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ST. BOTOLPH'S
C H E V E N I N G C H U R C H

Church Annual Review 2022



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 Jess Lewis	2021	
	Mr David Thompson	2021	
	Mr Thomas Geldard	2021	
	Mrs Rebecca Pilcher	2021	
	Mrs Kelly Stiff	2021	Until September 2022
	Mrs Sophie Osborne	2021	
	Mrs Susan Wandless	2021	
	Miss Sandra Tolhurst	2020	
	Mr Joseph Devine	2020	
	Mr Peter Wilson	2022	Co-opted on by PCC May 2022
Secretary	Mrs Jess Lewis		Until July 2022
Vergers	Mrs Jayne Duncan & Mr Ian Glen		
Ministry Leaders:	Prayer		Mrs Lynda Hubbard
	Pastoral Team		Mrs Marjorie Jones
	Bell ringers, Tower Captain		Mr Tony and Mrs Carole Cresswell
	Chevening Brownies		Mrs Anna Donnelly

Chevening Guides & Rangers	Mrs Nicola Dedman
Choir Director	Mr Jonathan Riley
Church Fabric	Ms 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
Mpendo Link Coordinator	Ms Sandra Tolhurst
Parish Disclosure Officer DBS	Mrs Fiona Jordan
Parish Safeguarding Officer	Mrs Fiona Jordan
Parish Hall Bookings	Mrs Pauline Blundell
Parish Hall Treasurer	Mr Graham Higgs
Small Groups	Rev Hannah Adams
Children's Groups	Mrs Alex Robinson & Mrs Becky Pilcher

Rector's Report

2022 saw us run various courses and events for not only those in our church family but in the wider parish and beyond: Alpha, a pancake party to celebrate Shrove Tuesday, Baptism Preparation classes, our community BBQ in June to name just a few. In 2020 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.

We set out with three main projects and 2022 saw great progress in each:

1. The re-roofing of the North Nave – which was completed in 2022. A huge thank you again to all those who contributed their time, energy and generous donations to see this project through.
2. Investment in the young people and families in our parish – This remains an ongoing priority for us as a church. Our Play Café saw a regular 12 'families' attend once a month, School Services and other events have meant we've stayed committed to this priority. More work is to be done in this area as we look to employ a Youth & Families Worker and to explore space for our Sunday services that provide room for the young people in our church to have their own programme.
3. Chancel and other building maintenance works to make our worship space accessible to all – significant progress has been made in these plans throughout 2022 thanks to the work of the Churchwardens and the PCC and we look forward seeing these plans to fruition in the coming years.

From August 2022 I went on Maternity Leave and the Churchwardens took hold of the reigns for the rest of the year, during this season the church had visiting clergy to run our services on Sundays whilst the Churchwardens and the office staff took on a lot more responsibility for what happened during the week (weekly newsletter deliveries, building maintenance, pastoral oversight and much more). This was no easy task for them and I am grateful for their leadership in that season.

Thank you to everyone, after all it is the people that make up the church, the Body of Christ in this place. We couldn't do what we do without you – what you do bring and give to this community has an impact on our how we achieve our vision. Thank you for all you did throughout 2022.

Rev Hannah Adams, Rector

Churchwardens' Report

2022 was the first full year in which we were able to hold services and resume church business in a way which we hadn't done since the covid pandemic hit us in early 2020. But even so, 2022 was still a different kind of year, with the Rector starting nine months' maternity leave in mid-July. We were delighted to join with the whole congregation in welcoming baby Jacob, who was born in August and who we're looking forward to seeing in church on Hannah's return.

We're really grateful that before she started her leave, Hannah was able to arrange cover for almost all the services to be held during her leave – one less job for the churchwardens! We shall be thanking properly all those who've helped once Hannah returns in April 2023.

Although fewer people now attend church every week of the year, and our core congregation is less than it once was, there is no doubt in our minds that the ability for people to go to a church when they want, or at certain times in the year and at certain times of their lives, is still important and something we should provide for in as welcoming a way as possible.

The work involved in caring for our beautiful and historic grade 1 listed church is part of that provision, and never really stops. Regular maintenance is provided by those who clean the church; look after the electrical system; maintain the elderly but still functioning boiler; check the fire extinguishers, alarm system and lightning conductors; and tune the organ. We are grateful to them all.

A well-kept church is part of being a welcoming church, and thanks are due to all those who contribute to that by serving on the Sunday Welcome Team; providing after-service refreshments; and indeed ensuring that our church is opened every day to those who wish to come for private prayer; to look round; or simply to sit quietly in a place hallowed by almost a thousand years of Christian worship.

2022 saw the joyful occasion of Her Late Majesty Queen Elizabeth II's Platinum Jubilee and then, sadly, her death in September. In common with all churches in the country we opened an official Book of Condolence for anyone to sign. His Majesty King Charles III is now Supreme Governor of the Church of England, and we look forward to his Coronation in May 2023. The Communion vessels used in church that weekend will include the silver Chalice presented to Chevening at the Restoration, when the last King Charles, Charles II, was crowned in 1660.

It is a privilege to be able to serve as a churchwarden, which in itself is reward enough for an unpaid post, but sometimes there are tangible perks to the job. One such was an invitation in September from the new Bishop of Rochester, Bishop Jonathan, to join him and other churchwardens in the Diocese at Evensong at the Cathedral and afterwards at Bishops Court for refreshments. This was a very pleasant occasion and a chance to meet our new Bishop who, we hope, may visit us at Chevening in due course.

This is the last churchwardens' annual report we shall write, since neither of us is seeking re-election in 2023. We sign off by wishing our Rector and the congregation well, and with our hope that, with God's help, our church will thrive in the years to come.

Marcia Barton and Rob Hubbard

Secretary's Report

Chevening PCC meets approximately once 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 responsibility for the maintenance of St. Botolph's Church and the Chevening Church Hall complex, incorporating the Chapel of the Good Shepherd and Homedean House.

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 2022 the PCC met 8 times. The Standing Committee met between meetings and the minutes of their deliberations were received by the full PCC and discussed where necessary. The role of secretary to the PCC was held by Jess Lewis until August 2022, when Sophie Atkinson took over the role.

Sophie Atkinson, PCC Secretary

Treasurer's Report (including summary of accounts)

FINANCIAL REVIEW 2022

Income

Total incoming resources were £228,174 (£141,877 in 2021) and these are detailed in the financial statements. Voluntary unrestricted income has increased to £119,082 from £104,328 in 2021. Our church activities, in recent 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 £7,447 from £4,155 in 2021.

Expenditure

Our expenditure on church activities was £129,464 (2021 - £118,456) and this includes our parish contribution of £60,000 (2021 - £60,000) 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 continue to be 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 2022, our unrestricted funds reduced slightly to £64,973 from £65,011 in 2021. Restricted reserves, including the endowment, rose from £82,977 to £90,554.

It is PCC policy to maintain a balance of unrestricted funds of at least £25,000 to cover emergency situations that may arise from time to time. Unrestricted reserves, at the year end, amounted to £64,973 which, after setting aside the minimum referred to above, is equivalent to approximately 16 weeks costs, down from 20 weeks in 2021.

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. We also have funds remaining after the completion of the work on the nave roof which, in the opinion of the PCC, may be used for further essential roof repairs and maintenance. These funds total £36,027.

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 2022

		Notes	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Endowment funds	Total 31.12.22	Total 31.12.21
Income and endowments							
Voluntary income	2a		119,082	98,465		217,547	135,691
Investment income	2b		1,316	285		1,601	909
Fees	2c		7,447			7,447	4,155
Other income	2d		1,579			1,579	1,130
Total income			129,424	98,750	0	228,174	141,885
Expenditure							
Church activities							
Costs of generating funds	3a		127,643			127,643	106,616
Major church repairs	3b		1,821			1,821	
Total expenditure	3c			88,194		88,194	8,672
Net income (-expenditure)			129,464	88,194	0	217,658	115,288
Unrealised gains or losses			-40	10,556		10,516	26,597
Net movement in funds	3d				-2,980	-2,980	3,168
Funds brought forward			-40	10,556	-2,980	7,536	29,765
Funds carried forward			65,011	57,663	25,314	147,988	118,223
			£64,971	£68,219	£22,334	£155,524	£147,988

THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF ST BOTOLPH'S

Balance Sheet as at 31st December 2022

	Notes	31.12.22	31.12.21
Accumulated funds	6		
Unrestricted funds		64,973	66,291
Restricted funds		68,220	56,385
Endowment funds		22,334	25,314
Total Church Funds		<u>£155,527</u>	<u>£147,990</u>
Represented by			
Fixed assets	7		
Investments		31,806	34,786
		<u>31,806</u>	<u>34,786</u>
8			Current assets
Accounts receivable-payable		5,224	2,442
Balances at bank		118,498	110,762
		<u>123,722</u>	<u>113,204</u>
Total Church Assets		<u>£155,528</u>	<u>£147,990</u>

Graham Higgs, Hon. Treasurer, Chevening PCC

St Botolph's Chevening Society of Bellringers

The band's main focus is on ringing for Sunday services but early in the year this was still severely compromised by the Covid pandemic so that we were only able to ring 2 bells. As the year progressed, we were able to increase our numbers and on occasion even managed to ring on 6, a much more satisfying sound, although there were times when the bells were silent due to unavoidable absences. Tuesday evening practices have however been beyond us and have fallen into abeyance for the time being. We welcomed back Carmel, who is now regularly ringing for Sunday services, and Ben, who has greatly increased his involvement in the latter part of the year, and I hope that 2023 will see a revival of the band's enthusiasm. We were pleased that 6-bell ringing could again be made available for weddings and the bells were rung for four, including that of Josh Westacott (grandson of a former band member) and, by special request, there was 8-bell ringing after the marriage of Judy Scrine (daughter of another former ringer at St Botolph's). This all relied heavily on help given by ringers from other churches in the Tonbridge District of KCACR.

The tenor bell was tolled half-muffled for 6 funerals and also before the Good Friday "Final Hour" service.

Coinciding with the Chevening Garden Opening for the NGS scheme on 12th June, a band of ringers from Tonbridge District rang a peal to celebrate The Queen's Platinum Jubilee. Then, sadly, on 9th September we marked The Queen's death by tolling the fully muffled tenor bell continuously for an hour, starting at noon. Before the 10:30 am service on 11th September rounds and call changes were rung on the back 6 bells in loving memory of HM Queen Elizabeth II by the members of the band and likewise the following week with the assistance of a visitor from Ireland. Meanwhile, on 13th September a quarter peal of 1260 Plain Bob Triples was rung in memory of Her Majesty by a band of ringers from Tonbridge District. On these three occasions the bells were fully muffled with the tenor open at backstroke, in bellringing terms a compliment reserved for marking the death of our Monarch and quite a challenge for the ringers!

It was a quiet year as regards other ringing events but we did host two other quarter peal attempts and the Tonbridge District's Annual District Meeting on the evening of 1st October with the band providing refreshments and general ringing taking place both before and after. My thanks go to all of our small band of ringers for their dedication to keeping our beautiful the bells ringing out throughout the year!

Tony Cresswell, Tower Captain

1st Chevening (St Botolph's) Brownies

The Brownies have been working towards their skills for the future badge this year which has included a keep fit session kindly run by Lisa from BOOSTfit, discussing budgets and deciding what sort of jobs we might want to do in the future.

We have welcomed many new Brownies and have a 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 would like to help or be involved with anything in the village.

We are looking forward to a Summer term and you are likely to see us stream dipping, litter picking and taking part in nature trails around Chipstead. We will be taking part in church parade for the king's coronation in May which will gain us our coronation badge.

Anna Partridge

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

The request to write the report for St Botolph's AGM arrived at the mid-point of the current academic year. Trying to remember the start of 2022 proved a little challenging; but the process of pausing to reflect on past activities, events, challenges and successes always brings opportunity for giving thanks. In any school year there are unexpected highlights, timetabled routines and, sometimes, those more sombre occasions; all require different tenors and scales of response. 2022 proved to be no different to other years, although one of the highlights was, perhaps, all too swiftly followed by sadness.

From today's viewpoint, the delays and difficulties of early 2022 now seem happily distant, which is a good thing! High levels of sickness for staff and children meant that some special events, activities and visitors sadly had to be postponed. Yet, with determination and flexibility, both daily learning and broader school development work continued. The dedication of our small staff team really shone through, as work continued on curriculum development, a new Phonics teaching scheme, 'trauma-informed' training and preparations for Football and Netball tournaments. School life can be varied for all ages!

The children continued to excel in adapting to and enjoying opportunities whenever possible; pottery workshops, on-line meetings with journalist Sarah Oliver and the return of the 'Once Upon A Story Bus' for world Book Week were spring-time highlights. Meanwhile, the staff team benefitted from the wisdom and experience of one of our parents, learning more about the need for financial safeguarding for all. Towards the end of spring, we were relieved to see the levels of sickness reduce, enabling us to enjoy typical routines and activities.

Opportunities to learn beyond our own site are invaluable, whether class trips, team matches/tournaments, or visits to other schools. Sevenoaks School's Science Week is a consistent highlight, enabling our children to watch and participate in slightly more grown-up

(possibly exciting and dangerous) experiments and activities! Happily, everyone returned to Chevening intact and further fuelled to consider future science-related professions and opportunities.

Visitors to school are always welcomed, providing different insight and opportunity. The regular assemblies led by local friends, including The HiStory Troupe, helped the children explore faith-related stories and issues. The on-going support and involvement of Chevening parents and families enabled further academic and personal development for the children, often through PTFA organised activities. The list of PTFA accolades is long and includes longstanding favourites like Mad Hair and Easter Fun Day, but also some new initiatives, such as our own Chevening Colour Run, where energetic and enthusiastic families raced around the field either trying to dodge or embrace the colours being thrown! We are grateful to Chevening parents who supported our endeavours to escape for class trips, with adventures to Hastings, Chiddingstone Literary Festival, Rochester, Young Voices at the O2, London's Golden Hinde and Chatham Dockyard all featuring in the 2022 calendar.

The summer term featured our whole-school celebrations for HM Queen Elizabeth II's Platinum Jubilee; a bit of drab day that was completely transformed by the children's entertaining renditions of musical hits from the last seven decades. Chevening's rendition of Queen's Bohemian Rhapsody provided much entertainment that lasted well into those scorching summer temperatures! The steady whirr of electric fans and frequent dips into our lovely swimming pool helped us all to navigate the boiling temperatures. Farewelling another cohort of Year 6 children always stirs a swirl of emotion: incredulity that their Primary years are finished, professional pride in individual stories of progress and success and great hope for further learning, opportunity and accomplishment. Once again, we were delighted for Chevening children to be able to progress to many of the local successful secondary schools and, indeed, we have already heard great things about our ex-Chevening children! With the benefit of Chevening's vision and values, we believe they are well-placed to offer a positive contribution to their new peer groups, staff and the local community.

We were thrilled to be able to carry out a complete refurbishment of our playground space during the summer break, bringing about new playground markings, new astro-turf, new improved goals and smart fencing panels. This transformation caused a good stir of excitement at the start of the Autumn term, thanks to the financial support of the PTFA and Rochester Diocesan Board of Education SCA funds.

Lowering our Union Flag to mark the death of HM Queen Elizabeth II was sobering; a time of unexpected and unwanted sadness, which led to some beautiful personal tributes to the only monarch current members of Chevening School had ever known. We received a poignant card from HM King Charles III, just before the return of our printed silk flag from the Platinum Jubilee Parade in London. Perhaps you spotted our Key Stage 1 waterfall of school values proudly being danced up The Mall? If not, the flag is now displayed in the main entrance – do pop in to take a look!

In 2022 we worked hard to further embed the Parable of the Mustard Seed as our Biblical Vision, inspiring and underpinning all activity, debate and decision-making. We were privileged to see the school continue to grow and meet the needs of our local community, a very practical way of fulfilling our aim to be true to Christ and His teachings, to be known for kind and thoughtful actions and attitudes and to be inclusive in serving, sharing and showing God's love to all. In all that we tried to achieve in school, we continue to be very grateful for

all the practical care, attention and support from St Botolph's Church, particularly Rev Hannah, our Governors, Trustees and, especially, Churchwardens Marcia and Rob. With their encouragement, wisdom and help, we navigated small and larger-scale challenges and continued to press onwards.

If you would like to know more about our work, please see www.chevening.kent.sch.uk or contact the school.

Karen Minnis, Headteacher

Children's Church Group

Children's Church has had a reasonably consistent number of children this year, 10-15 each session. Along with the children that have been coming regularly for many years, it has been lovely to see some new faces too. Although, we have found it difficult to plan without the register of children that used to go out before each session, as this would give us an idea of how many children were planning on attending.

For each session we plan for 15 children. Alex will tailor her teaching around the sermon if possible, and Becky's craft will support this, otherwise we link into yearly events; Mothering Sunday, Easter, Christmas etc.

Alex and Becky provide all the art and craft materials and prepare these beforehand, ready for the session.

With the shorter services we have found it difficult to fit in going to the stables for our sessions, therefore have used them less, especially in the cold and wetter weather. If the weather is dry we go outside in the graveyard, otherwise we have been setting up on a carpet at the back of church.

As Alex and Becky run Children's Church on their own, cover can be a bit tricky. If one is not able to make a session the other will run it, if both are not able to make it, this usually means that session doesn't run. So looking to the future it would be fantastic to have lots more helpers, to keep the fun going for the children!

Alex Robinson and Becky Pilcher

Chipstead Chapel Charity

The PCC members are collectively the Trustees of the Chipstead Chapel Charity, which is responsible for the Hall Complex including the Chapel of the Good Shepherd, the Hall and its facilities as well as the Church Office and Homedean.

It is managed by the 'Chipstead Chapel Charity (CCC) Management Team' which is comprised of the following: The Rector (Chair), The Churchwardens, Marcia Barton and Rob Hubbard, Junior Churchwarden Richard Mais, Caretaker Ian Glen, Treasurer Graham Higgs, Parish Administrator Sophie Atkinson, Hall and Events Manager Fiona Jordan and the Bookings Clerk Pauline Blundell.

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 at the 5pm Service.

The Chapel continues to be in good order and repair.

Church Hall

The Church Hall provides 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 priority use and on some Sundays, when we meet for the 5pm Informal Service.

The hall has benefitted from good income in 2022. We have received income from the rent collected from Homedean, from thirty six weekend parties held in 2022 at a cost of £75 each and we also had income from our regular hall users and from one off bookings.

Our regular users for 2022 include The Brownies, The Guides, Chipstead and Chevening WI, Carolyn Atkins Pilates, Jane Rossi Yoga, Paracise Class, Victoria Johnson Dance Class, Boostfit, Claire Beaumont Pilates and Chipstead Badminton Club.

We had the opportunity to add some storage cupboards to the stage during the year and this has helped some of our regular users store their equipment more easily.

The church has had use the hall for events such as the Pancake Party, The Maundy Thursday Meal and the Harvest Supper. These events have been well supported by our congregation and everyone has enjoyed the opportunity to mark these special occasions together.

A few people to say thank you to. I'd like to take this opportunity to thank Ian Glen, our Hall Caretaker for being a wonderfully willing hall caretaker and cleaner. Thank you for refreshing the hall floor during the year and for sanding it back, revarnishing and applying new tape for court markings and also for your hard work in maintaining the hall and cleaning up after the various events.

Our thanks also to Pauline Blundell for taking care of bookings. Thank you also to the ladies that have helped out for the church events in the kitchen. Jayne Duncan, Jane Hardy and Riona Horley. What a dream team!

Thank you all for your hard work. It's so appreciated.

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. The Church office is manned by the Parish Administrator, Sophie Atkinson on Monday 9-3pm, Tuesday 9-2pm, Wednesday 9-1pm, Thursday 9-1pm, Friday 9-1pm. The Hall Manager is also in attendance two days a week.

Homedean – Report by Richard Mais

After all the problems with our former tenant during lockdown we have had two excellent tenants since. The tenant who took over the property in 2021 decided not to renew the lease for family reasons in March 2022 but we were able to secure a new tenant with only a week's loss of rent though we were unable to gain any rent increase. The new tenant has, since the year end, renewed the lease for a further twelve months.

During the year we carried out a few minor repairs and the property remains in good condition.

Our particular thanks to Richard Mais for his expertise, patience, wisdom and care with looking after Homedean,

Fiona Jordan, Events and Hall Manager

Church Fabric Report

The Rector and the Churchwardens have the responsibility, with the PCC, for ensuring that the church building is well maintained and fit for purpose. Regular maintenance is an important part of the whole, and has been referred to in the Churchwardens' report. Otherwise, we look to our inspecting church architect (currently Mr John Bailey), who makes an inspection of the church fabric every five years, to guide us on what other work needs to be done. The last quinquennial inspection was carried out in 2020 and the next is due in 2025, so this report covers what has happened at the half way mark between inspections.

QUINQUENNIAL INSPECTION 2020

The most important recommendations made in 2020 were the need for re-covering the north roof of the church and repairs to the south porch – all of which were completed in time for last year's annual meeting and were reported on then. During 2022 we were gradually working our way through the remainder of the recommendations, details of which are listed below:

Rainwater Disposal and Drainage: A number of recommendations relate to ensuring all guttering, gullies and drainage areas are working properly. Richard Mais and his churchyard maintenance team regularly clear out debris/plant growth from easily reached guttering, gullies and other drainage areas. Other work has been tackled with assistance particularly from Richard Francis, who has helped the church in many ways over many years, and to whom we are deeply grateful. The problem of birds nesting in downpipes will be tackled by placing wire mesh over the hoppers.

External Stonework: Pointing, grouting and shelter-coating areas of the external walls forms part of the ongoing care of a building over 900 years old. We are fortunate again that Richard Francis has been willing to help with this.

Doors and Windows: Some "tender loving care" was recommended for our ancient priests' door and for the other doors to the church. All doors and most woodwork have been treated with linseed oil, and the outstanding work will be completed in 2023, when scaffolding is available.

Some quarries in a vestry window need to be replaced, and cracks appearing in the large south window overlooking the pulpit need to be addressed. These are on the list for 2023.

Internal Work: Recommendations for painting the south chapel and the chancel ceiling will be considered in 2023, as will those relating to two monuments – the canopied monument in the south chapel, where an obelisk needs to be reaffixed; and the Herries monument at the south side of the altar where a movement crack in the wall potentially will make the monument unstable.

Churchyard: The Chevening Parish Council are responsible for the care and maintenance of the churchyard, which has been closed for burials for very many years. Additional gardening and maintenance are carried out by Richard Mais and his team, who work hard - despite the work of resident badgers – to keep the surrounds of our church a pleasing sight.

Recommendations in the quinquennial report to ensure ivy does not take a hold on walls and tombs have been addressed, and a large bulge in the north boundary wall has been discussed with the Parish Council, who are arranging for remedial repairs to that and to some of the capping stones.

Statutory Responsibilities: The 2020 report drew attention to the need to carry out a **fire risk assessment** for the whole church, and to conduct an **Access Audit** to comply with those elements of the Equality Act 2010 relating to people with disabilities.

A professional Fire Risk Assessment was carried out at the beginning of January 2023, and the recommendations therein are being addressed. An Access Audit will be carried out later in 2023.

OTHER WORK

With most of the quinquennial recommendations having been addressed, it is hoped that in 2023 it will be possible to make real progress in work in other areas of the church which will benefit the congregation in various ways:

AV System

Improvements to the AV system

Chancel

Removal of some choir pews to provide a larger usable space

South Aisle

Creation of a Baptistry by moving the font to the space outside the south chapel

West End

Once the font is removed, refurbishment of the west end space, to include the provision of a kitchenette

NEW STAINED-GLASS WINDOW

July 2022 saw finally the installation of the new stained-glass window at the end of the south aisle, in memory of Rev Maurice Hewett, a former Rector. The window was dedicated by the Bishop of Tonbridge at a service in November attended by many friends of Maurice Hewett and those who had donated to the window repairs. The service, on the first Sunday of Advent, included the presentation of Christingles to the congregation, and Bishop Simon's sermon beautifully linked the light from the new window and Christ as the light of the world.

REFURBISHED TOILET

The outside loo had become a bit tired looking, but was improved with a coat of paint and new flooring.

In conclusion we are very fortunate at St Botolph's to have people in the congregation who are willing to help in the maintenance of our church, and particular thanks must go again to Richard Mais in this regard. There will always be something to be done, so as one generation is succeeded by another, we pray that there will always be those who believe it is worthwhile to give of their time, money and skills.

Marcia Barton and Rob Hubbard, Churchwardens

Community Café

It is hard to write a report for this endeavour as it was poorly supported and therefore only ran a couple of times.

A number of the church community came forward to support this initiative (thanks to; Sally Munro, Penny Walsh, Christopher & Liz Austen, Marjorie Jones).

The objective was to open the Church Hall on alternate Wednesdays to the Play Cafe and encourage the local community to come and be together.

We offered tea, coffee, cakes etc and had thought that we might run a swap shop where our community were able to bring and share surplus or homemade goods. We considered running board games, knitting squares to make blankets for the homeless etc.

Unfortunately, the cafe was very poorly attended, and it was felt the enthusiasm and commitment of the volunteers was wasted and that their time could be better spent elsewhere.

My thanks to all those who supported the cafe.

Jeb Hogg

Deanery Synod

Area Dean: Rev Canon Anne le Bas; Lay Chairman: Brig. Ian Dobbie; Secretary: Michael Conacher; Treasurer Rev Robin Jones. May Synod: Brigadier Dobbie welcomed members and prayed for the ministry of Right Reverend Jonathan Gibbs, new Bishop of Rochester and gave thanks for the interim leadership of Bishop Simon.

Rev Anne Bourne introduced St Luke's where they work alongside colleagues at St Mary Riverhead and St Mary's Kippington. St Luke's was preparing for Queen Elizabeth II's Jubilee in June. Each month Repair Café is held in church when parishioners can bring broken items of domestic equipment for repair by an expert.

Ben Andradi, Communications Officer for the Charity "Sevenoaks Welcomes Refugees", spoke about their small team of DBS checked volunteers. The charity raises £60,000pa, has 500 local supporters (including Sevenoaks School). The charity gives support and matches refugee families with appropriate host families. Firstly, 8 families from Syria and Afghanistan were helped, now 30 families from Ukraine are receiving support. The Charity needs: money, bibles, and volunteer hosts.

It was reported the Parish of Brasted: vacant; Sundridge & Ide Hill W Toys Hill: Revd. Pam Davies is off sick; Chevening: Revd Hannah Adams on maternity leave for a year.

The shortage of retired clergy in West Kent is an ongoing problem. Church Volunteers are congratulated for doing a wonderful job.

A report from Rev Tim Edwards was received on the February General Synod meeting: debates on: Racial Justice; Safeguarding; Faculty Registration - to be made easier; Human Trafficking; Clergy Remuneration - no change proposed; living as Christian Disciples; Persecuted Church which is increasing globally. Living in Love and Faith - all comments sent are being considered. Rev Tim hopes there will be help with the process of mutual

understanding of human sexuality. The wider Anglican community is involved and there is worldwide persecution in the church with many differing views.

At the October Synod Rev David Fox-Branch, Priest in Charge at Westerham, explained the church history; the site is Celtic, then a Roman camp, then a church in 9th century. The building dates from the 13th/14th century with Victorian renovations. There are 3800 people in the parish.

Magali van der Meuwe, the Diocesan Community Engagement Officer, explained her work involving National and local needs, she assists and works with parishes advising the Diocese on Poverty and Privation; Mental wellbeing; and Support for refugees, especially Ukrainians. Several church members in West Kent are providing accommodation for Ukrainian people. A church in Bexley is used for Ukrainians to hold their own services.

Lela Weavers (*Standing Committee member Deanery Synod*)

Diocesan Synod

In March The Bishop of Tonbridge, the Rt Rev Simon Burton-Jones, said that he was conscious that members came from different backgrounds, particularly from a world that was pandemic weary. Also the problems of the brutal power politics of the mid twentieth century and its delusional dictators, which one thought had been left behind 70-80 years ago but had not. Synod would reflect about how to think, pray and talk. The Bishop also talked about what kinds of responses could be made from within the Diocese to the needs of the people of Ukraine, whilst being conscious that there were serious wars elsewhere too.

There was a presentation about Children & Young People's Mission and Ministry in the Diocese. 'Living in Love and Faith' was reported on

#12 out of 17 Deanery synods had had presentations

#7 LLF courses had been run in Deaneries

Some Parish groups had engaged in various ways,

11 parishes had not engaged or did not plan to engage in any way - various reasons e.g. interregnum, etc. Support for LLF continued through the work of LLF advocate, Chaplain and consultative group.

Finance was discussed. Racial Justice and Equality: a report made 47 separate recommendations to the Church of England around these issues. The War in Ukraine: Bishop Simon said that he was really grateful for the way in which parishes had already stepped up in intercessions and donations, and in supporting local Ukrainian communities, many of whom worked in agriculture across the Diocese.

Use of Individual cups for Communion was discussed and it was noted that General Synod had also discussed this but rejected the proposal.

IN JUNE the Synod discussed Everyday Faith – a talk by Dr Nick Shepherd; Parish Giving Scheme – advisor Liz Mullins; Safeguarding and 'Dashboard' membership, an on-line tool to help parishes;

Anna Chaplaincy for care of dementia sufferers; Environment & Sustainability – lots of advice on CofE website. Annual Report & Accounts for 2021 were adopted – costs £11.8M; income £10.2M.

NOVEMBER was the Rt. Rev Dr Jonathan Gibbs first Synod as Bishop of Rochester.

He said that the Bishop's Chaplain, Rev Lindsay Llewellyn-MacDuff would be leading worship for the last time as she had been appointed as Associate Priest to Penshurst, Fordcombe & Chiddingstone.

The Bishop encouraged us to take up “**Change, Serve, Grow**” looking forward - for the Diocese and its Parishes.

Other items discussed were Finance – 77% of Diocese's income comes from Indicative Offers;

Other matters -discussed – Deanery Synod Elections which will be in 2023; Healthcare, Chaplaincy;

Safeguarding, The General Synod report and Bishop Council Reports were also discussed

Lela Weavers (*member of Diocesan Synod*)

Electoral Roll

At the time of the 2023 Annual Meeting there were 265 (2022 - 267) parishioners registered on the Church Electoral Roll.

Of the 265 parishioners 137 (2022 - 141) were resident in the parish.

Of the 265 parishioners 128 (2022 - 126) were resident outside of the parish.

If anybody is unsure as to whether they are on the Electoral Roll please contact either the Church Office or ourselves.

Clare and Richard Marriott, Electoral Roll Officers

Chevening Church Flower Fund

This will be the last flower fund report as the Chevening Flower Fund account has now been closed. Any remaining monies have been transferred to the main church account.

I should like to thank the very many people who have been involved in church flowers over the years: for all of their time and efforts, it has been very much appreciated. It is nice to remember all our flower festivals so wonderfully organised by our dear friend Brenda Elmer and all of the fund-raising events put on by Lela Weavers. I think we can all be proud of what we achieved and of the enjoyment we gave to many of our visitors.

But times change: many changes have taken place in the church, with more to come. We shall all have to adapt our approach to flower arrangements in church. Sadly, it is not possible to have arrangements in the Stanhope chapel on special occasions anymore. We shall endeavour to have fresh flowers on the remembrance table, with perhaps larger arrangements as the situation allows.

I have always felt it to be a privilege and a pleasure to arrange flowers in our beautiful church.

Jane Nielson

1st Chevening Guides

Chevening Guides is currently a small unit of girls aged 10-14; we meet on Friday evenings during term-time.

At Guides, our meetings follow the Guiding programme, allowing the girls to work towards different badges through a range of activities. We encourage the girls to try new things and learn new skills, as well as spending time having fun, playing games, and spending time thinking about the world around us and what we can do to make it a better place.

Some of our recent activities include celebrating International Women's Day and thinking about role models, learning cooking skills as part of their Skills for My Future badge, and learning some Sign Language for their Express Myself badge. We were also fortunate enough to be able to run an activity day for the girls at Blackland's Farm where we were able to have a go at a low ropes challenge, zip wiring, and crate stacking challenge. This term we are focusing on the Guiding badge Be Well, and the girls have experimented with creating their own healthy drinks, a yoga session, and thinking about different ways to promote physical and mental wellbeing.

With the coronation of King Charles, we have also seen a change to our Guiding promise, from serving our Queen and community, to serving our King and community. As well as celebrating the coronation as part of our weekly meeting, this also gave us an opportunity to revisit the promise with our unit and think about the different ways that we can help the community, as a Guiding unit, but also as individuals.

We are extremely lucky and grateful that we get to use the Chevening Church Hall as our meeting place, it provides the girls with a safe environment and a great space to for all the activities that we do. We were pleased to take part in a Church Parade service last year and hope to participate in more Church services in the future.

Anyone interested in joining Guides can register on the Girlguiding website <https://www.girlguiding.org.uk> - parents information section or please get in touch with us directly at 1stcheveningguides@gmail.com

Nicola Dedman and Katie Whitehead

Mission Coordinator

The position of Mission Coordinator was vacant throughout 2022, but with our linked parish in Tanzania has continued, and is reported here.

The Diocese of Rochester is linked to the Diocese of Kondoa in Tanzania, and within that, the parish of Chevening is linked with the parish of Mpendo. The pastor of Mpendo is Rev Canon Mussa Mzuri, with whom I have regular contact.

Some of you will remember Canon Sue Chalkley, who chairs the Kondoa Partnership Group for the Diocese of Rochester, giving a very good presentation about Mpendo during one of

our Sunday services last summer. Her presentation concluded with a request from Rev Canon Mussa Mzuri for a named person at St Botolph's with whom he could correspond with via WhatsApp. Last Autumn, I was asked if I would be willing to take on this role: this was initiated at the end of 2022.

Meanwhile, St Botolph's has continued to support Mpendo in a number of ways:

- Our parish pays £650 p.a. to support the salary of the pastor.
- In 2022, there was an appeal for financial help to pay for the roof of the pastor's new house. Since our parish had just completed the work re-covering the north roof of our own church with the aid of generous grants and donations, the PCC agreed we should be generous in turn to Mpendo. The PCC voted to donate a sum of £2,000 towards this project.
- This Bishop of Kondoa, Bishop Given, launched an appeal for financial support to pay for the education of pastors' children within the Diocese at the church primary school of St Peter and St Paul. The school fees per annum per child are £300. A good education is key to helping people to help themselves, and our PCC agreed to support the education costs of one child for seven years.

If you are interested in finding out more about Mpendo, the website "Diocese of Kondoa, Tanzania" gives a brief but interesting description of Mpendo parish, and mentions St Botolph's. Although very different, spiritually, the two parishes are on the same path.

Marcia has kindly contributed much of the above information.

All financial decisions made by Chevening concerning Mpendo are made by the PCC.

If anyone is willing to take on the roll of Mission Coordinator, I know that Hannah would be really pleased to hear from you.

Sandra Tolhurst

Pastoral Team

The team of Lela Weavers, Simon Claxton and me have been busy ringing and visiting parishioners when able to ensure they feel supported and included. Hannah was obviously part of our team but when she went on maternity leave Marcia very kindly attended our meetings. These happen every few months to ensure we keep everyone updated. We visit people in their own homes or nursing homes and we do the occasional hospital visits if required, plus anything else that might be helpful.

We are hoping Lyn Short will be joining our team soon which is very good. If you know of anyone who might like a visit from our team do e mail me on marjoriejones@btinternet.com or ring on 07790597733 or 01959 563946.

Marjorie Jones

Prayer Ministry

After Service Prayer continues to be offered each Sunday after the 10.30am service for anyone who would like to receive prayer. Since covid, the number of people coming forward for prayer has dwindled. This may be because church attendance is so much lower.

The Prayer Team is a team of ten and two members of the team are available each week to pray. They would love to encourage people to come for prayer. There are so many needs. 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; family relationships can cause stress. All these things are good reasons to come forward for prayer and receive peace, calm and healing from God. 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 (unless there is a safeguarding issue).

Prayer Box. Last year we 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 and pop it in the box as and when. The box will be emptied and private prayers said each week by the prayer team on duty.

Prayers for Ukraine. Since the outbreak of war in Ukraine we have been meeting on the first Sunday of each month at 10am in the chapel to pray for the heartbreaking and worrying situation in Ukraine. All are invited to join us to pray. Notification is given in the newsletter and emails are sent out as reminders. Please join us. We have a steady number praying but would love more.

Intercessory Prayers. These are read by members of the congregation who would like to pray. They are said each week at the 10.30am service. We have a good number of people willing to read prayers but we welcome more. Guidance is given regarding prayer needs and prayers are composed around these needs.

Prayer List. The list of those requiring prayer is read out at both the 9am and 10.30am services each Sunday. 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.

Hannah or Lynda are available to pray with anyone - in church, at home or over the phone. 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. Grateful thanks go to all those who have given time to pray - the Prayer Team, those praying the intercessions and those who have joined in the prayer time for Ukraine. Thank you for the support, love and care given to others. Please contact Hannah, Lynda or Sophie in the office if you would like to be involved with or would like more details of any of the above. Contact details are on the website.

Lynda Hubbard

Worship Group

The Choir

The choir were in good voice throughout 2022, thoroughly enjoying leading the singing, especially when accompanied by the organ.

We are now all getting on in years but can still muster 8 enthusiastic singers on a good day, more often 6 or 5.

We are grateful to Susan Wandless who plays keyboard for us on each 3rd Sunday and plays for our Thursday night choir practices.

Our big regret is that we can no longer sing 4 part Anthems due to lack of numbers.

But we do love to sing the Gloria, thank you, and we sing some anthems in 3 parts!

So, our prayer for this year is for some new singers to join us and for our current members to continue in good health.

Jonathan Riley

Worship Band

We enjoyed contributing to the leading of worship in 2022, both in morning services (twice a month) and at the informal 5pm monthly evening service at the Church Hall. We've enjoyed working with the visiting speakers during maternity leave.

We have a well-established group of musicians and a good list of singers. However, it would be great to have a bit more cover for keys and guitar if there is anyone in our church family who would like to get involved. We're a friendly bunch so you would be very welcome to join us. Please contact jimi@stewardstrust.org.uk or grab one of us on a Sunday to chat more about it.

A highlight of the year was once again leading the informal 'Beer and Carols' event at the Bricks. We were inside this year, which helped it to be even better attended, with the pub full of enthusiastic carollers. Lots of people come who aren't normally in church so it is a great opportunity to connect with our local community and invite people to join us on a Sunday.

Sadly, at the start of 2023 we have had to scale back what is possible in the mornings. We now only play once a month at the 'All together' service. This is because the service pattern and lack of a permanent system makes it very difficult to practice and set up in time. This could be rectified with a permanent sound desk and some other improvements to the AV system, which are well overdue. We are looking at options both at the church and the Parish Hall to improve the quality and ease of setup for our AV.

Jimi Gale

Small Groups

Discipleship is one of the PCC's priorities in their mission action plan and our goal is to see every member of our church in a Small Group. This is where we can go more in depth than on Sundays and build relationships with one another. 2022 saw 4 groups that regularly meet, have approximately 12 members in each of them (this is an increase in numbers compared to 2021). This means that they are now nearing capacity so more groups will need starting. Discipleship remains a key priority for us as a church.

Rev. Hannah Adams

Safeguarding

Safeguarding

After many years of service and following the resignation of Donna Hill as the Parish Safeguarding Officer, I was nominated and appointed at the PCC meeting following last year's APCM, as the new PSO and also the Lead Recruiter for the Parish. Our thanks to Donna for her long and sterling service as the previous PSO.

The PCC and the Incumbent have a shared obligation to:

- Ensure the Church has a Parish Safeguarding Officer
- Uphold the requirement to carry out DBS checks for those who are required to have one.
- Formally adopt the House of Bishops' safeguarding policy statement.
(This formal statement was put to the PCC and agreed upon and is recorded in the Minutes of the meeting held on 23.05.2022.
- Ensure that safeguarding training has been carried out by PCC members and those in role leadership.
- Display 'Promoting a safer Church' Poster with safeguarding contact details.
- Keep 'Safeguarding' as a topic on the agenda of PCC meetings as recommended by the Diocese and at the APCM.

In 2022 all members of the PCC went through their online safeguarding training during the year and completed their Basic Awareness (C0 - v2022) training. Certificates of completion were shared and are held in the Parish Office. In addition to the basic training, some members of the PCC were required to complete Safeguarding Foundations (C1 - v2021) and others the Leadership training (C2).

The training of Basic, Foundation and Leadership Awareness must be renewed every three years.

The Church takes very seriously, its responsibility in safeguarding and safer recruitment of both paid and volunteers. We will continue to uphold the recommendations from the

Diocese through training, DBS checks and accountability through regular reporting to the PCC.

We all have a shared responsibility to make sure our Church is a safe place to be for children, young people and adults who may be considered vulnerable.

Anyone who has any concern about a person who is at risk of, or is being abused, or presents a risk to others, child or vulnerable adult should seek advice from the Parish Safeguarding Officer, the Incumbent, the Diocese Safeguarding Advisors or the Police in an emergency.

Safer Recruitment

This is a vital element of providing information through disclosure, for those involved in paid or voluntary work within the church. The PCC has an obligation to find out, by the process of applying for a DBS certificate (Disclosure and Barring Service) if an individual has any criminal convictions that make them unsuitable to work with children, youth or adults who may be considered vulnerable.

All members of the PCC are required to have a DBS certificate as well as those who lead certain activities and ministries within the church.

Fiona Jordan -Parish Safeguarding Officer and Lead Recruiter (DBS)
safeguarding@cheveningchurch.org

Fiona Jordan