO** vacancies - both for St. Giles,
7. **Appointments**
 - (a) Sidespeople
 - (b) Independent Financial Examiner.
8. Goodbyes and Thank-you's.
9. **Any other business and date of next A.G.M. 2022.**

ADDITIONAL REPORTS

Rector, *(pages 17-19)*
Associate Rector, *(pages 19-21)*
St. Giles Music, *(pages 21-22)*
St. Giles Family & Children's Worker, *(pages 22-23)*
St. Giles Safeguarding Report, *(pages 23-24)*
St. Giles Bell Ringers, *(pages 24-25)*
St. Nicholas Family & Children's Worker, *(pages 25-26)*
Mothers' Union, *(pages 26-27)*
House Groups, *(page 28)*
St. Giles Website, *(pages 28-29)*
Friends of St. Giles, *(page 29)*
Parish Magazine, *(page 29-30)*

The Accounts are on the Notice Boards of both Churches.

2. MINUTES

MINUTES OF THE VESTRY MEETING AND ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING HELD ON SUNDAY 18th OCTOBER 2020

PARISH OF FARNBOROUGH ST. GILES THE ABBOT AND ST. NICHOLAS

Vestry Meeting

Election of the Churchwardens and Deputy Churchwardens

Churchwardens: Philip Lovelock (St. Giles)
Claire Couldridge (St. Nicholas)

Vote of thanks to Sue Simpson, the outgoing St. Nicholas Churchwarden.
Approved.

Proposed: Jenny Wilkins
Seconded: Rosemary Fordyce
Agreed: All

Deputy Wardens: Peter Russell (St. Giles - 8.00 a.m.)
Sue Rennie (St. Giles - 10.00 a.m.)
Janet Palmer
and Sally Attwood (St. Giles - 11.15 a.m.)
Andrew Bailey (St. Giles - 6.30 p.m.)
Sheila Munns (St. Giles - Thursdays, 10.00 a.m.)
Nick Jolliffe (St. Nicholas)

Approved.
Proposed: Julia Hoadley
Seconded: Helen Roberts
Agreed: All

ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING **SUNDAY 18th OCTOBER 2020 at 4.30 p.m.**

PRESENT: The Revd. Matthew Hughes, The Revd. Stephen Broadie, Philip Lovelock, Claire Couldridge, Helen Roberts, Eddie Roberts, Roger Allard, Rosemary Fordyce, Jenny Wilkins, Julia Hoadley, Martin Parsons, Nick Jolliffe, Richard Butterworth, Carol Fryer.

1. **Opening prayers.**

2. **Apologies for absence:** These were received from Linda Montgomery, John Tinham, Jessie Tinham, Susan Midha.

3. **MINUTES**

Minutes of the Annual Parochial Church Meeting held at St. Nicholas on Sunday 28th April 2019.

Vote of thanks to Linda Montgomery for her work in taking the Minutes for the APCM and PCC Meetings.

Approved.
Proposed: Martin Parsons
Seconded: Julia Hoadley
Agreed: All.

4. **MATTERS ARISING**

None.

5. REPORTS

(a) Electoral Roll Report:

It was reported that there were 388 on the Electoral Roll as at 31.12.19 - 337 at St. Giles and 51 at St. Nicholas.

The Rector commented: a healthy level and allows us to keep in touch via internet and mail-outs.

(b) Annual Report on the Proceedings of the Parochial Church Council:

No comments.

(c) Churchwardens' Reports including St. Giles Churchyard Report:

No comments.

(d) Deputy Churchwarden's Report on the Goods and Ornaments of the churches in the Parish:

No comments.

(e) The Parochial Church Council Consolidated Accounts for the year 2019 including financial statements for St. Giles and St. Nicholas: and the Report of the Independent Examiner:

St. Nicholas Treasurer, Roger Allard: St. Nicholas hit quite badly. They have an annual income of around £100,000 - 50% from giving and 50% from rental income. From March to June/July there was no income, and since then the nursery has been back, along with a few other hirers, amounting to around £3,000. At 30.9.20 Unrestricted Funds were down £115,000 on last year.

The Rector commented: It has been a hard year which has affected all churches and dioceses, especially those reliant on lettings.

The Associate Rector commented: The impact of Covid has been massive, but we are seeing some improvement.

Roger Allard asked about the effect of being Tier 2 has had on lettings, particularly on the Guides.

Jenny Wilkins replied: The Guides are still able to meet, restricted to 15 socially distanced, subject to parental and leaders agreement.

Roger Allard confirmed the nursery was continuing.

Jenny Wilkins mentioned: The National Youth website shows which classes could continue.

The Consolidated Accounts together with the Accounts for St. Giles and St. Nicholas were formally accepted.

Vote of thanks to the Treasury Teams of both St. Giles and St. Nicholas.

Approved.

Proposed: Julia Hoadley

Seconded: Mary Compton

Agreed: All

5. SAFEGUARDING

The Rector commented: St. Giles met all current safeguarding criteria and requirements of the Diocese.

The Associate Rector commented: St. Nicholas also agreed. Safeguarding was raised and confirmed at each meeting.

6. ELECTIONS

(a) Members of the P.C.C:

St. Giles, 2 vacancies:

Nomination: Helen Roberts

Proposed: Jenny Wilkins

Seconded: Julia Hoadley

Agreed: All.

Nomination: Jo Cook

Proposed: Martin Parsons

Seconded: Mary Compton

Agreed: All.

St. Nicholas, 1 vacancy:

Nomination: Jayne Calvert

Proposed: Sue Simpson

Seconded: Claire Couldridge

Agreed: All.

(b) Deanery Synod Members - two vacancies, both for St. Giles:

Nomination: Linda Montgomery

Proposed: Martin Parsons

Seconded: Jenny Wilkins

Agreed: All.

7. APPOINTMENTS

(a) Sidespeople.

Vote of thanks for all the people who carry out this role for both St. Giles and St. Nicholas.

The Rector commented: Such important work.

Proposed: Julia Hoadley

Seconded: Philip Lovelock

Agreed: All.

(b) Independent Financial Examiner:

Christopher Jones from Baxters is to continue as the Parish Independent Financial Examiner. Vote of thanks for work done and continued support.

Proposed: Mary Compton

Seconded: Martin Parsons

Agreed: All.

8. GOODBYES AND THANK YOUS

Leaving:

Alison Lovelock - PCC Member, St. Giles

Judy Crowson - Deanery Synod Member

Sue Simpson - Churchwarden at St. Nicholas.

Vote of thanks for their hard work and support. The Associate Rector offered his personal thanks to Sue Simpson for her support.

9. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS AND DATE OF NEXT A.G.M. APRIL 2021**

Mary Compton raised the current position of the proposed toilets for St. Giles. The Rector responded: Covid had delayed news on the position of toilets for the Church. Although it is highly desirable to have toilets in St. Giles, there appear to be problems that, without unlimited funding, would prove to be insurmountable. The Rector confirmed he would put all his energy, together with the help of the PCC, into resolving the question of toilet provision.

The Rector commented: St. Giles have completed all the necessary refurbishments, spending around £300,000. We now face other challenges.

The Rector commented: These are demoralising times for parish churches. We need to keep going and sustain the life of the Church. He is pleased and encouraged by all the support and enthusiasm he receives.

The Associate Rector commented: A sincere thank you to everyone and look to all pull together in these difficult times. We face numerous challenges, with a new pattern of services and attendance. He gives his full encouragement to Churchwardens, PCC and congregation.

The Rector commented: Must mention and give thanks to Nick Wilkins whose energy and enthusiasm for bell ringing resulted in him raising an amazing £26,000 for the installation of two new bells in St. Giles. St. Giles will not be an eight bell church. We look forward to the Bell Installation service when we can hear those new bells.

The Rector remembered, among others, those who have died:

In Fordyce
Derek Couldridge
Stanley Eperon
Arthur Edwards.

10. **CLOSING PRAYERS**

The meeting closed with prayers at 4.45 p.m.

3. **MATTERS ARISING**

4. **REPORTS**

ELECTORAL ROLL Report (a)

The figure for the Electoral Roll stands at 385 (St. Giles - 336, St. Nicholas - 49). Our Electoral Roll membership continues to offer a solid base for the ongoing life of the Parish.

**ANNUAL REPORT OF THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL FOR
THE YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 2020 - Report (b)**

**ST. GILES THE ABBOT, FARNBOROUGH
With ST. NICHOLAS, ORPINGTON**

OBJECTIVES

The Parochial Church Council (“PCC”) has the responsibility of co-operating with the incumbent, the Revd Matthew Hughes, 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 Centre complexes of St. Giles at Church Road, Farnborough and St. Nicholas at Leamington Avenue, Orpington.

MEMBERSHIP

Members of the PCC are either ex-officio or elected by the Annual Parochial Church Meeting (“APCM”) in accordance with Church Representation Rules. Members of the PCC who served from 18 October 2020 until the date that this report was approved by the PCC were: -

Ex-Officio:

<u>Rector</u>	The Revd. Matthew Hughes	Chairman	
<u>Associate Rector</u>	The Revd. Stephen Broadie		
<u>Assistant Priest</u>	The Revd. Bill Mullenger		
<u>Readers</u>	Mrs. Chris Hallett Mrs. Susan Midha		
<u>Wardens</u>	Mr. Philip Lovelock Miss Claire Couldridge	until APCM 2022 until ACPM 2024	St Giles St Nicholas
<u>Deputy Wardens</u>	Mr Peter Russell Mr Andrew Bailey Mrs Janet Palmer Mrs Susan Rennie Mrs Sheila Munns Mrs Sally Attwood Nicholas Jollife	Not on PCC Not on PCC Not on PCC Not on PCC Not on PCC Not on PCC until APCM 2024	St Giles St Giles St Giles St Giles St Giles St Giles St Nicholas
<u>Deanery Synod Rep.</u>	Mrs Linda Montgomery Ms Michelle Felstead Mrs Sue Simpson	until APCM 2024 until APCM 2021 until ACPM 2021	St Giles St Nicholas St Nicholas
Elected:			
<u>Hon. Secretary</u>	Mrs Linda Montgomery		
<u>Hon. Treasurer</u>	Mr. Roger Allard		St. Nicholas
<u>Gift Aid Secretary</u>	Ms. Carol Fryer		

Members

Mr Martin Parsons	until ACPM 2021	St Giles
Mrs Jenny Wilkins	until ACPM 2021	St Giles
Mr Andrew Fruin	until ACPM 2021	St Giles
Mrs Linda Crisp	until ACPM 2021	St Giles
Mrs Adele Cooke	until ACPM 2022	St Giles
Mrs Jo Cook	until ACPM 2024	St Giles
Mrs Helen Roberts	until ACPM 2024	St Giles
Mr Richard Butterworth	until ACPM 2023	St Nicholas
Mrs Diane Stiff	until ACPM 2022	St Nicholas

The United PCC (only Clergy, Wardens and Treasurers in 2020) met once during the year with an attendance of twenty four per cent. In addition, the members representing St. Giles met seven times (with an average attendance of seventy two per cent) and those representing St. Nicholas met six times (average attendance nine per cent).

COMMITTEES

The PCC operates through a number of committees, which meet between meetings of the PCC:

- Standing & Finance Committee – this is the only committee required by law. It has the power to transact business of the PCC between PCC meetings, subject to any directions given by the PCC
- St. Giles' Fabric Group
- St. Giles' Churchyard Group
- Ad hoc groups.

CHURCH ATTENDANCES

There were 385 names on the Church Electoral Roll for the parish as at 31st December 2020.

As a Parish, we are available at times of birth, marriage and death. In 2020, the Parish and its ministry were involved in the following occasional offices: -

9 Baptisms
0 Weddings
21 Funeral services held in church followed by burial in the churchyard
or
7 Cremations
12 Graveside Funeral services
19 Funeral services held at a crematorium
22 Burials of ashes.

RECTOR'S REPORT AND REVIEW OF THE YEAR

This has been a challenging year for St. Giles and St. Nicholas. I am very grateful to all those who have worked so hard to maintain the life of our Church during the lockdowns. We have kept in touch with members of the congregation through a weekly bulletin, online services and live services when it has been permissible for the Church to open.

We have fully complied with all Safeguarding obligations.

Matthew Hughes, Rector

FINANCIAL RESULTS

Aggregated parish income for the year was £276,671 (2019-£393,688) and aggregated resources used were £256,981 (2019-£438,572). Net incoming resources amounted to £19,690 (2019-[-£44,844]). St Giles recorded net incoming resources of £42,615 (2019-[-£57,156]) and St. Nicholas recorded net incoming resources of (£22,925) (2019-£12,272).

RESERVES POLICY

It is the PCC policy to maintain a balance on unrestricted funds (less fixed assets) which equates approximately to six months unrestricted expenditure. This was achieved as at 31st December 2020.

THE CHURCHWARDENS' REPORTS Report (c)

ST. GILES CHURCHWARDEN'S REPORT INCLUDING CHURCHYARD REPORT

It is more than a year since the nation went into its first lockdown due to Coronavirus. We have read many articles regarding the health of the nation and how lockdown has impacted mental health. Those who have experienced the impact of mental health only know too well the battlefield that lay before them, a cerebral 'no man's land', the possible feeling of unending struggle. I do not underestimate the impact of such feelings. However, as we know from history every battle ends and peace ensues, then the process of healing begins.

But can it be the same as before? Can the nation be the same as it was pre-Covid 19 and perhaps some would question if we want to go back as it was. No doubt most of us have experiences regarding compassion shown during lockdown and the unrelenting determination to make our lives safe. To coin a phrase, 'not all superheroes wear capes'.

I take comfort that Spring is upon us and the shoots of new growth are apparent, new life and warmth are what we can expect. We can consider that the Spring is renewing of hope and the foundations of healing with the coming of the resurrection.

Over the next few months many would say that St. Giles and the surrounding area look most stunning at this time of year. The abundance of colour and flowers, all within this beautiful tranquil space (and we thank those who have given to the maintenance of St. Giles), we reap the rewards of their effort, commitment, and fellowship - thank you! For the miracle of Spring is divine.

There will be many memories taken from recent experience and actually some perhaps quite positive. I shall take our Remembrance Service, and how we paid our respects in a more low key, but significant gathering. Then a most amazing service outside for the Christmas Midnight Mass, with a bonfire that evoked atmosphere, and Matthew's words and readings gave life in minds to a time in Bethlehem and the birth of Jesus. I shall hold this memory as particularly special as I am sure all those who were able to be present will also. Perhaps we will have the opportunity to experience such a service again.

The mission continues and with all the support of the community we shall come together once again with Matthew. The commencement of regular services will be most welcome.

Hope is thriving and it's all around us. Take care all.

Philip Lovelock
St. Giles Churchwarden

ST. GILES CHURCHYARD REPORT AS PART OF THE CHURCHWARDEN'S REPORT Report (c)

The committee consists of eight people who are all members of the voluntary working team, plus a Secretary, the Rector, and Churchwardens, who are ex-officio. We meet every other month to discuss on-going maintenance in the Church, St. Giles Centre and the Churchyard. Unfortunately this past year we had to cancel some meetings, and hold others on-line with Zoom.

We have a volunteer team of around twelve men and eight ladies who meet every Tuesday come rain or shine. Many of them have still been coming during lockdowns, with social distancing of course.

Routine work is clearing away dead flowers; and of course in the winter picking up leaves, quite a long job; removing dead wreaths left at Christmas (180 last year); path edging; hedge cutting; and tidying grave tops with a strimmer etc. The only thing we have missed is being able to have our coffee and biscuit and a friendly chat. New volunteers are always welcome.

We dig the holes for the burials of ashes, and one of our team, Nick Reynolds, keeps the records for all burials - ashes and graves. The Churchyard has about another twelve years of use. Edward Bellamy, another team member, is responsible for the plaques on the Garden of Remembrance Walls, plenty of room still here.

We have had our Quinquennial Inspection, and I am pleased to say all is looking good, with only minor repairs, such as some re-pointing, re-painting of window ferramenta (metal window supports) and cleaning of gutters are needed. This is in hand. The main thing was re-bedding the ridge tiles, and replacing a few other broken roof tiles, which has already been done. It is twenty years since the Church roof was re-tiled, so only minor work was required. Unfortunately the major cost of any work on the roof is the hire of scaffolding. While the scaffolding was in place we had the moss and pine needles removed from the north side roof, and sprayed to prevent re-growth, another request in the Quinquennial Report. Also an electrical survey has been arranged.

Two new bells were installed in the tower, making a total now of eight bells.

We are no nearer getting a toilet. However, this is still on our agenda, and the refurbishing or rebuilding of the St. Giles Centre will be where one will have to be situated, as there is no mains sewage near the Church.

St. Giles Centre had a leak in the roof which was repaired. This has not been let during the lockdowns. The nursery school has closed.

Some trees in the wood behind the Gardens of Remembrance have been cut down, but we are still waiting for the Council to cut down the very large beech tree which is leaning on another one. We had a large free fall from the wood at the far end into the Churchyard, which the farmer at North End Farm kindly cut up for us.

Part of the flint wall by the lichgate has collapsed, we notified the Council who came out the next day and put up a barrier. Since then it has collapsed more, and several months on it is still waiting to be repaired.

The re-pointing of the War Memorial is about to take place, and the south bank, opposite the Gardens of Remembrance, has been cleared of nettles and planted with ground covering plants and bulbs.

PRO Landscapes who mow the grass, remove rubbish, and wood chip the paths, have been given the contract again, at the same price as last year, £6,900. They come twenty times between March and November.

Richard Healey
Chairman Churchyard and Fabric Group

ST. NICHOLAS CHURCHWARDEN'S REPORT

It has been more than a year since the start of the pandemic. At the beginning no one could have imagined the upheaval and loss of life that there would be and none could have imagined churches having to close for health and safety reasons. Nor having to use something called Zoom to communicate with each other.

Yet in the year, certainly at St. Nicholas, we learned how to adapt to the ever changing situations that have been thrown at us, and whilst it isn't ideal we have learned how to use Facebook and Zoom to keep in contact with a vast number of our congregation. Our 9.00 a.m. is pre-recorded and posted on Facebook. The 10.00 a.m., which is our family service, is done on Zoom and is led by Diane Stiff and Stephen. The biggest surprise has been the growth of our Wednesday morning service which has just kept on growing and now spreads over the whole Parish.

Pastoral care hasn't gone amiss either with a number of people keeping in contact with those who need it.

Our latest project is a Community Larder where food that is just out of date and would be thrown out from the supermarkets is brought up to the Church, laid out and on Tuesdays people from the community can come up and take what they want, without charge, all done under the current guidelines.

Another recent project we have just started is the Bible course, run by the Bible Society, we are running on Zoom over the Parish, it explores how the Bible was put together and gives an outline of varied books over 8 weeks

As you can see it has not been a quiet year with everyone at St. Nicholas playing their part, however big or small, working together for our community

My thanks to everyone for their continued support and Nick and Stephen for all their help.

Sue Simpson
St. Nicholas Churchwarden

DEPUTY CHURCHWARDENS' REPORT ON THE GOODS AND ORNAMENTS OF THE CHURCHES IN THE PARISH Report (d)

This has been another busy year at St. Giles with the latter part being dominated by the coronavirus pandemic. It has been good to be part of the Churchwarden's team and I am grateful to my fellow Deputies for their continuing support of St. Giles in these difficult times.

In terms of goods and ornaments the Parish Verger, Mr. Peter Russell, kindly organised and facilitated the purchasing of two new candle sticks for the altar at St. Giles to replace the existing two which had deteriorated.

We have also purchased dedication plaques for the oak storage boxes made by Jon McDonald last year to store the boards for the hymn board. These are in memory of his parents, John and Barbara McDonald.

In addition, in order to provide music during the services over the last year, we have had a number of CDs of church music purchased by individuals and donated to St. Giles.

During 2020 we have also undertaken a refurbishment of the Clergy Vestry, repainting the walls and undertaking a 'deep clean'.

Given the current emphasis on cleaning I can report that St. Giles is being cleaned with due regard to its historic materials following guidance from Historic Churches.

I can report that all the Church's goods and ornaments are in a good state of repair.

Andrew Bailey
Deputy Warden

THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL CONSOLIDATED ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR 2020, INCLUDING FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR ST. GILES THE ABBOT AND ST. NICHOLAS

ST. GILES THE ABBOT

In 2020, we finished with a surplus of £42,615. Our total income was £201,844 which exceeded our total expenditure of £159,299. As you all know 2020 was a difficult year but whilst our income fell by some 25%, our outgoings decreased further by over 50%.

The reasons behind our surplus are varied, but we are very grateful for the way the congregation and church community rallied behind St Giles, firstly with Covid-19 donations and later with further donations to replace the lost income from the summer fair.

The stewardship campaign we held in 2019 and the pledged response helped to provide an increase in regular donations of £2864, instead of the usual annual decrease. Unfortunately, because the church was closed for most of the year, our loose plate, wedding and funeral collections were also affected. Magazine income was also reduced, this was mainly due to a fall in advertising revenue, although restructuring of magazine production and distribution, together with an accounting procedural change, all played a part. We, of course, had our rental income from Wentworth Close which was unaffected by the fallout from Covid-19.

At the beginning of the pandemic, I was relieved because I recognised that our reserves policy meant we were in a good place to weather the storm, which at the time I believed would have a much greater effect on our finances.

During the year, Debbie Pedder was unfortunately unable to continue trading as Absolute Beginners, running the pre-school in the centre. It was with regret that I heard this news, as Debbie had been operating the pre-school in the centre for twenty-seven years. All other activities in the centre stopped and we do not expect any to re-commence until a lot later this year.

No legacies were received in 2020.

The Parish Share or Diocesan Contribution for 2020 was £64,323. Our Indicative Offer for 2020 was provisionally £74,968. However, last year the Diocese altered the rules again. Previously, the parishes have kept the DBF (Diocesan Board of Finance) fees for funerals and weddings, which was a direction of the Diocese when they made the PCC responsible for the Incumbent's salary and benefits. This was to aid in offsetting these extra costs.

Now the Diocese demand that the DBF fees are paid over, no doubt to assist in balancing their perpetual (unbalanced) budget. In response to this, the PCC unanimously decided that the amount of last year's DBF fees (£10645) should be deducted from our Indicative Offer. This is how we arrived at the contribution for 2020.

As previously stated the St Giles's congregation continues to give generously, through planned giving, collections and specific fund raising, as well as time and skills, to the upkeep and work of the Church. Donations from funerals and wall plaques fees help fund maintenance of the Churchyard.

Previous generous legacies provide security, as well as the ability to fund major building repairs and projects, as fabric wears and needs renewing or replacing. These funds also provide security against unforeseen events similar to those we are experiencing. Therefore, these funds are not utilised for the running costs of the church and work of the church. The Rector and PCC monitor running costs with the aim always to keep expenditure below income.

As ever, many thanks to all who help with the St. Giles financial work. The finance team work especially hard, so my gratitude and appreciation goes to, in alphabetical order, Ken Butchers, Mary Compton, Linda Crisp and Carol Fryer.

Thank you to Eddie Bellamy, administrator of the Memorial Wall fund, in again providing a reliable income stream. Thanks are also due to Adele Cooke for her continued sterling work with the Parish magazine and office administration.

In addition, I would again like to thank Carol Fryer for her work as Gift Aid Secretary and Pam Stacey our Planned Giving Envelope Scheme Secretary.

Finally, thanks to David Clark for looking after the insurance policies and to Mark Auger, for preparing the Parish and St Giles Annual Accounts. Also it is important to acknowledge the work of our examiner, Chris Jones of Baxter's, Orpington.

Paul Beamiss
Hon. Treasurer, St. Giles

ST. NICHOLAS

Before the coronavirus became centre stage it was always unlikely that St. Nicholas would break even at the end of 2020 and the approved budget anticipated a deficit of £8800 for the year.

There are two key elements to the income at St. Nicholas - giving and hall hire income. Planned giving held up well during the year and we are very grateful that everyone continued to honour their pledged giving, but cash collections on Sundays where money is put in the collection bags was only two thirds of budget with the Church closed for so many weeks. With St. Nicholas shut for such a long time we lost our hall hire income and the actual for the year of £25227 was half the budget and this is by far the most significant factor in the outturn for the year.

During the closure period there was no income from other sources such as the monthly Lunch Club, the weekly term time Parent and Toddler Group, the summer Holiday Club and the Autumn Fair, but as a compensating factor there were savings in a number of expenditure areas as a result of the closure.

On a brighter note we were able to complete the refurbishment of the main hall with new stage curtains and window blinds at a cost of almost £3000, using Restricted Funds that were set aside for that purpose. We now have a very attractive main hall available for letting once the current restrictions are over.

At the end of the year the net current assets have fallen from £95926 at 31 December 2019 to £73001 at 31 December 2020. £2582 of the £73001 are Restricted Funds to be used towards the cost of the concrete repairs to be carried out in 2021.

2021 is going to be difficult too and at the time of writing there is no certainty when St. Nicholas will be able to re-open. At this stage we have not felt able to commit to the Diocese's full Calculated Indicative Offer for 2021 of £52721, but have committed to the Ministry and Benefice Cost of £41994, whilst keeping our income and expenditure under review to see whether in due course we are able to include some or all of the Wider Diocesan Element of £10757.

Whenever St. Nicholas re-opens there will be a deficit in the year again and a further reduction of net current assets. How large that reduction is will be dependent upon the re-opening date and there being no significant additional costs for the concrete repairs to be carried out in the summer holidays.

We have been fortunate over the years in that we have been able to build up the St. Nicholas reserves such that we have had funds available to cope with the 2020 deficit and also a deficit in 2021. Once we are back to more normal times we shall need to see how we can make good and replenish the reserves.

In conclusion I would like to say a big thank you to Catherine in the St. Nicholas Office who does an excellent job with all the day to day financial work in banking the income, paying the bills, inputting all the data on to the accounting system and the role of Hall Lettings Manager. We are extremely fortunate that these parts of the financial administration are in such very good hands.

Roger Allard
Hon Treasurer, St Nicholas

5. ELECTIONS

FOUR MEMBERS FOR THE ST. GILES P.C.C.

NO MEMBERS FOR THE ST. NICHOLAS P.C.C.

TWO DEANERY SYNOD REPRESENTATIVES, both for ST. GILES

6. APPOINTMENTS

SIDESPERSONS -

St. Giles:

Mrs. R. Arney, Miss S. Attwood, Mr. P. Barnes, Mrs. L. Barnes, Mrs. V. Clark, Mrs. M. Compton, Mrs. C. Coyle, Mr. M. Dancer, Mrs. I. Dancer, Mrs. C. Fryer, Mrs. A. Goodall, Mrs. C. Hallet, Mrs. J. Palmer, Mrs. S. Pugh, Reeves Family, Russell Family, Scarlett Family, M. Sullivan, Mrs. E. Walker, Mr. J. White.

St. Nicholas:

Mr. H. Bavin, Mrs. V. Blinks, Miss I. Broadie, Mrs. P. Butcher, Mr. D. Clark, Mrs. P. Clark, Mrs. B. Couldridge, Mrs. S. Dixey, Mrs. M. Felstead, Mrs. C. Gibbons, Mrs. Anne Howlett, Mrs. L. Matthews, Mrs. S. Simpson.

INDEPENDENT FINANCIAL EXAMINER

Acting under delegated powers (A.G.M. 2001) The P.C.C. appointed Mr. Christopher Jones, F.C.C.A., Baxter and Co. as independent examiner for the 2020 accounts.

The PCC recommends Mr. Jones's appointment for the year 2021 accounts and the A.G.M. is requested to approve this proposal.

7. GOODBYES AND THANK YOU'S.

8. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

To be notified at the beginning of the meeting.

Date and time of next A.G.M.

ADDITIONAL REPORTS

RECTOR'S REPORT

This year at St. Giles has, of course, been dominated by the Coronavirus pandemic and the various national lockdowns.

As I write this it doesn't seem that long ago that we had to close St. Giles, mothballing Church life for almost a whole year.

Undoubtedly this has been a stressful and demanding time for our whole nation and a time of great pain for the many families who lost loved ones to Covid-19, particularly those from our own community.

It is also true to say that through this crisis we have also discovered much to inspire and be grateful for. We have been acutely aware of our dependence on others, from hospital and supermarket staff to scientists and the neighbour next door. We have been reminded of our vulnerability and powerlessness and the importance of love, family life, friendship and our Church.

For us at St. Giles and St. Nicholas the challenge was how to adjust to the changes and demands of lockdown as quickly and effectively as possible. I am pleased to say that through the support of many people we were able to rise to the challenge of keeping the life and witness of our churches alive in ways that we could not have previously envisaged. Below are some reflections on church life through a pandemic, and to thoughts for the future.

Firstly, and most importantly, I want to acknowledge with deep gratitude the help, support and constancy of our Church Officers and volunteers throughout this crisis. Through everything they have kept going, performing their duties with their normal thoroughness and reliability. I am grateful to our Churchwardens, Verger, Treasury Team, Maintenance Team, Parish Administration, Sidespeople, PCC Members, Children's Workers, Cleaners, Magazine Team, my colleagues in Ministry/Music, and many others, for all they have done in keeping the life of our Church afloat and functioning.

I am very grateful to David Brooks - Wilkins and all those who worked so hard in producing our online services. This has been a steep learning curve, but nevertheless a godsend for those who were missing worship at St. Giles. I am sure that moving forward we will continue to produce online services as part of what we offer to our Parish, particularly for those who are not well or mobile enough to attend Church.

I am very grateful for the financial support given to St. Giles throughout the lockdowns. This was immensely helpful because we were not in receipt of our usual Sunday collections, hall fees, fundraising event income and wedding fees. On top of this I am particularly pleased that we were able to generously support a number of National and International charities.

When lockdown is finally over it will be very good to return to full Church life and to catch up with a number of events and special services that we had to postpone and cancel. In particular I am looking forward to hearing the ringing of our two new bells, which are being installed as I write. Thank you to Nick Wilkins for his enthusiasm and drive in getting this exciting project under way.

Even though this has been a very challenging and disconcerting time, I think we can still attest to the love and faithfulness of God throughout. New people have joined our online services and new people have also requested our weekly bulletin and parish magazine and many have felt well supported and spiritually sustained through times of isolation. Spiritual growth is inevitably linked to hardship and adversity.

I am also pleased to say that through the work of our Safeguarding team, Irene Dancer and Linda Montgomery, we have been able to fully comply with all Diocesan Safeguarding requirements.

LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

As every week passes more and more people are vaccinated and this continues to underline the optimism we all have that normality and freedom will return. When full Church life is allowed to resume it will be vital that we all reaffirm our commitment to active worship and participation in the life of St. Giles and St. Nicholas. Over the past years we have all worked so hard to create the vibrant Christian communities that are St. Giles and St. Nicholas. It is important that this work is honoured and that we pick up from where we were forced to leave off. It may well be that things will not be able to return exactly as we knew them. However, our future focus should be on what I would like to call the important *RE's*

RETURN. I hope and pray that all those we worshipped with pre-lockdown will eventually return to Church when it is safe and possible to do so. Jesus prayed in John Chapter 17, 'that not one of his followers should be lost.'

RECONNECT AND REFAMILIARISE

Coming back to Church after a long absence is going to take time. We will need to give ourselves and others time to *reconnect* with the habit of church-going and to *refamiliarise* ourselves with the customs and practices of our faith. Jesus regularly attended the Synagogue on the Sabbath, 'as was his custom.' (Luke 4:16ff).

RELATE. Church is, and indeed should be, a place of relationships and *relating*. In this way we are able to put into practice the specific hallmark of authentic Christian community, namely that we should, 'love one another as Christ has loved us.' (John 15:12ff). Many of us have spent the last year being cut off from our family and friends, this is also true in regards to our Church family. It will be important to take time and effort to re-establish, (there's another 're' word!) the relationships that we once enjoyed with our brothers and sisters in Christ, and hopefully forge some new ones as well.

RESOURCE. As we all know churches do not run themselves but rely on a large and complex web of volunteers. Churches also need to be financially secure if they are to effectively function at the heart of their community's life. When we return there will be some gaps in our network of volunteers and some readjustments as we pick up our previous roles. It will be vital, as far as possible, that all our volunteers remain in post' during this time of retrenchment and recovery and that as far as possible we continue to encourage a collective response to St. Giles's financial needs (Two more 're' words!). As Paul writes, 'You are the body of Christ and individually members of it.' (I Corinthians 12:27).

RESTRUCTURE. The re-establishment of church life will inevitably bring up changes, challenges and opportunities, as indeed lockdown has. Moving forward there will be some areas of our Church's life which might need to be restructured. This could be in terms of our pattern of services, the types of services, the ongoing provision of online services and the weekly bulletin, the pastoral care of the elderly and housebound and, of course, decisions will need to be taken concerning the Centre. These, and I would imagine other areas of our life, will provide much for consultation and discussion. I believe that such has been the nature of this National calamity that there will be a renewed interest and hunger for the consolations of the Christian faith and therein will be our opportunity for outreach and connection with those outside the church. It is hoped that the PCC will begin to initiate this process in due course. Jesus praises the householder, 'who is able to bring out from his treasure both new and old.' (Matthew 13:51-53)

REJOICE. Finally at the heart of our faith is the desire and need to praise and love the Blessèd Trinity, our Father in heaven, our Blessed Lord and Saviour and the Gracious Holy Spirit of truth and comfort. During lockdown we have had to do this at home, out on a walk, or in Church without the support of our choir and music. Rejoicing is always best done together. We look forward once again to the time when the rafters of St. Giles will resound (last 're' word!), to our collective songs of praise. St. Paul writes, 'Rejoice in the Lord always and again I say rejoice.' (Philippians 4:8ff).

Yours in Christ,

Matthew Hughes
Rector of Farnborough Benefice

ASSOCIATE RECTOR'S REPORT

2020 will forever be associated in our memories with the COVID-19 pandemic, and the restrictions that began in the UK with the first lockdown on 23rd March 2020. It proved to be a challenging year for St. Nicholas as a church, as we went for long periods of time without being able to meet together physically, and having to shut our building to many of the hirers who have traditionally used our premises. As a result, we found ourselves quickly having to adapt to these new circumstances. On Sunday 22nd March we used Facebook for the first time to broadcast a recorded video message, and on Wednesday 1st April we held our first ever Morning Prayer meeting on 'Zoom'. Both these activities have continued almost every Sunday and Wednesday ever since. We now regularly have between 15-20 people attending the Zoom Morning Prayer meeting, where we have been working our way through the lectionary readings for the year, praying for all the different streets of the parish, and sharing reflections on the bible passages, as well as our own prayer requests. One of the highlights of broadcasting our services on Facebook was the Christmas service, where a number of our congregation helped record a sung version of Silent Night, and over 300 people tuned in to watch. To date the most popular video on our Facebook page has been a sung version of the Lord's Prayer, 'Our Father',

composed and performed by Jason Henniker, which has been watched over 600 times by people all over the world, including the Archbishop of Malta! In these and in other ways the pandemic has forced us to adapt and innovate, and somehow reach people who had never before had contact with our Church.

Once restrictions on church gathering eased last summer, we ran a couple of 'trial services' in Church, testing out new seating arrangements, implementing measures such as hand hygiene points and using 'Eventbrite' for booking. Eventually we were able to open again for regular Sunday worship, and in September settled into a pattern of having a 9 a.m. 'Informal Communion' service, and a 10.30 a.m. 'Children and Family Worship Service' every Sunday. The two services enabled us to fit everyone in under the new social distancing guidelines, while also allowing us to carry on children's work when small Sunday school classes were not possible. With the two regular Sunday services in place, we actually began to see more people attending St. Nicholas than before the pandemic, and were able to welcome some new worshippers, and some families who had not previously attended on a Sunday. Obviously many restrictions continued to pertain, and in line with many London churches we had to stop meeting in person when the Mayor of London declared a 'major incident' across London on 8th January. However, since the beginning of March we have been able to meet once again in the building, continuing to follow our pattern of two services every Sunday, with continued good attendance.

Since the beginning of February 2021 we have also opened a 'Community Larder' at St. Nicholas, working with the charity 'FareShare' and the Co-op's 'FoodShare' scheme. Every Tuesday at 11.30 a.m. we open up the Church to distribute food to the local community, giving away unused food from local supermarkets and wholesalers. To date we have given away nearly 220 food parcels, and this initiative has opened up links with local businesses (including the Co-op and Waitrose), with other churches in the Borough, and also with the local housing association, Keniston Housing. It has been great to see so many people coming forward to volunteer for this initiative, from St. Nicholas and St. Giles as well as from the local community. It has truly felt like a living demonstration of our strapline, 'transforming our community through the presence of Christ'. One other highlight of this past year has been the 'Bible Course', where 25 of us worked our way in eight weeks through a whistle-stop tour of the Bible following videos provided by the Bible Society, and with much animated discussion in our Zoom 'breakout rooms'.

There have of course been many challenges in the past year. As we have been conscious of those who have not been able to join us in person during the pandemic, we have set up a 'pastoral support' group to try and ensure that at least one person from our Church is in touch with each church member who may be isolated or housebound. Moreover, the lack of hall hirers in 2020 inevitably had a great impact on our finances, as has been outlined in the Treasurers' report. In the face of these challenges, we continue to be encouraged nevertheless by the generosity of the congregation, and as we look ahead to 2021 we will be seeking to communicate some of these financial challenges to the congregation and community and asking everyone to partner with us in ensuring that St. Nicholas continues to be an active centre of mission in this part of the parish.

As I think about those who have served our Church over the past year, I would like to express my thanks to the PCC, and in particular to Claire Couldridge, our tireless Church Warden, and to Nick Jolliffe, who has carried out his role of Deputy Warden alongside an incredibly challenging role as a frontline doctor in a major hospital. I must also thank the different Lay Ministers at St. Nicholas: Diane Stiff, our Children and Families worker and Pastoral Assistant who has been so innovative in

developing resources and plans for our new CFW service while continually supporting our families throughout the crisis. Thank you also to Ian Gillies, our Reader with PTO and Rosemary Fordyce, our Pastoral Assistant with PTO. I am also very grateful to Roger Allard, our Treasurer, and Richard Butterworth our Deputy Treasurer. Thanks must also go to Jayne Calvert, our Director of Music, who has kept Mothers' Union going throughout the pandemic and has been instrumental in helping set up and run the Community Larder. Thank you also to Catherine Roffey for all she does as Church Administrator and Lettings Manager, and to David Clark for all his work with the fabric and insurance of the building. I also want to thank the whole congregation of St. Nicholas for their many words of encouragement and support over the last 12 months, and for the great adaptability and resilience they have shown in the face of so much change. In spite of all the challenges we have faced, I believe we can continue to say that 'St. Nicholas is in good spirits'.

Stephen Broadie
Associate Rector

ST. GILES MUSIC

The Junior Choir: now has 19 members, slightly up on last year. Membership is stable and there is more participation in church festivals etc. The Junior Choir continues to increase the contribution that it makes to the musical life of St. Giles. The Royal School of Church Music's 'Voice for Life' training scheme is proving to be of great benefit, with a number turning up half an hour early on practice nights. Several are near to being awarded their medals for the second stage.

The 'Let's Sing Together Group': is successful in that several members now join in with the Church choirs at festivals etc. However, we could do with a few more members, particularly on the Soprano line. I am greatly indebted to members of the Senior Choir who come along to support this venture: it is very difficult to teach people from a standing start without more experienced singers alongside - in fact it would be next to impossible. Meetings take place in St. Giles on the first Monday of the month at 19.30 and new participants are always welcome. We concentrate on music reading, different styles of Anglican Church music and singing technique but we also spend time on looking at the music that is coming up for festivals.

The Organ Restoration Project: As everyone knows, this took much longer than we envisaged for a variety of reasons, some of which were acceptable, others not. We also caused the contract period to extend somewhat by having the display pipes gilded and decorated, which, due to drying times etc. added more than a month. The organ builders took the financial hit for the bits that were down to them. However, it was all worth it. Organists and people in the trade have been impressed by the result and by the Parish's commitment to the project. We now have an instrument that is far more cohesive, a pleasure to play and it should last for many more years. A review of all the work will be undertaken before May when final regulation and fine tuning will take place but there are a couple of things that I am not yet happy with and they will be addressed before this: the under-action on one 'department' is being replaced to improve responsiveness; and a re-voiced reed stop is not yet good enough and will be looked at again after the action improvements have taken place.

To mark the finish of the work and the settling in period there will be a **Celebrity Organ Recital** by Daniel Moulton on Saturday 9th May. There will be more about this in the April and May editions of the Parish Magazine but Daniel is one of the best players in the UK and the programme should include something for everyone. In addition, Saturday 18th April is World Heritage Day and the Royal College of Organists has asked every building in the land that houses an organ to open their

doors and invite people to come in and listen. That's actually thousands of buildings and only a fraction will do it but I felt that St. Giles must participate to show off what has been done. So the Church will be open on that day from 14.30-16.30 for people to come in, listen, ask questions, even 'have a go'. I shall be joined by my brother and we might even play an organ duet, if we can find where we put the music!

Clive Brearley
Organist and Junior Choirmaster

ST. GILES FAMILY & CHILDREN'S WORKER

Our church families are an integral part of our Church community and its children make a lively and vital contribution to its life. Their spiritual development is a key component of our usual weekly Church services and meetings and so it was with a sad heart that we had to close our groups at the end of March 2020 due to the Covid pandemic.

However, it was considered a priority that we should attempt to keep in touch with our church families and to provide spiritual support and friendship wherever it might be needed. With that in mind, regular emails were sent out to families with Sunday School children, initially just as a means of keeping in touch, but soon these included links to useful websites offering family friendly faith-based ideas. Moving on from there, since April 2020 Sunday School 'lesson plans' have been emailed out to both Junior and Senior Sunday School parents to help them support their children's spiritual development at home. Of course, these have been entirely voluntary but have been available as and when needed.

Throughout 2020 we covered a number of topics....

Junior age children looked at some Old Testament characters and then went on to think about the themes of Harvest, Advent and Christmas. This was approached through the use of stories and practical activities. Families were sent crosswords, word searches and colouring sheets; craft ideas for pictures, collages and models, masks, friendship bracelets and crowns; recipe ideas; games such as 'pairs' and how to make a jigsaw. The aim was to provide activities that were light-hearted and fun to carry out.

Seniors started off by following the bible readings allocated to the Sundays they would have been attending Sunday School. Although based around bible study, opportunity was provided for families to discuss as many or as few questions provided and to support the study through practical application. For example, when studying Matthew 9: 35 - 10: 8 'spreading the gospel through team work' as well as questions to help with understanding the passage, they were also encouraged to talk about teams they supported or were in themselves. The children could then create an 'advert' for the role of disciple or decorate an old T shirt showing that they were on God's team. This group then also went on to look at the themes as for the juniors, but at an appropriate age level.

After the first lockdown, I attended a Zoom meeting run by the Diocese regarding opening up churches for children's and youth work. With our small church and hall buildings, doing this at St. Giles presented us with particular difficulties. Families were sent a questionnaire asking how they would like to continue with Sunday School. There was even some tentative thought that we might be able to meet again as groups, albeit in a bigger space than the Centre. Of all the suggestions sent out, an organised, socially distanced walk was by far the most popular. While some families were all 'zoomed out' and others not keen on meeting indoors, the majority were keen to meet outside if possible and also to continue to receive activities via email. Two walks were organised, one for each age group, and we managed to fit in

one before the second lockdown. A group of Junior children and parents met outside the Centre for a walk around High Elms. They were given craft packs with everything they needed for bark rubbings, leaf collection and picture making around the theme of autumn. Juniors who were not able to accompany us had their craft packs delivered to their homes so that they could take part with their families when convenient. You may have seen some of the pictures the children produced in the magazine or on the website.

Christmas craft resources and ideas for all ages were posted out or hand delivered and again, you may have seen some of their work printed.

This brings us to 2021 and the third lockdown. At the time of writing, two email shots have been sent out. In January, both Sunday Schools followed the theme of 'beginnings' and in February, 'hope'. The older children looked at bible references for each topic, while the younger ones looked more generally at what these words mean. We attempt to apply what we learn from the bible into our everyday lives. For 'hope' we discussed the difference between a wishful thinking kind of optimism and the confident expectation that God's promises for us will be fulfilled

And for our younger children we asked....when you pray, who do you hope is listening? God *is* listening but we have to talk to him in the first place for Him to hear. The March mailout based on the theme of 'nurture' included a pack of sunflower seeds for each family. We looked at nurture in relation to nature, human growth and spiritual development.

We have all experienced many challenges and changes in our lives over the past year. Families have had to work, teach and learn from home and I am grateful to those who have kept in touch with emails of their news, their response to our survey and my email lessons and resources. As a Church we remain committed to supporting our families in developing the faith of their children whatever circumstances we may all face.

Irene Dancer
St. Giles Family & Children's Worker

ST. GILES SAFEGUARDING REPORT

This is the first such report from the Parish Safeguarding Officer (PSO) to be included in the AGM papers.

I can confirm that our churches have adopted the House of Bishops' Safeguarding Policy and Practice Guidance. In addition to this we have our own Parish Safeguarding Policy, which supports and illustrates the above guidance. Copies of this are located in both churches, in St. Giles Centre and on the parish website.

Safeguarding is integral to the smooth and safe running of all institutions, not least the Church. In our parish, safeguarding is taken seriously and we seek to treat all with respect and to ensure that all who come here feel safe and protected.

Since becoming the PSO I have completed the appropriate training and have sought to ensure that all those who are in roles of responsibility also do so. Our Lead Recruiter and DBS administrator ensure that all relevant police checks, for volunteers and workers, are carried out in a timely fashion.

Following a Diocesan request for a safeguarding audit a Safeguarding Action Plan was produced and agreed by the PCC. The implementation of this has been disrupted because of the current Covid pandemic.

Throughout the year the Diocese has kept us updated with new training requirements, modules and dates and these have been disseminated as appropriate. We have been made aware of changes to Safeguarding personnel at Rochester. Our notices around the churches will reflect this once church has reopened. A copy of the Parish Safeguarding Policy, a Training Matrix and Parish Safeguarding Handbook (produced by the National Safeguarding Team) have been circulated to all current members of the PCC. The updated Parish Safeguarding Policy has been forwarded to the web manager.

Prior to lockdown I had updated the church notice boards with the required Safeguarding Policies and contact details and placed 'here to help' notices in toilets and was about to include the choir and clergy vestry. Matthew and I were planning a programme of briefing sessions with church groups and discussing other ways to extend the opportunities within the parish to discuss and inform about this important issue. All policies and notices will be updated once Church is fully open.

Irene Dancer
Parish Safeguarding Officer

ST. GILES BELLRINGERS

2020 was a year like no other and the Coronavirus restrictions impacted severely on the country as a whole, the church and inevitably bell ringing.

The initial restrictions started in March and this effectively put an end to normal ringing. During those first weeks of 2020 the bells were rung every Sunday morning prior to the Family Service and, also during that time Wednesday afternoon teaching practices continued to take place. As reported last year, these practices are highly successful and well attended with the timing of 3.30 p.m. deliberately designed to be convenient to children straight after school.

Five quarter peals were rung in 2020 (28 in 2019), all on Tuesdays from about 11.00 a.m. mainly with visiting ringers plus NW and four peals (nine peals in 2019) including one on Saturday 29th February. Those much-reduced totals reflected the effective ceasing of normal ringing from March.

After the complete lockdown restrictions were eased a little moving into late summer and early autumn 2020 it was possible, after carrying out a Risk Assessment, to ring a limited number of bells. The conditions were that ringing could only be for services for a maximum of 15 minutes, ringers to be spaced 1.5m apart (unless a family) staying with the same bell for all the ringing session including ringing up and down and wearing masks. On this basis we were able to ring three bells but occasionally more with a family group and NW ringing two bells. Even this ringing ceased towards the end of 2020.

As previously reported, everyone who visits St. Giles likes the bells which are physically easy to ring and extremely popular with young and old and this is one of the main reasons that the Wednesday afternoon ringing sessions are so well attended. With the popularity of these practices, we have often found there were more people in the ringing chamber than there are bell ropes. In order to address this situation, prices were obtained for augmenting the bells to a peal of eight and on 16th March 2020 the PCC approved this proposal. Taylor's of Loughborough, who installed the six bells in 2012 have been instructed for a 'Top and Tail' augmentation involving the casting of a new treble, a heavier tenor and tuning the 4th bell down half a note. A Faculty was obtained in September 2020.

Reductions to the headline price are offered by Taylor's for self-help and in this connection the 4th bell was removed from the tower by volunteers on 26th October and taken to Loughborough. The expected final cost is likely to be approximately £25k and for which funding has been secured. A Just Giving Page was set up to aid fund raising and an article drawing attention to this project was produced by NW and published in June 2020 in the bell ringers weekly magazine, The Ringing World. Without a doubt the profile of the project and hence the flow of contributions, was helped enormously by the association of the project with the late John Barnes, a prominent ringer of over 70 years who resided in Leamington Avenue in this Parish. John spent decades helping parishes with bell restoration projects and it is fitting that the new treble will bear his name.

Pleasingly the installation of the necessary extra framework and hanging of the two new bells commenced on Monday 22nd March and was completed on Maundy Thursday, 1st April, so for Easter there was an octave of eight ringable bells in the tower. Unfortunately, the distancing restrictions prevent us from ringing all eight bells and, with spacing, we can ring roughly every other bell: odds or evens.

Finally, I'd again like thank Matthew for his continued enthusiasm and support, the members of the band that turn up regularly to ring and all those involved with the successful augmentation.

Nick Wilkins
Tower Captain

ST. NICHOLAS FAMILY & CHILDREN'S WORKER

I'm sure that many reports will comment on the unprecedented year that we have just had due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Many activities have had to be cancelled or done in a different way, we have had to get to grips with zoom and pre-booking services.

ST NICHOLAS TODDLER GROUP

Unfortunately it has not been possible for this group to meet since March 2020. We are hoping that as restrictions are lifted we may be able to meet again in the summer with number restrictions in place.

KIDS CLUB

This last year it has not been possible to do KIDS CLUB as before, but we have been running a Children and family worship service on weeks when there has been no lockdown. This has worked well, families stay in their groups and there are activities to do that have been prepared in advance. Families book in advance via Eventbrite so we know how many are coming each week. When we have been unable to meet in Church we have either run online or zoom services for families.

Families have been involved with creating a giant poppy wreath on the Church doors, decorating and putting up nativity pictures in the windows of their houses, colouring Holy Week Easter Egg pictures to go on our outside noticeboard and creating an outside Easter garden. There have also been Christmas and Easter trails to complete.

JUST BABIES

Just Babies is for parents with babies up to crawling age. This is deemed to be a support group and it is planned to start again after Easter with families booking in advance.

MESSY CHURCH

Messy Church was cancelled for most of 2020 but we did a Christmas session modelled on our Sunday morning family worship. Families booked in advance, stayed in their groups and did craft packs that had been pre-prepared. We watched a video clip of the Christmas story. In March we held an Easter session in the same way and we plan to do a couple more in the summer term.

Unfortunately we had to cancel the children's holiday club, 'Light and Bright', and the Easter activity morning. We are hoping if the easing of restrictions continues in the way that is planned that we will be able to run some sort of children's activity in the summer.

I would like to thank the families at St. Nicholas for their support and encouragement and Lynne Henniker for all her help throughout the year. Thank you.

Diane Stiff

Family and Children's worker St. Nicholas

MOTHERS' UNION

Well, what a difference a year makes! Who would have thought we would all have become proficient with Zoom meetings? Our Farnborough Mothers' Union group has gone from strength to strength and has positively thrived during this COVID-19 pandemic. The group has increased by three new members who were enrolled earlier this year, and one transferred from another Orpington branch. Our total membership stands at 25. We have met together twice a month over Zoom to share faith and fellowship. Those who are not able to join us in person get a paper copy of each service so they can feel involved at home. Several members from other MU branches in Orpington regularly join us, so we are truly united in fellowship.

We follow the church's year and have just had a very successful Lady Day and Mothering Sunday Zoom meeting. We were lucky enough to have our Diocesan President, Julia Jamieson and her husband Mark, join us.

In February we had a meeting that included Lent Reflections to prepare us for Easter. Jocelyn also gave a very interesting account of her recent trip to New Zealand, complete with pictures.

In December we held our service supporting the 16 days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence, entitled "No More 1 in 3", and lit candles to show solidarity with our friends who have sadly been affected, both in the UK and overseas. Many suffer in silence and are undetected in their wider community. Mothers' Union joins each year with other organisations from approximately 187 countries who participate in this campaign to raise awareness of, and call for, an end to gender-based violence in all forms and in all societies.

Even though our organisation was formed in 1876 by Mary Sumner, a Clergyman's wife, from a small home-group meeting to support young mothers living in her husband George's parish in Old Alresford near Winchester, our beliefs and goals are still very relevant to today. We have over 4 million Christian members in 83 countries in the world, but Mothers' Union still continues to flourish.

On August 9th we celebrate Mary Sumner Day, and members from Rochester Diocese have always joined in a pilgrimage starting from their home Church and stopping off at various churches for prayer, fellowship and light refreshment, before ending up at Rochester Cathedral to share in Choral Evensong. Unfortunately, it wasn't possible to join in the pilgrimage last year in person, but we did celebrate her life via a Zoom meeting. It was also a shame that we were not able to hold our normal Charity Lunch last June. This is usually very well attended by members from other Mothers' Union groups, and people from Farnborough Parish. Who knows what this year will bring?

Like many other charities, Mothers' Union has suffered this last year through lack of fund raising, however our group has just participated in this year's Make a Mother's Day campaign. This year our theme, "Gifts of Togetherness", at a time when the chance to come together has been more precious than ever before.

Our small Mothers' Union group here in Farnborough has raised £347 for this campaign. With that money we have been able to purchase:

- Empowerment classes for young girls in Ethiopia, enabling a girl to attend a weekly empowerment group that helps her to stay in school.
- Savings and business skills to help mothers in Tanzania have the gift of independence, by enabling a woman to attend a savings group workshop to grow her family income, giving them greater access to better healthcare and education.
- Parenting classes in the UK to give the gift of support, companionship and friendships to help their families flourish.
- Passionate about parenting, enabling a woman in Uganda to attend a series of parenting classes, so her children can have a brighter future.
- Trauma-healing journey, helping communities recover from trauma, shock and grief in a safe environment, after one of the worst cyclones on record to hit Africa in 2019 ripped through Malawi, Mozambique and Zimbabwe.
- An AFIA (Away From It All) Experience day in UK for a family to help them get away from the stresses of daily life.

As our Worldwide President, Sheran Harper wrote, *"Mothering Sunday is a day when we can show love, gratitude and appreciation for all the wonderful mothers and caregivers, both past and present, at home and around the world"*..

Locally, several members of Farnborough Mothers' Union and others are still knitting colourful squares, which are then sewn up into blankets. This past year several blankets have been given to Haiti, and SCBU at the PRUH has received many baby cot- blankets, cardigans and other clothing for the preterm and sickly babies needing care there.

I want to thank my friends in the Mothers' Union group for supporting me so generously when I was providing toiletries for the staff at the PRUH working in ITU with the seriously ill Covid -19 patients, both last Spring, and again earlier this year in January and February. Such activities demonstrate that we are showing God's love through Mothers' Union in Action.

We continue to hold our Zoom meetings on the 1st Monday evening in the month at 7.30 p.m., and the 3rd Thursday afternoon at 1.30 p.m. Hopefully, we may soon be able to return to proper meetings at St. Nicholas Church. It will be wonderful to meet up in person again!

If you are interested in hearing more about the Mother's Union, contact:

Jayne Calvert on 01959 439153 or 07780664340

HOUSE GROUPS

In my house group report for 2020 I recalled that we had set up 4 extra small groups, in addition to the 12 on-going house groups, to follow Matthew's Lent course, 'A Stone in my Pocket'. These had just got going when Covid 19 arrived and lockdown, so sadly any further meetings, including the culminating workshop to paint and inscribe a pebble, had to be abandoned.

Fast forward to January 2021 and we knew it would not be possible to hold our usual in-person Lent studies because of the continuing pandemic. Instead, Matthew wrote a course on the Letter of James; the Bible reading, a reflection and some questions to ponder are included with the weekly St. Giles bulletin and service sheet which is either posted or emailed to all those who wish to receive it. Matthew also recorded and posted each session online. In this way everyone who wished to take part could do so, albeit on their own and not with a group.

During lockdown house group leaders have kept in touch with their members by phone and email and a few 'technically savvy' ones have continued to lead their groups using zoom, including following the Lent course. Well done!

Going forward I think it will be helpful to consider the different ways in which we have produced this year's Lent course. Perhaps there are some lessons here for the future? (*Please let Matthew or me know your thoughts on this*). One area is the benefits of online services/study groups etc, not to replace meeting up physically, but rather to enable more people to participate, particularly those who are not able to attend in person.

Heather Argent
House Group co-ordinator

ST. GILES WEBSITE

The normal smooth management of the website was interrupted by two technical challenges:

Firstly, the software that I had been using to publish the website to the internet since 2011 stopped working. This was caused by changes made with no prior warning by our hosting company that the old software I was using couldn't cope with. Fortunately Alison and I were staying with our daughter Annabel at the time, and in readiness for just this type of eventuality she had had the foresight some years before to link up with and later marry Matt, a network specialist. He was able to help me get an alternative method up and running early in 2020.

Later in the year I was again unable to publish any updates, due to further changes made supposedly in the interests of security by the hosting company, and again with no prior warning (do you detect a theme?). This was resolved following a call to their helpdesk, but as they were very short staffed due to Covid. this took some days, and it started recurring on a regular basis. The permanent solution was to migrate to using 'secure ftp' for publishing. This was a sound idea anyway, but beyond me. However again a friend came to the rescue, this time a former work colleague, also a network specialist, who knows all about these things. It turned out later that the only people who would have been affected by the change made were those with a BT internet connection, as these are apparently highly prone to hacking attempts and therefore BT apply additional security.

An enhanced solution has now been implemented, but as my friend keeps reminding me I have not yet, due to Covid19, been able to buy him the promised pub lunch.

FARNBOROUGH PARISH WEBSITE:

www.farnborough-kent-parish.org.uk

The parish website has continued despite the above, although with a much lower frequency of updates, for obvious COVID-19 reasons. Details of services were suspended for some months, because there weren't any, and the normal steady flow of updates about forthcoming events and photos following events dried up.

This has had its impact on usage volumes: which after a strong start to the year finished overall up to 13% down on the previous year.

FARNBOROUGH HISTORY WEBSITE

www.farnborough-kent-village.org.uk

The history website has continued through the year, with updates including a profile of Sheila Grant Duff, the history of Tubbendence, the disposal of properties owned by the Fox family after the bankruptcy of the brewery business, aerial photographs of Farnborough taken in the 1950s and exciting details about milestones and coal-tax posts. There are also now a number of historical maps of the area.

Once again, I have been given permission to use relevant articles from the magazine of the Bromley Borough Local History Society, which are always of high standard and well researched.

Several new pages on the website have been used with modifications for submission to the parish magazine.

The site now contains about 105 pages, currently larger than the St. Giles website,

Nick Reynolds
nickrstgiles@gmail.com

FRIENDS OF ST. GILES

The aim of the Friends has always been to support the Church. This year, along with the PCC, we have been investigating the idea of providing broadband into the Church following a suggestion from a member at our last Friends AGM.

The 250 Club continues to flourish as no social distancing is needed for that!

All other activities have been postponed until the appropriate time.

Julia Hoadley
Chairman

PARISH MAGAZINE

The magazine has undergone a complete overhaul since April 2020.

Until Covid struck T&C printed the magazines and these were delivered by an army of willing volunteers. Overnight the order was given that magazines could no longer be delivered in this way and T&C had to stop printing. Unfortunately April was also the month when people were asked to renew their annual subscriptions. Adèle Cooke took on the task of producing a magazine which was sent out via email to those who have email and used a print and post service to those who didn't. It was very difficult to ascertain who should receive magazines as many of our readers are not on the electoral roll and missed out on the information in the weekly bulletins. Sadly we have lost touch with many of them.

In January we were able to resume working with T&C to produce the A4 printed version. In order to cover the cost of producing and delivering the magazine, the price had to be increased but a pdf of the magazine was available via email at a much reduced price.

There are still many people in the community who would like to receive the magazine and slowly word is trickling through and the number of subscribers is increasing. We are hopeful that in time we will reach many more.

With regard to the content of the magazine, we are very grateful to Matthew and Stephen for their leaders. We should also like to thank Lynne Henniker, Lindsay Barnes and Patsy John for keeping us updated with their monthly contributions; to Nick Reynolds and Alex Fordyce for their interesting articles and Sheila Munns for her articles about birds. Margaret Thurgood has written some thought provoking stories and Bob Donovan keeps us amused with his outlook on life! We have had very good feedback on the number and variety of all the articles so please keep them coming.

We look forward to the time when we can once again have monthly news from Irene Dancer and Diane Stiff about the children's activities, and all the social events put together by Carol Fryer.

Despite everything we were able to enter for the 2020 National Parish Magazine awards and put forward the January and April 2020 magazines in the A4 category. We were delighted to once again find ourselves in the top ten and achieved 7th place from 262 entries. We are grateful to Danny and the team at T&C for helping to produce such a result.

Eddie and Helen Roberts
Editors

9. CLOSING PRAYER

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning is now and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.