



ST. BOTOLPH'S
CHEVENING CHURCH

Church Annual Review 2021



St. Botolph's Church, Chevening
The Chapel of the Good Shepherd, Chipstead
and Chevening Parish Hall, Chipstead

Rector: Rev Hannah Adams

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Who's Who

PCC

Churchwarden	Miss Marcia Barton	2021	Deanery Synod ex-officio
Churchwarden	Mr Rob Hubbard	2021	
Treasurer	Mr Graham Higgs	2020	
Members	Mrs Lela Weavers	2021	Diocesan Synod ex-officio
	His Honour John Colyer	2020	Deanery Synod ex-officio
	Mrs Fiona Jordan	2020	Deanery Synod ex-officio
	Mrs Donna Hill	2020	
	Mrs Clare Marriott	2020	
	The Hon. Richard Mais	2020	
	Mr James Gale	2021	
	Mrs Carole Cresswell	2019	Until March 2021
	Mr Richard Chamberlin	2018	Until May 2021
	Mrs Dana Dobrescu	2019	
	Mrs Jess Lewis	2021	
	Mr David Thompson	2021	
	Mr Thomas Geldard	2021	
	Mrs Rebecca Pilcher	2021	
	Mrs Kelly Stiff	2021	
	Mrs Sophie Osborne	2021	
Mrs Susan Wandless	2021		
Miss Sandra Tolhurst	2020		
Mr Joseph Devine	2020		

Secretary Mrs Jess Lewis

Vergers Mrs Jayne Duncan & Mr Ian Glen

Ministry Leaders:

Prayer	Mrs Lynda Hubbard
Bell ringers, Tower Captain	Mrs Carole Cresswell
Chevening Brownies	Mrs Anna Donnelly
Chevening Guides & Rangers	Mrs Nicola Dedman
Children's Crèche	Mrs Rebecca Massam
Choir Director	Vacant
Church Fabric	Miss Marcia Barton
Church Key Holder	Mr Petronel Butuc
Electoral Roll Secretaries	Mr and Mrs R Marriott
Flower Fund	Miss Jane Nielson
Gift Aid Officer	Mr Graham Higgs
Health & Safety Officer	Vacant
Mission Link Coordinator	Vacant
Parish Disclosure Officer DBS	Mrs Jess Lewis
Parish Safeguarding Officer	Mrs Donna Hill
Parish Hall Bookings	Mrs Pauline Blundell
Parish Hall Treasurer	Mrs Riona Horley
Small Groups	Rev Hannah Adams
Children's Groups	Mrs Alex Robinson & Mrs Becky Pilcher

Rector's Report

Our vision for the church is to be a beacon of hope. Throughout 2021, despite the many changes in restrictions, we saw many opportunities where that vision became a reality. From providing an online presence near and far in our Church at Home services, to small intimate services in the hall for those who were isolated and without internet. We put on fun community events such as a BBQ, the October light party and Beer & Carols at the Bricks, and not forgetting our Love Christmas campaign. The Play Café for those with preschool children started and pastoral home visits to local residents as well as those in Rivermere Carehome. We have seen a 'Dear Friends' almost every week delivered to everyone in the church – including approx. 17 in person deliveries every week to those who are without internet, isolated and/or vulnerable. A HUGE thank you to all of you and how you have played a part (seen & unseen) in providing all of this to happen. I am so thankful.

Our church has grown in number and we've been able to welcome over 10 new families and individuals. In addition to this, we were able to increase our staffing: Fiona Jordan is our Events & Halls Manager and Nathan Adams is our Communications Coordinator. However, we could not do what we do without the generosity of our many volunteers who give up a lot of time and effort – many of whom are busily working in the background.

Last year we launched our 'Vision for Growth' as our way of serving a bigger picture vision to be a beacon of hope. The underpinning scripture to our 'Vision for Growth' is the parable of the mustard seed and specifically how can we make God's kingdom known as we emerge from the pandemic. Our three main objectives were (and continue to be): Restart, Recuperate and Refocus.

To achieve these we set out with three main projects all of which have either been accomplished or are still in progress. The re-roofing of the North Nave was planned in 2021 and completed successfully in 2022. We have funding in place for a Youth and Families Worker for three years and we hope that this will continue as well as a generous pledge to help us enhance our space for our children and young people. We also have started trialling ways in which we can improve the space in the Chancel (front of church) so that all can benefit from better use of the limited space available.

We've been able to move from the start of the year with very tight restrictions to reopening with a new service pattern that serves everyone in our church. Many have said it was the point when we could sing again (whether with Choir, organ, band or somewhere in between), that was the moment where things started to feel normal again.

Everyone should be proud and thrilled by what has been achieved in another turbulent year. We remain thankful to God that he continues to use and bless us. Here's to 2022!

Rev Hannah Adams, Rector

Churchwardens' Report

Most of the congregation see the two churchwardens at work only on a Sunday, when they are preparing the church for a service or tidying up after a service. But behind that there is quite a lot else to being a churchwarden. We share the possession of the church and the churchyard jointly with the Rector; the moveable furniture and ornaments of the church are in our legal ownership; we are responsible for ensuring that the fabric of the church is in good order; that order is maintained in both the church and the churchyard during services (we have a power to remove people who cause a disturbance!) We also have to ensure that everyone who wants to attend a service has a seat, or a suitable place to stand (which caused one or two problems whilst we were observing social distancing). We undertake in front of the Archdeacon each year to carry out these duties faithfully. We are also Officers of the Bishop, and are obliged to answer any questions about the state of the parish and to report anything which is amiss. Thankfully we have not had to do the latter!

In the calendar year 2021 some things stand out from the routine work:

- The gradual return to worshipping in church in person, with special services in September for Confirmation, and to celebrate Hannah's 1st anniversary as our Rector, partly to compensate for the fact that very few of us were able to be present at her formal service of Induction in September 2020. And of course it was lovely to be able to be in church for Harvest Festival; Remembrance Sunday; and Christmas.
- Successful fund-raising for the repairs to the north roof of the church, and the commencement of the work.
- Agreement from the Archdeacon for repairs to the roof of the south porch, and for repairs/refurbishment to the interior of the porch.
- After many ups and downs and delays, the grant of a Faculty for the installation of a stained glass window at the south-west end of the church in memory of a previous rector.

The work of ensuring the fabric of our church is in good order and, importantly, fit for current congregations and forms of worship, has kept our predecessors and will no doubt keep our successors busy. But it's important to note that that without the ability to share the burdens with other members of the PCC and the congregation our church would not be as successful as it is.

Marcia Barton and Rob Hubbard

Secretary's Report

Chevening PCC meets roughly every six weeks and has the responsibility of co-operating with the Incumbent in promoting the whole mission of the Church: pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical. It also has maintenance responsibilities for St. Botolph's Church and the Chipstead Parish Hall complex (incorporating the Chapel of the Good Shepherd and Homedean). St. Botolph's is a member of the Churches Together in Sevenoaks and District.

The method of appointment of PCC members is set out in the Church Representation Rules 2020. All church attendees are encouraged to register on the Electoral Roll and stand for election to the PCC where there are vacancies.

In 2021 the full PCC met 9 times (both in person and on Zoom). The Standing Committee met between meetings and the minutes of their deliberations were received by the full PCC and discussed where necessary.

Jess Lewis, PCC Secretary

Treasurer's Report (including summary of accounts)

FINANCIAL REVIEW 2021

Income

Total incoming resources were £141,887 (2020 - £117,005) and these are detailed in the financial statements. Voluntary unrestricted income has increased to £104,328 from £95,956 in 2020. Our church activities in the past two years have been severely restricted by the Covid-19 pandemic and collections in church have been limited. Many parishioners have made one off donations to compensate and their generosity is very much appreciated.

Fees for weddings and funerals were also limited by the pandemic but have now increased to £4,155 from £2,802 in 2020.

Expenditure

Our expenditure on church activities was £115,288 (2020 - £118,407) and this includes our parish contribution of £60,000 (2020 - £64,750) to the costs of administering the Diocese and the cost of the Rector's stipend and associated costs.

Generally our expenditure has been strictly controlled this year but there are a number of repair and maintenance issues which will need to be resolved in the coming year.

Reserves

As a result of our activities in 2021, our unrestricted funds increased to £66,291 from £63,515 in 2020 and our restricted reserves, including the endowment, rose from £54,708 to £81,700. It is PCC policy to maintain a balance of unrestricted funds of at £25,000 to cover emergency situations that may arise from time to time. Unrestricted reserves, at the year end, amounted to £55,956 which, after setting aside the minimum referred to above, is equivalent to approximately 20 weeks costs up from 17 weeks in 2020. Our restricted funds include the Building Fund which consists of monies given and retained towards meeting the costs of major repairs to the fabric of the church itself including such costs as may arise from our Quinquennial Inspections. It is the policy of the PCC that funds held, in excess of foreseeable needs, shall be invested with the CBF Church of England Deposit Fund with the CCLA.

THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF ST BOTOLPH'S

Statement of Financial Activities for the year ended 31st December 2021

	Notes	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Endowment funds	Total 31.12.21	Total 31.12.20
Income and endowments						
Voluntary income	2a	104,328	32,495		136,823	113,073
Investment income	2b	909			909	1,130
Fees	2c	4,155			4,155	2,802
Other income	2d					
Total income		109,392	32,495	0	141,887	117,005
Expenditure						
Church activities	3a	106,616			106,616	104,864
Costs of generating funds	3b					
Major church repairs	3c		8,672		8,672	13,543
Total expenditure		106,616	8,672	0	115,288	118,407
Net income (-expenditure)		2,776	23,823		26,600	-1,402
Unrealised gains or losses	3d			3,168	3,168	1,897
Net movement in funds		2,776	23,823	3,168	29,768	495
Funds brought forward		63,515	32,561	22,147	118,223	117,728
Funds carried forward		£66,291	£56,385	£25,315	£147,991	£118,223

THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF ST BOTOLPH'S

Balance Sheet as at 31st December 2021

	<u>Notes</u>	<u>31.12.21</u>	<u>31.12.20</u>
Accumulated funds	6		
Unrestricted funds		66,291	58,964
Restricted funds		56,385	36,493
Endowment funds		25,314	22,766
Total Church Funds		<u>£147,990</u>	<u>£118,223</u>
Represented by			
Fixed assets	7		
Investments		34,786	31,618
		<u>34,786</u>	<u>31,618</u>
Current assets	8		
Accounts receivable-payable		2,442	4,219
Balances at bank		110,762	82,386
		<u>113,204</u>	<u>86,605</u>
Total Church Assets		<u>£147,990</u>	<u>£118,223</u>

Graham Higgs, Hon. Treasurer, Chevening PCC

**St Botolph's Chevening Society of Bellringers
Tower Captain's Report for 2021**

When we went into "lockdown" again just after New Year 2021 all bell ringing was halted and, due to concerns raised by the Church of England in conjunction with the Central Council of Church Bell Ringers about the risks from poor ventilation in ringing rooms (ours has no opening windows) and the close proximity of bell ropes not allowing enough spacing between ringers, things for us have still not got back to normal. Initial easing of some restrictions only enabled ringers from the same household to ring together so we could only ring 2 bells on 20th June to mark the Patronal Festival at St Botolph's and for some weddings. Further relaxation of the guidance meant that by taking a lateral flow test before ringing, and ringing for no more than 15 minutes, we have been able to ring 3 or 4 of our bells for the later weddings and for Sunday morning services once they resumed in church in September; we rang 3 bells half-muffled on Remembrance Sunday.

Altogether we rang for 6 weddings. Fees were reduced according to the number of bells rung but it was pleasing to know that bells – however few – were definitely wanted and appreciated. The tenor bell was tolled half-muffled for 6 funerals during 2021 and it was also tolled half-muffled 99 times at 4 pm on the 9th April to mark the passing of the Duke of Edinburgh and again for 99 whole pulls at 2 pm on 17th April, the day of the Duke's funeral. A quarter peal attempt was made by 8 ringers from around the Kent area for the confirmation service on 19th September. They were all prepared to accept the Covid risks and were pleased to ring for this important occasion. Unfortunately, the quarter peal attempt (which takes approximately 45 minutes) fell apart just before the end but it was a delight to hear all 8 bells singing out in celebration once again.

Carole Cresswell, Tower Captain

1st Chevening (St Botolph's) Brownies

The Brownies have been working towards their Be Well skills builder badge this year which has included a walk through Chipstead, discussing healthy eating and a yoga session. We have been kindly invited to Chipstead Sailing club after the Easter holidays for a sail around the lake and a demonstration of how to rig a boat.

We have welcomed many new Brownies and have a very full waiting list so we always welcome anyone that would like to come and help at our meetings or has a skill they might like to teach us. We are looking forward to a Summer term where we will be out and about on scavenger hunts, boat racing and hopefully taking part in a division activity for the Queens Jubilee.

Anna Donnelly

Chevening, (St Botolph's) C.E. (Aided) Primary School

One of the highlights of 2021 for Chevening School was the completion of the task to establish a Bible-based Vision, to guide our actions and activities. The *Parable of the Mustard Seed* was really important to the school family during the continuing COVID times; the focus on Christ's teaching, kindness, thoughtfulness and inclusivity underpinned the continuing growth of individuals, the school and God's Kingdom.

The start of 2021 dealt a bit of a blow to school life, with another Government Lockdown and further stringent COVID restrictions; the ill-health and inconvenience to work and home-life felt so much harder in the winter than in the glorious sunshine and heat of Spring 2020. Incredibly quickly, the staff, children and parents adjusted to changed routines and working ways, with improved technology and prior experience spurring on systems for separated learning; further ingenious ideas from the PTFA team strengthened interest, connections and enjoyment. With a Virtual Pet Show, bingo games and activities planned, some beautiful, uplifting posters and messages from different homes and the launch of COVID tests, the school continued to find positive and practical ways to function for all. Parents and staff were impressed with our children's willingness to support each other, preparing quizzes, games and Lockdown survival tips for the weekly newsletter. While the arctic blast's extreme weather took its toll for a brief period, an idea was being carefully kindled in school, leading to a project to demonstrate love and compassion for Chevening parents and friends toiling in medical and caring professions (and those further afield) to provide the best care and attention for their patients in hospital, clinics and at home. Inspired by the Bible story of Aaron and Hur holding up Moses' arms so that Joshua could succeed in battle, The 'Cry Out for Carers' facebook page featured colourful and supportive quotes, ideas, messages and pictures from staff, children and parents, supplemented with chocolates and home-made hearts for Valentine's Day.

Preparations for everyone to re-unite before the Easter break provided a welcome and fresh perspective; virtual author visits and book character costumes were two of the highlights of Book Week and the PTFA kindly arranged for Captain Fantastic to make an end of term virtual visit. As Class 6's whole school Lent Challenge drew to a close, the traditional Easter Service in St Botolph's was re-organised, due to COVID health and safety, with the classes exploring the different elements of the Easter story, through the lens of our school Christian values: **compassion, courage, faith, forgiveness, honesty, love, perseverance and respect.** Despite the difficulties, a seasoning of 'hope' permeated school activities, discussions and hearts.

It's impossible to pretend that COVID has not changed our circumstances and behaviours. Our children's determination to welcome and support each other was commended and notable early in the summer term. For many, there were times of sadness and loss intermingled with happy news; the children's affirmations decorated their daily route to walk in and out of school, providing visual and written encouragement and wisdom for everyone. This was extended in a formal sympathy card prepared by our Head Boy and Head Girl for HM Queen Elizabeth II, to mark the death of Prince Philip; a moving response was duly received a few weeks later.

As well as painful losses, COVID brought about some unexpected opportunities, friendships and connections. Following specialist training, the school was able to offer in-house Emotional Learning Support, to benefit children struggling with social and well-being needs, certainly exacerbated by the further disruptions of the Pandemic. The three branches of our Mustard Seed Vision '**Be true; be kind and thoughtful; be inclusive**' provided a strong foundation to our welcome for the new Class R families for September 2021, with small group games/stories, welcome bags and home visits enabling staff and families to begin to meet and form a new class group.

Summer saw the return of class trips out, school-based activities and residential. The challenge and well-being benefits of individual and team sports remained an important feature of school life, especially swimming. With the amazing support of Mandy Turner, PTFA, parents and Governors, the 2021 Swimming Season brought huge benefits to all; daily exercise, self-improvement, stamina, determination and teamwork all feature in swimming lessons. Some 70 miles were swum by all the Chevening children during the 2021 Swimathon – an amazing feat after the disruptions of dilapidated pool, refurbishment and then COVID. Further adaptations to Sports Day kept the plans within Government Guidance; the children's delight in being able to participate in and support individual and team effort could be heard without the PA system! It was only at the very end of the summer term that we had the first experience of closing a Bubble. Although disappointing for those who had to, again, stay at home, surviving the academic year with only one formal closure was a great achievement. Thank you to everyone who helped keep children, staff and families safe!

Being able to join in with community activities and initiatives continued to provide good opportunities for Chevening children to practise **being true, being kind and thoughtful and being inclusive** beyond the school site. During 2021, the children enjoyed supporting community activities in Chipstead, undertaking Bee Bomb-ing responsibilities around the Lake and entering two recycled pupils into the annual village Scarecrow competition. In turn, the children shared their skills and talents with residents, providing outdoor entertainment on the Green for Leonard Cheshire friends and Christmas carols for Rivermere residents, Tesco shoppers and Coolings Garden Centre visitors. Harvest 2021 saw children, classes and parents excitedly back in St Botolph's Church to celebrate together, with parents enjoying the children's service, presentations, singing and prayers. In December some children, staff and parents managed to escape school, with the Head Teacher's permission, heading to London to sing carols in Trafalgar Square - a wonderful memory!

As a school family, we leaned on the PTFA to provide alternative and skilfully adapted activities to entertain children and adults, sometimes together and sometimes apart; wine tasting, summer lollies on the Rec, a month of fitness, competitions, dress-up days and a Fun Day all played their part in supporting and uniting the school. September's Fun Day was the first opportunity for our 2021 Reception Class to meet other families, whether bumping into each other on the Inflatables, enjoying tea and cake, munching bags of sweets, scoring goals, sporting tattoos, or galloping around on a donkey. Many thanks to the parents, carers and friends for all their wonderful energy and efforts. With the support of Chevening parents and carers, we have again been able to offer additional clubs, activities, trips and opportunities, which enable our children to learn and flourish. 2021 saw an early autumn Science extravaganza, with Chevening families sharing their professional knowledge,

hobbies and passions, in addition to visits by the Wonderdome and Royal Institution. The outdoor presentation of proved how much learning and enjoyment had occurred over the week.

In July, our Class 6 families kindly presented a new tree and accompanying poem, 'Be like a tree'. 2021 proved to be a year when we were strengthened by our Biblical Vision and, to quote the poet, stayed grounded, connected and kept on growing. We are grateful to God for His generous provision and care for us all. I hope this report provides a glimpse of the energy, excitement and enthusiasm that emanate around Chevening (St Botolph's) classrooms, playground, field and facilities. We are so grateful to our friends, supporters, Governors and Trustees at St Botolph's Church for their on-going wise and generous interest and prayerful support. If you would like to know more about our work, please see www.chevening.kent.sch.uk or contact me at the school.

Karen Minnis, Headteacher

Children and Young Persons Report

As part of our Vision for Growth, we asked everyone to think how they could help us practically achieve our goals. Through this we have been able to source funding to employ a part-time Youth and Families Worker for 3 years. This we are absolutely thrilled about and look forward to filling this post in 2022. We are so thankful to those who are financially supporting this and we hope throughout the 3 years we are able to raise more funds to make the role more long term.

Our children (primary school aged) at the start of the year could join in with their own Zoom kids church every Sunday and eventually were able to move to meeting in person twice a month when our services in church resumed. We are incredibly thankful for the time and energy Alex Robinson and Becky Pilcher put in to teaching, loving and caring for the children at St. Botolph's!

As by way of outreach we've been able to restart our once a month Play Café – something for local families and those with preschool aged children to attend. We've roughly seen on average 10 families each month (this could be parent, grandparent or carer with one or two children). We have a small but dedicated team who help set up and set down, led by Gemma Wilson. We hope to grow this team so that we may in the future increase the regularity of the Play Café to more than once a month! Those who come are very thankful that we are able to put this on for them.

As for the youth we were able to have 9 of them involved in Youth Alpha as they prepared for Confirmation in September. This was a great celebration and it was a joy to see them journey throughout the 10 week course. However, the youth of our church have been the primary age group that have not been served in 2021. Whilst there are limitations such as volunteers, time and then other elements that were out of our control such as restrictions, looking forward to 2022 the Youth of our church and community must be seen as a priority.

In our Vision for Growth launch last year, we put space for our Children's work as a priority. We've been able to adapt to our very little space and we now have a 'Stay & Play' corner in the chapel for those preschool aged – this has replaced what was our creche before the pandemic. We have our 'Comfy Corner' for the babies and the Estate continue to be very generous in allowing us to use one of their converted stables as a room for our primary school aged. However, we had set out to find more permanent space such as a port-a-cabin but we have hit several roadblocks in seeing that become a reality. We now must consider how we can cater to our growing Children's work with little space.

Rev Hannah Adams, Rector

Chipstead Chapel Charity

The PCC is the Trustee of the Charity, which is responsible for the Chapel of the Good Shepherd, and the Parish Hall including the Church Office and Homedean.

It is managed by the 'Chipstead Chapel Charity (CCC) Management Team' which is composed of the following: The Rector (Chair), The Churchwardens, Junior Churchwardens, Caretaker, Treasurer, Parish Administrator, Hall Manager and the Bookings Clerk. The committee meets typically each quarter to review and to update the running and the care of the complex.

Chapel of the Good Shepherd

The consecrated Chapel of the Good Shepherd is positioned at one end of the Parish Hall and is a beautiful space in which small groups can meet for Services of communion and worship. If the large doors are opened fully, it allows the hall to become an extension of the chapel, where many more people can be accommodated. This is the case when the informal evening service takes place once a month on a Sunday.

The chapel continues to be in good order and repair.

Parish Hall

The Parish Hall continues to provide a wonderful space for community groups and fitness classes to take place during the week. The hall is available to hire every day apart from Wednesdays when the church has sole use and, on some Sundays, when we meet for the 5pm Informal Service.

Since the relaxation of the covid restrictions we have seen the return of all but one of our regular users which include four fitness groups, Chevening and Chipstead Woman's Institute groups, a badminton club and the Guides and Brownies. We have also been able to relet the hall for one off events such as children's birthday parties. The hall is once again generating some income separate from the rental income of Homedean.

Unfortunately, during the autumn of 2021, it was noticed that the wooden supports of the bell tower were almost completely rotten and the committee had to make some quick decisions about removing the lead covered bell tower for safety reasons. With thanks to some effective organisation on Nigel Hill Builders behalf, the scaffolding was erected, and the tower canopy and bell were carefully removed and stored. Regrettably whilst the committee have been researching various options to have it repaired, the lead was stolen from the top of the canopy. The incident was reported to the Police and the Churchwardens

have been given a crime number in relation to the theft. It remains under discussion as to whether the bell tower can be reinstated.

The Church Office

The small room off to one end of the hall, formerly known as the Committee Room, now houses the church office and essentially has become the hub for parish business. Part of the office adjoins Homedean. Once Covid restrictions had lifted during the year, the Church office was once again manned Monday to Thursday 9-5pm although closed on Fridays. In September of 2021, two new temporary roles were agreed by the PCC for a period of four months to give the busy admin side of church life, some support. A 'Hall and Events Manager' and a 'Communications Manager' were agreed as suitable positions to take some of the load off the very busy church office. These positions will be reviewed by the PCC

Homedean

Following the serious problems with our tenant during 2020 we eventually gained full vacant possession on 18 January 2021. Working with the loss adjuster appointed by our insurers and an independent surveyor appointed by us but whose fees were met in full by the insurer a specification for refurbishment was prepared, competitive tenders sought, and a contractor appointed in less than two months with work starting early March 2021. All refurbishment work was completed late April with virtually all our costs, fees and loss of rent being recovered. Through our letting agents we secured a new tenancy which started on 29 April 2021 with a full year's rent paid in advance. During the year we have renewed fencing and carried out work on the gables which required scaffolding. Post the year end our tenant has left but a new one paying the same rent has already been secured and moved in so that there has been no void period.

Our particular thanks to Richard Mais for his expertise, patience, wisdom and care with looking after Homedean, to Ian Glen for being our wonderfully willing hall caretaker and cleaner and to Pauline Blundell for taking care of the bookings. Thank you all for your hard work.

Fiona Jordan, Events and Hall Manager

Church Fabric Report

It is the churchwardens' job, with the Rector, to ensure that our church building is not just maintained well, but that it is fit for all forms of worship, both traditional and contemporary. No mean task with a building which is mediaeval in structure with an essentially Victorian interior. So it is always pleasing to be able to report on positive progress with the many issues which have to be addressed.

Church Roof

No building is going to last long without a sound roof, and last year the PCC decided to have the north slope of the church roof retiled, as recommended in our Quinquennial Inspection report. Around half the £54K required was raised from donations and the balance covered

by grants from the Friends of Kent churches and the National Churches Trust. Many thanks are due in particular to our Treasurer, Graham Higgs, who worked hard to secure this significant funding.

An Archdeacon's Licence was obtained for the work; the work specification drawn up; contractors engaged, and in the new year (2022) work started and was completed on time at the end of March, despite unforeseen delays caused by funeral services and inclement weather. Huge thanks are due to our deputy warden, Richard Mais, and to our church architect, John Bailey, who both ensured the work was done to the required standard and within budget.

South Porch

An Archdeacon's Licence was also obtained for repairs to the roof of the South Porch and for refurbishing the interior of the porch, which was beginning to look distinctly tired. The roof was retiled first (using the same contractors as for the main roof), but the repainting of the walls and ceiling has been put off until warmer weather. Meanwhile, Chris Whitehead has again demonstrated his skills and craftsmanship by restoring the wooden porch benches and the wood surrounds of the three noticeboards in the porch. We are truly indebted to him. When the painting is finished we'll give the tiled floor a good clean, leaving our principal entrance looking more welcoming than ever.

New Stained Glass Window

The new glass for the window at the end of the south aisle, in memory of a former rector, should be installed by the beginning of June 2022. The Faculty for the installation was granted after much toing and froing with the Diocesan Advisory Committee, and by the time of the Annual Meeting the scaffolding should be erected.

It will be a matter of some relief to the churchwardens to be able to tick this project off our to-do list!

The Chancel

For some time we have been wondering how to make a bit more room around the chancel area so that the worship band and others who may need to use the chancel steps can be accommodated more easily. Just after Christmas the Rector's stall was moved to the side of the altar, and the smaller Litany desk brought forward to serve as a new stall. The matching stall was moved to the other side of the altar, and the lectern moved sideways into the space left. (The beautiful carving on the sides of the stalls depicting the parable of the mustard seed is still visible.)

The moves have made an immediate difference without the need for permissions or any kind of building work – simply an enormous amount of muscle power, for which many thanks to Rob, Richards Francis, Mais and Marriott and Petronel.

Boiler

Our elderly boiler sometimes shows its age by not performing as well as it should, and although it's still going, the time cannot be far off when a new boiler is required. A reliable new generation of boilers is perhaps a couple of years away, and we must hope the present one lasts till then. Meanwhile it will be prudent to ensure we put money aside for the day we need to replace it.

Graffiti

No – not a complaint about modern-day vandals, but to note that members of Kent Archaeology came in the Autumn to survey the church for signs of mediaeval graffiti. They found a number of masons' marks and some protection marks, including a large hexafoil (or "daisy wheel") on one of the nave columns, as well as other more obscure markings. If anyone would like to see the report or the column daisy wheel, please ask one of the wardens.

Protection

It may be good to know our building is protected by mediaeval markings, but more prosaically our roof is protected by alarm sensors and anti-lead theft "smart water"; we have lightning conductors; fire extinguishers; and of course insurance. The maintenance of all these systems has to be managed, supervised and of course, paid for – just some of the not very obvious costs which have to be met from church funds.

Thank you

To the many members of the congregation who in various ways assist in the upkeep of our building.

Marcia Barton and Rob Hubbard, Churchwardens

Deanery Synod

Area Dean, Rev Michael Gentry led the meetings together with Lay Chairman Brig. Ian Dobbie. In January Treasurer, Ron Drury stepped down and Rev Robin Jones was appointed. In April the Area Dean recommended to all Parishes "Thy Kingdom Come" a directive from Rochester Diocese being aware of the great challenges faced by so many over the last year, so they pivoted their resources to be (what is hoped) a real help to churches, schools or in the home a **gathered, online, or hybrid approach**. They also offered **huge free resources** for parishes in the hope that whatever age or tradition, these resources will spiritually nourish and encourage.

At the July Synod meeting elections for Diocesan Synod were held by Zoom for 2 lay members and 3 clergy. Brig. Ian Dobbie was elected. Clergy were not quorate so no election could take place. Rev Jane Winter gave a presentation on Living in Love and Faith; about sexuality and the Church of England. Anne le Bas reported on Anna Chaplaincy (dementia in old age) she is the Sevenoaks representative and willing to give talks to parishes.

Rev Michael Gentry retired as Area Dean to take up his new post as Associate Rector at Chelsfield with Green St. Green & Pratts Bottom. **Rev Canon Anne le Bas was appointed new Area Dean**. The Bishop of Rochester retired in July- his farewell party had to be cancelled due to Covid restrictions. Appointment of new Bishop unlikely until Spring 2022. It was reported that Westerham's new Rector is Rev David Fox-Branch; Brasted Church is suspended; and Rev Pam Davies, Sundridge with Ide Hill & Toys Hill is off sick. Other clergy

are helping with services and Rev Tim Edwards with pastoral work. Rev James, vicar of Kemsing has moved to Scarborough. Rev Mandy Carr might take on Leigh as well because Rev Lionel Kevis is considering retirement next year.

Also reported were changes from May to **Marriage Registration** which is now done online. Parishes should keep their own records

The second Synod meeting held in November at St Nicholas Church, Sevenoaks – met in reality but all members required to wear masks. A video message was sent by Graham Wilkinson who is Archdeaconry Growth Enabler and adviser to Parishes. Keith Berry commentated. Gerry O’Brien explained the process about selection of the next Bishop of Rochester – 12 people are selected, then reduced to 5 men and 5 women, then further reduced to 4, in January 2022 a name will be submitted to the Queen for approval. A report about General Synod in July was accepted from Rev Angus MacLeay (retiring after a total of 22 years on General Synod) . He reported that there were many debates including safeguarding, links with Methodists, new slogan for CoE to be “simpler, humbler, bolder” **Living in Love and Faith** where there is much consultation to be done on this issue relating to human sexuality and it will be the new General Synod which will be involved in decision-making, probably at the end of 2022. The intention is for parishes to respond by the end of 2021, then these responses considered in 2022 by the House of Bishops, followed by discussion at General Synod which might, possibly, result in a relevant resolution!

Lela Weavers (*Standing Committee member Deanery Synod*)

Diocesan Synod

Diocesan Synod met in **March** via Zoom; Bishop Simon acknowledged the exhaustion and inertia that many people felt caused by the pandemic, no one knew what to expect or how they would feel. It had been like running a marathon, but the pandemic gave an amazing opportunity to do great things for the Lord and that all was needed to make the longed-for breakthrough was to work harder than ever before – like asking a marathon finisher to go and immediately run 1500 metres as fast as they could. And so the Church needed time to recover, its people needed to recover. And everyone had got to learn kindness for themselves as well as for others. Recovery would happen at different speeds, for different people and parishes, as surely as people’s experience of Covid itself had varied.

The 5 points of mission were discussed and the role of Growth Enablers. Synod approved the review of the Called Together refocused priorities, namely:- (1) Enabling each church to be mission-minded; (2) Helping children, young people, and adults live out everyday faith in Jesus; (3) Supporting loving service in local communities; (4) Encouraging, and responding to, the prophetic voice of justice and peace; and (5) Protecting creation’s life for future generations.

Clergy welfare was discussed and synod agreed to adopt the Covenant for Clergy Care and Wellbeing, synod was also informed that the Clergy Disciplinary Measure was under review.

Finance for 2020: there was currently an operating deficit of approximately £0.9m slightly higher than budgeted but significantly lower than might have been feared earlier in the year. Parish Offers at the end of the year amounted to £8.39m (5.7% below budget). Mr Pope thanked parishes for the contributions they had been able to make. A Continuity Grant of £320,000 towards the Covid-related deficit had been received from the National Church Institutions. Cost savings of £214k below budget had been achieved. A total of 48 grants of £5,000 each were made to 37 parishes in the greatest need from the diocesan Covid-19 Emergency Relief Fund. Safeguarding and Rochester Diocesan Spirituality Network reports were received.

The **June** meeting (zoom) was the last that Bishop James led as he retired in July. Synod adopted the 2020 accounts: income being £10.6M, costs £11.5M. **Diocesan elections for 2021-2024** took place, results for **Sevenoaks Deanery** were:

House of Clergy: Rev Matt Taylor (St Nicholas). House of Laity: Mrs Jane Belle (Sundridge w Ide Hill & Toys Hill) Mr Gerry O'Brien (St Nicholas, Sevenoaks), Mrs Lela Weavers (Chevening) so two more lay people are required from our deanery and three more clergy. In October **General Synod elections** took place.

The final synod of the year took place in **November** Bishop Simon gave the Presidential address and announced the retirement of Ven. Dr Paul Wright Archdeacon of Bromley & Bexley in February 2022. There was an update on Safeguarding and Synod authorised the expenditure for the Common Fund not exceeding £13.5M. Parish offers had fallen 19.2% over last 4 years. Funding required from a benefice is £79,000. Living in Love & Faith, Called Together and many other topics were reported on.

Lela Weavers (*member of Diocesan Synod*)

Electoral Roll

At the time of writing there are 267 (2021 - 268) parishioners registered on the St Botolph's Church Electoral Roll.

Of the 267 parishioners 126 (2021 - 126) are resident outside of the parish.

If anybody is unsure as to whether they are on the Electoral Roll please contact us or the Parish Office.

Clare and Richard Marriott, Electoral Roll Officers

Chevening Church Flower Fund

Much has changed over the last few years including our life in church. These changes will influence our approach to church flowers. For regular Sundays we will have a small fresh arrangement on the Remembrance table to welcome people into church. For the vestry pedestal we will rely a lot more on silk flowers. We will certainly wish to celebrate special occasions but probably not to the extent we used to in the past. The Queen's Jubilee and the dedications of Rev Hewett's window and other items will be marked with special arrangements throughout the church. We welcome anyone who would like to help with flowers at anytime. Help is on hand, and you do not need to be an expert, just to join in the pleasure of arranging flowers in our beautiful church.

Jane Nielson

Pastoral Visiting Team

It has been another difficult year due to covid but the team comprising myself, Hannah Lela and Simon have continued to stay in contact with the older and more isolated members of our congregation. Using the phone as our main point of contact hopefully we have provided support and help when required and now we can visit in person when appropriate which is so much better. Over the year we have lost several members of our congregation and although gone their memory lives on. Hopefully 2022 will be better for everyone.

Marjorie Jones.

Prayer Ministry

With the reopening of the church and the gradual lifting of Covid restrictions, **After Service Prayer** was reinstated. The Prayer Team have been faithfully on duty each Sunday after the 10.30am service for anyone needing prayer. Before Covid there had been a steady number coming forward for prayer most weeks. However, post Covid there have been very few taking this up.

The prayer team continues to be available in the sofa corner at the end of the 10.30am service and would love to encourage people to come for prayer. There are many needs for prayer. Life can be very stressful and anxiety can take over; family or friends can become unwell; the sadness of the death of a family member or friend can cause unimaginable grief; at times family relationships can be difficult; situations, such as the war in Ukraine, can stir our emotions. All these things are good reasons to come forward for prayer. Sometimes we simply don't understand what God is saying or doing, but we are called to trust Him. His thoughts, ways and timings are different to ours. God may not answer our prayers immediately; answers may not always be as we expect, but He hears and answers our prayers in His timing. We, the team, can't work miracles, but God can! Everything that is prayed about is confidential and will not be spoken of to anyone else without permission from the one requesting prayer.

We have introduced a **prayer box** in church which sits on the table in the sofa corner. Prayer request slips can be found in the pews, on the welcome desk and by the prayer box. All are invited to complete a form as and when and pop it in the box. Pens are available on the shelf by the welcome desk. The box will be emptied and private prayers said each week by the prayer team on duty.

Since the outbreak of war in Ukraine we have been meeting between the 9am and 10.30am services to pray for the heartbreaking, and extremely worrying situation in **Ukraine**. We meet at **10am every Sunday** in church by the font to ask God for a miracle turnaround; to bring peace back to this innocent country. Please join us. We would love to see large numbers. Praying with many is powerful.

Intercessory prayers continue to be read by members of the congregation. They are said each week in the 10.30am service. We have a growing number of people wishing to read. Guidance is given regarding prayer needs and prayers are composed around these needs. Please let Lynda know if you would like to be included in reading intercessory prayers from the lectern.

The list of **those requiring prayer** continues to be read out at the 10.30am service during the intercessory prayer time. May we encourage you to put forward names to be read out - maybe someone in the church family is unwell, in hospital, about to undergo an operation or suffering in other ways. Please let Lynda or Jess know if you would like your name included. Contact details are on the website.

Hannah or Lynda are available to pray with anyone - in church, at home or over the phone. Please contact either if you would like prayer.

Nothing is too big or too small to take to God in prayer. God wants us to spend time with Him. He welcomes us into His presence and cares enough to listen to us and answer us.

Lynda Hubbard

Worship Group

2021 was a strange year for the Worship Band because we had to be flexible in terms of what was permitted by Covid rules. There was a degree of two steps forward, one step back in terms Covid rules but this also provided opportunities to try new things like outdoor worship, which worked really well (when not having to shelter under umbrellas!).

When permitted, we led worship on a weekly basis for the 5pm service and once a month for the all-age service. With the number of musicians and singers we have, this was only just manageable and it felt like we were becoming a bit separate by focusing on the 5pm. The new pattern of having the 5pm once a month allows for more involvement during the morning services. This seems to be working well from our perspective.

A highlight of the year was leading the informal 'Beer and Carols' event at the Bricks. This was really well attended by people who would not normally come to church. There were around 70 people and this was when Omicron had just been identified, which kept some people away. It is a wonderful opportunity to place the church in our community at a key time in the year and we should definitely seek to build on it for Christmas 2023.

Another positive has been moving the 5pm back to the Parish Hall. We've had two excellent and well attended services there and it feels like it will grow from here. Perhaps linked to the successful relaunch of the 5pm, we have had more people coming forward offering to sing and play. This bodes well for all services.

Something that I include in every APCM report I've ever written is the need to upgrade certain aspects of our AV in church. The remodelling of the front of church would enable us to put in a more user friendly system. There is significant amount of set up and take down required, plus trip hazards a plenty due to all the exposed wiring. Some pledges towards this work were made in response to the fundraising communications. Now the roof project is well underway and mostly funded, it would be good to revisit the remodelling proposal.

Jimi Gale

Small Groups

Our small groups have continued to meet throughout the year. One of the PCC's priorities in their mission action plan is to see every member of our church in a small group. We have 4 groups that regularly meet (some every week, others every other week) and cover day time and evening as well as in the parish and out. Throughout 2021 these groups have grown in size and in 2022 we look to opening more Small Groups so we don't overwhelm the current groups. Being part of a small group is a fantastic way to grow in relationship and friendship with one another as well as go further in our walk with God. The PCC will continue to encourage everyone to get involved with a Small Group.

Rev Hannah Adams

Safeguarding

We ensure that all who attend our church are safe and feel so. We have our 'Promoting a Safer Church' commitments displayed both at the hall and the church and the PCC adopted the House of Bishops' safeguarding statement 'Promoting a Safer Church' at its meeting in July 2021.

We are grateful to Donna Hill for serving as our Parish Safeguarding Officer for a number of years. Donna has now stood down and her successor will be appointed at the APCM. Anyone who has any concern about a person who is at risk of, or is being abused, or presents a risk to others, should seek advice from the Parish Safeguarding Officer or the police.

Rev Hannah Adams