

St Peter's

COLCHESTER

Annual Report 2021-2022

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Vicar's Introduction – page 1

This last year has been a time of recovery and growth. For this, we are deeply thankful to the Lord for all his provision and care.

The previous year was a difficult time of great change, and church life was often overshadowed by the global pandemic and the various restrictions that were inevitably in place. I think, though, that through that difficult year we were taught some important lessons and reminded of some important truths: the significance of corporate worship, the necessity of church fellowship, the value of hope, and ever-present need to be flexible as we adapt to changing circumstances.

This year, we have been able to rejoice as new life has sprung from the wilderness of the lockdown. Of course, we go on living with the dangers of Covid, and many of the losses will be felt for years to come. But we have been able to meet again face-to-face, and can gather again properly in church on Sundays (and sing! indoors! without masks!).

This year's Annual Report tells of all manner of new developments. Ministry has taken on new forms (including in the Vicarage Garden and on the BBC) and has started to reach new people (including, for the first time for many years, mums and toddlers on Thursday mornings). The Lord has continued to provide, often in unexpected ways, and I think we can look forward to the year ahead now with excitement and confidence.

And so I am delighted to be able to commend this Annual Report to you. Do please take time to read it through, to thank the Lord for all that has been good over this past year, and to pray for all that still lies ahead.

But please also do join us for the 2022 Annual Church Meetings on Saturday 7th May. This will be an opportunity to ask questions, to seek clarification, and to hold the PCC (and me) to account as your leaders. Please join us on that Saturday morning, as an important part of our church life together.

And finally, let me also thank you for the part you have played – whatever that part has been – in these last 12 months. We are often reminded in the Bible that the church is a body, and that the body has many parts. And whatever part you have played, it has been important, it is valued, and we are grateful.

With best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mark" with a long horizontal line underneath it.

*Rev Mark Wallace
(Chairman, St Peter's PCC)*



page 2 – Ministry Report

The PCC works with the Incumbent, Revd Mark Wallace, to further the work of the gospel in the parish – and, where possible, beyond the parish boundaries.

Much of last year was spent seeking to re-establish gospel ministry in the face of the vagaries and variations in the Covid-restrictions. One of the highlights of this period was *Garden Church*, an outside church service in the Vicarage garden in the summer months, meeting at 10am, 3pm and 6pm each Sunday.



a return to normality

Meanwhile, the gradual lifting of the Covid-restrictions in recent months has allowed some sort of return to normality:

- normal Sunday services in church are now fully resumed, with very few restrictions and encouraging numbers of worshippers;
- children's and youth work has not only re-started, but is now expanding and flourishing;
- the previous patterns of Home Communion, visits to Freda Gunton Lodge, and assemblies in local schools are being re-established;
- small group ministry is starting up again, face-to-face.

ongoing online ministry

Nonetheless, much of the ministry of St Peter's has remained online in this last year, either because of the uncertainty around the Covid-restrictions, or because it has been seen as more convenient for those involved:

- *Christianity Explored* and *Discipleship Explored* have continued as online opportunities to explore the Christian faith, and to deepen discipleship;
- *The Generosity Project* was a whole-church project in the autumn to help us to learn, to pray, and to work together to become the big-hearted people God calls us to be;

Ministry Report (cont.) – page 3

- an evening book group was established during Lent 2022, looking at our Lent Book: *Love Your Church*;
- PCC and various subcommittee meetings have often remained online via Zoom to enable more people to participate;
- the Wednesday evening Church Prayer Meeting on WhatsApp has enabled many, who would have been unable to attend physically, to attend virtually.

town centre ministry

Our *Jericho Road Ministries* have continued to seek to support the homeless in Colchester, working in partnership with Beacon House.

Meanwhile, in April 2021, as part of the national response to the death of HRH Prince Philip, the church building was immediately opened (in accordance with the Covid-restrictions in force at the time), for short services of Reflection and Thanksgiving.

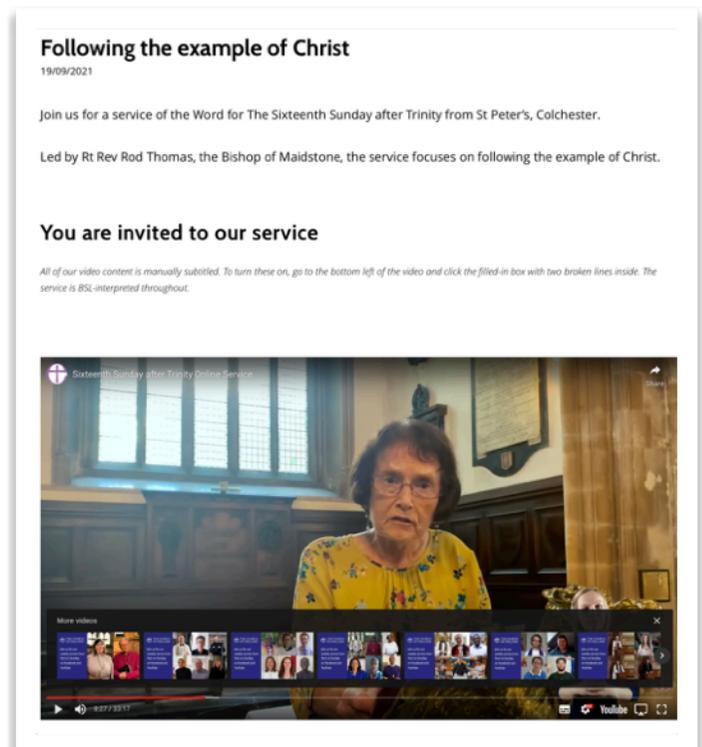
In December 2021, St Peter's featured in a BBC Essex piece as our Vicar was interviewed about the meaning of Christmas.



the wider church

St Peter's continues to play a significant part in the life of the diocese and wider church, through the ministry of our Vicar, who remains on Diocesan Synod, was elected to General Synod in 2021, is part of the national *ReNew* Steering Group, and is also now a CPAS Patronage Trustee. He continues to work part-time as Senior Chaplain to the Bishop of Maidstone, alongside his parish responsibilities.

In September 2021, St Peter's was the setting for the Church of England's National Online Service, entitled "*Following the example of Christ*", in partnership with the Bishop of Maidstone and All Souls Church, Langham Place in London.



page 4 – Children’s & Youth Ministry Report

The PCC’s Children’s & Youth Worker is Mrs Lizzie Wallace

We pray and work to this end: that the children and young people will long “to know Jesus better and to make him better known”.

What a year! There have been many changes in the formats of our various Children’s and Youth groups since this time last year – but constant through them all has been our focus on learning together



from God’s word and marvelling together at his never-ending love for us, and kindness to us.

Last March the PCC were asked to pray for two specific things:

1. a team of leaders who would commit to regular help with, and prayer for, the ongoing work in each of the children’s and young people’s groups. And,
2. for more families to join our St Peter’s church family.

These remain our prayer requests, but - thanks be to God! - the following paragraphs show how these prayers have already been answered much to our encouragement, and to our Father’s praise and glory.

In March last year Lizzie Wallace (with a team of helpers) was leading 3 online Bible study groups each looking at the Sermon on the Mount. This remained our provision for those aged 7-18 until late Spring when covid restrictions eased and changes were enabled.

Spark

In April this group started to meet in person as ‘Spark in the Garden’. It comprised two 9-year-old girls wrapped in blankets sheltering from the rain under a small gazebo in the Vicarage garden! We began a

Children's & Youth Ministry Report (cont.) – page 5

series called 'Meet the King' which took us through Mark's gospel. By the summer holidays we intermittently had 4 girls attending in the large marquee. In September we met in the church hall for a 'Spark Special' to which the girls' families and the St Peter's Youth Team were invited. It was a happy occasion involving a variety of games, activities, and food. The highlight was hearing from the girls all that they had learned over the previous months as they talked us through the pictures on the wonderful banner Chris Gray had produced.

From that point Spark started to meet twice a week; on Sunday mornings for Bible studies, and on Thursday afternoons as the re-named 'Spark After School'. SAS regularly has 6 girls in attendance, and we have just completed our Bible Overview (based loosely on The King, The Snake and The Promise material).

Bible Tots and Diggers

These groups began in May with the start of Garden Church. Gathered as one group around a small table on the top lawn each Sunday morning we learnt from the Bible that 'the Earth is the Lord's, and everything in it' (Psalm 24:1) We considered (from Luke 15) how very precious we are to our Father, and how wonderful it will be when He takes us home to live with Him in heaven (Psalm 23). The children sang songs and produced crafts which reinforced the truths they had been learning. Since September we have met each Sunday



morning in the church hall learning from the Bible about the life of Jesus, and what it means to be a friend of God. We continue to use songs as a fantastic way to teach truths to even the very youngest children, and they return to their parents towards the end of the service each week clutching the latest picture / model / trumpet(!)... etc to remind them of what they've been learning that morning. Bible Tots and Diggers started last year with 4 children; we now have 7 children in that age group. With the arrival of two new babies, and in the hope of more young families coming along, it is hoped that a creche can soon be established in the Vestry. This would enable

page 6 – Children’s & Youth Ministry Report (cont.)

parents to hear the sermon whilst looking after their babies in relative comfort, and ease the teaching sessions in Bible Tots and Diggers.

Ignite

This group continued to meet for weekly online Bible study (and hotly contested Blockbuster competitions!) until the summer holidays. We studied from Proverbs what it means to be wise;



considering how to ‘guard our hearts’ and ensure that we are building our lives on the rock of God’s word.

On Sundays, since Garden Church began, the Ignite age group has stayed in with the adults. They are encouraged to take notes as they listen to the sermon each week writing down anything that they have a question about, and anything that has been particularly helpful / encouraging / challenging. We meet periodically to discuss anything arising from the sermons, and to have fun together eating pudding and playing games.

13-18 year olds are encouraged to come to 421 each Friday evening for the opportunity to meet with young people from other churches to enjoy games and a talk and Bible study. Lizzie Wallace helps to lead at 421 with others from our partner church at Fordham.

Other events that have taken place for this age group over the course of the past year are: the wonderful ‘Contagious Lite’ camp last summer, the ‘Sorted’ event in London, a trip to JumpStreet in the autumn and an Ice-skating trip this spring.

Tiny Tots

Our long-prayed-for Toddler Group got off to a flying start in January this year. A dedicated team of helpers spend each Thursday morning serving our community by providing a welcoming, fun, and safe environment for parents and carers to bring their babies and

Children's & Youth Ministry Report (cont.) – page 7

children. To date we have welcomed more than 30 families through the door. For many of these 'lockdown' children this has been their first experience of being in a group with other people. It has been a joy to see them grow in confidence, and to provide their grown-ups with much-needed adult company. Each week finishes with a Bible talk and songs which point to the God of heaven and earth who has made all things, and who loves them.

Our prayer is that the friendships made through this group will encourage people to feel confident in bringing their children along to church. To this end it is also hoped that some appropriate evangelistic events can be planned for the year ahead.

Compassion Team

As a church we continue to treasure the relationships with our sponsored children. A small Compassion Team was assembled at the end of last March. These five people have committed to regularly pray for, and write to, Mary and Richard. It is always a great thrill to receive letters from them, and we joyfully share these letters with the rest of the St Peter's church family.



The young people of Spark and Ignite raised £90 from their Compassion Sunday Cake Sale in February and were excited to be able to send this money to provide gifts for their brother in Brazil and sister in the Philippines. Meanwhile, the *Make a Mother's Day Appeal* in March raised £1231, to enable us to continue our sponsorship.

St Peter's Youth Team

Established in May, this team comprises 19 adults who have committed to praying for our children and youth, and where possible, to helping out in person. A few members of the St Peter's Youth Team attended the Equip training day in February. This was an encouraging time, and we hope there will be further opportunities to meet together as a whole Youth Team; to give thanks for so many answered prayers, pray for the children and young people in our care, and be encouraged and built up for continued service.

We are particularly grateful to Clare Reid, Karen Van Den Broek, Bernice Watts and Chris Gray for their sacrificial service providing continuity in *Spark* and *Bible Tots & Diggers* to the great benefit of our children on Sunday mornings. Huge thanks also to Caroline Sheldrick for providing SPK holiday sessions which enable the leaders to have a break. We are also very grateful to Andy Lawn & Richard Lawn who provide weekly transport for young people who could not otherwise get to their midweek groups.

page 8 – Church Family News & Pastoral Care Report

The PCC's Pastoral Care Co-ordinator is Mrs Lizzie Wallace

"We ought always to thank God for you, brothers, and rightly so, because your faith is growing more and more, and the love every one of you has for each other is increasing" 2 Thessalonians 1:3

Vivienne Depledge held the position of St Peter's Pastoral Care Coordinator as we navigated our way through the end of lockdown this time last year. She telephoned and chatted to many who were suffering from isolation and arranged several walks and bonfires that were greatly enjoyed by all those who attended. Vivienne also wrote messages in the Easter cards that had been made and coloured by a team of volunteers, and she helped to distribute these to people in local businesses. Cards were also delivered to many of our church members and to residents in Balkerne Gardens. Along with these cards were colourful invitations to the Garden Church services that were about to begin, and we welcomed several visitors from Balkerne Gardens on the back of these. Vivienne finished her role in June 2021 and we were able to say goodbye and wish her well at one of our Garden Church services.

Meeting together

Garden church was a wonderful opportunity to start meeting face-to-face with each other and it was a delight to welcome old and young

alike at various services each Sunday. Drinking coffee together had never seemed so luxurious! Further opportunities were arranged to enable church family to meet up outside of the restriction-bound Sunday Service environment. Our Summer Programme included picnics, coffee and cake events in the Vicarage garden, and various coffee times arranged in local cafes and hotels. People's willingness to help by turning up and welcoming others at these social activities was really encouraging.

Practical help

'St Peter's Practical Help' continued through the year, overseen by Bernice Watts and Morvern Cox, until the majority of covid restrictions had been lifted. Practical needs are now being channelled through Lizzie Wallace as the new Pastoral Care Co-ordinator. One development in this area is the ability now to provide meals for those who are having a particularly tough time. We are grateful to those who have offered to cook / provide money for these meals.

Like last year, we have sent homemade Christmas and Easter cards to many of our church family members and to the residents of Balkerne Gardens. These were gratefully received, and we had such a lot of

Church Family News & Pastoral Care Report (cont.) – page 9

fun putting them (and the mailshots and Christingle kits) together that we have since run several more 'cutting and sticking' sessions where volunteers have gathered to help Lizzie to prepare activities and crafts for the various SPK groups.

Other lovely opportunities to catch up with each other have taken place on a number of mornings at the Mercury Theatre Café. At the last of these mornings, there was a special focus on our lent book "Love your Church" and we chatted together and encouraged each other with the theme of belonging to our local church family as well as to the wider church.

Farewells

This year we have said goodbye to two dear friends who have been promoted to glory in recent months: Moyra Hart and Helen Ballard were both precious members of our church family and are deeply missed. We are grateful for having known and worshipped alongside them, and look forward to joining them in heaven one day.

We were also saddened to hear in early April of the death of the previous Vicar of St Peter's, Revd Fred Woods. Many at St Peter's will remember him fondly, and we send our condolences to his widow, and former Churchwarden of St Peter's, Jane.



Safeguarding

Safeguarding is an important duty of everyone at St Peter's and we are pleased now to have an entire dedicated safeguarding team! For years it has been our policy that everyone who leads an SPK group must be DBS checked and trained in safeguarding procedures, but now, overseen by Mark Wallace and Sue Almond, the team is encouraging others to undertake these checks and training - that we might offer the safest possible environment to all adults and children who come along to anything related to life at St Peter's.

page 10 – Churchwardens' Report

The Churchwardens are Dr Matt Cox and Mrs Anne Kavanagh

Hello again from Matt and Anne! Despite the resurgences of Covid variants and fluctuations in the corresponding imposed restrictions over the last year, we are grateful to God that our church has remained open for worship. It has been encouraging to see our fellowship grow in number and to be able to re-establish friendships

and relationships, face to face, with our church family. We were sad to see Vivienne leave her position as pastoral worker for a new role elsewhere, but thankful for Lizzie stepping in to continue this valuable work. We thank our Heavenly Father for his great faithfulness and give Him the glory.

The important legal bit – “THE FABRIC, GOODS & ORNAMENTS”

The Fabric

There have been no works of alteration, repair or decoration carried out since the last APCM. Therefore, the vestry and the lead of the nave roof remain in poor condition. Work to remove a dead tree and prune back others in the churchyard by the council was completed in March. The five yearly Electrical Inspection has been carried out and all remedial works completed.

The Goods and Ornaments

Silver Chalice: this has been returned following the repair of accidental damage. Oil painting of St Peter's Church (c.1770): This painting remains on loan to The Colchester and Ipswich Museum Service as per the Faculty granted in 2020. Plans are for it to be displayed again in the Colchester Town Hall later this year.

Church Hall

During the past year, \$106 money from the Council has been used to fund new carpet tiles, repairs to roof and ceiling and re-decoration of some areas of the hall. Some items, such as water heaters and taps have been replaced. A ramp has also been fitted to improve access.

Churchwardens' Report (cont.) – page 11

Church Family

Things to give thanks for:

- being able to meet face to face over the summer months at Garden Church
- being able to meet in person in church since last September
- that God has kept us safe
- new folk joining us and SPK starting up again
- Faithful preaching and teaching both on Sundays and online

Things to pray for:

- that all would feel warmly welcome and encouraged to walk together in faith
- that we would all grasp new opportunities to 'love our church' and the community around us
- ongoing perseverance, and joy in their work, for Mark, Lizzie and Bernice

Buildings & Contents

Things to give thanks for:

- the continued provision of a large, visible, physical space to meet and serve in
- the dedicated team who work hard to maintain the building
- the talented people who decorate it weekly, as well as on festive occasions

- provision of funds to undertake much-needed decoration and improvement of the church hall

Things to pray for:

- wisdom and stamina for those tasked with overseeing maintenance of a deteriorating building
- opportunities to use our building to reach out to our town with the Gospel



Redevelopment Project

Things to give thanks for:

- tangible progress made in the last year with our architects on plans for the redevelopment of the church
- the amazing generosity of members of our church family and grant organisations towards the project

Things to pray for:

- the Lord's guidance and provision in moving the project forward
- the Lord's wisdom for the PCC in decision-making, so that we can better serve the ministry of our church family and the wider community

page 12 – PCC Secretary's Report

The PCC Secretary is Mrs Bernice Watts

St Peter's PCC has the responsibility of co-operating with the Incumbent, Rev Mark Wallace, in promoting in the ecclesiastical parish the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical. St Peter's is a town centre church, with a gathered congregation and a valued heritage of evangelical and expository ministry. The PCC is also responsible for the maintenance of the

Church building and Church hall on North Hill, Colchester.

The PCC is committed to enabling as many people as possible to worship at our church and to become part of our parish community at St Peter's. The PCC maintains an overview of worship throughout the parish and makes suggestions on how our services can involve the people that live within our parish, and beyond.

Our services and worship put faith into practice through

study of God's word, prayer, music and sacraments. We also have a concern to provide practical help to those around us in particular need - especially the homeless, families and the elderly.

When planning our activities for the year, we try to enable ordinary people to live out their faith as part of our parish community through:

- Worship and prayer; learning about the Gospel; and developing their knowledge and trust in Jesus.
- Provision of pastoral care for people living in the parish, and members of the congregation.
- Evangelistic, social and outreach work.

To facilitate this work it is important that we maintain the fabric of the church of St Peter's and its Hall.

Safeguarding remains a high priority for the PCC. A Safeguarding Committee was formed to enable the responsibilities in safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults to be more effectively shared. Our thanks to Mrs Clare Reid, our Electoral Roll Officer, for her upkeep of the electoral roll. The number on the roll had at the time of writing risen to 60. Of those 60, 13 are resident in the parish.



PCC Secretary's Report (cont.) – page 13

Key items on the PCC agendas during the past year:

In the past year, the PCC has met regularly face to face and via Zoom eight times.

- Appointments and roles: In September 2021, following the departure of Vivienne Depledge, Lizzie Wallace was formally appointed as Pastoral Co-ordinator, while continuing in her role as Children's & Youth Worker.
- The Safeguarding Committee was formed in May 2021.
- A meeting was held in February 2022 with members of the PCC, The Ven. Ruth Patten, the Archdeacon of Colchester and other diocesan and deanery officials to outlay the proposal of a pastoral reorganisation. The outcome of the process will mean the dissolution of the benefice of St Peter's and St Botolph's, thus creating a new separate benefice for each church. The process is underway but will take some time to complete.
- In May 2021, the PCC attended the event *PCC Tonight*, organised by CPAS (Church Pastoral Aid Society). The vision of the training event was to help PCCs to clarify their purpose in being committed to serving the church well. The meeting took place on Zoom and was well attended.
- In September 2021, our new architect Mr Ben Downie of Inkpen Downie Architecture & Design Ltd held a presentation on the proposed refurbishment plan for the church. It included an overview of the three proposed phases of construction, which the PCC approved. The work will focus on a new kitchenette, improved toilet facilities, a better disabled access ramp and more floor space for communal area.

- A subsequent visit from the DAC (Diocesan Advisory Committee) came as the next formal stage in obtaining the necessary permissions for the work. The DAC was very positive about the plans we have in mind, and we continue to put the redevelopment project in God's hands.
- During the past year, a S106 grant from Colchester Borough Council was offered to St Peter's. The PCC welcomed this funding to make improvements on the church hall which will serve the community and church family better. Many aspects of the hall have been enhanced and the work is still ongoing.
- The work on a PCC Handbook to help the PCC is underway.
- A small library of Christian based books has recently been set up in church. Our thanks to Val Morris and Sheila Lloyd for instigating this initiative and for overseeing the project.



page 14 – PCC Treasurer’s Report

The PCC Treasurer is Mr Richard Lawn

Overview

Thanks to the ongoing generous giving of our congregation, much of this by regular standing order, the church finances coped well with the impact of the COVID lockdown and restrictions. The reduced number of services in the church building meant that collections were still at a low level - slightly higher than in 2020, but only 23% of the 2019 figure. There was an increase in planned giving of 27% compared to 2020, so as more members use standing order, or other direct methods of giving, cash collections will probably continue at these reduced levels in the future. We were very pleased that we were able to use our reserves to fund the provision of the additional staff positions in the parish.

**The full and detailed accounts
can be downloaded from www.stpeterscolchester.org
or requested from the Parish Office.**

The repairs and improvements made to the church hall mean that we were able to receive income from hiring the hall at the end of the year - after several years of relying heavily on reserves. The Section 106 grants received from Colchester Borough Council have helped to fund the improvements, for which we are very grateful. Even so, we had to use £3,500 of reserves towards the hall in 2021.

Our redevelopment fund has paid for architect's costs, but there was negligible income, and the balance is now £70,171. This excludes grants that we have been promised, but which we can only claim when we actually do the work.

We are very grateful for a legacy of £7,000 from the estate of the late Ken Cooke, which will be used to maintain the fabric of the church. 2021 saw the completion of payment for the roof repairs, and the churchyard wall repairs, and the Fabric Fund has a balance of £8,494.

Despite our relatively healthy financial position, costs are likely to increase significantly in 2022 and beyond - increases in energy prices, Parish Share, and staff costs contributing to this.

We do give thanks to God for his ongoing provision for our needs - and trust Him for the future as well.

PCC Treasurer's Report (cont.) – page 15

Detailed Financial Review

Total receipts into unrestricted funds (General Fund) in 2021 were £74,267, and payments from the General Fund were £84,561, which includes the full payment of the Diocesan parish share (£37,374). Staff salaries were supported from reserves (£10,000), leaving an excess of payments over receipts of £294. The balance of unrestricted funds at the end of 2021 was £3,374.

We only just started to receive income from letting the hall at the end of the year, so the Hall fund was again supported from reserves (£3,500). Section 106 grants of £3,625 paid for most of the repairs and improvements, but there was an excess of payments over receipts of £543, leaving the fund with a balance of -£1,452

The Fabric Fund receipts comprised the legacy of £7,000 from Ken Cooke, interest, and recovery of VAT paid on repairs. The only payments were those for the completion of the roof repairs and churchyard wall repairs. There was an excess of receipts over payments of £4,352, and the fund had a balance at the end of the year of £8,494

The Guest House fund is for the provision of shelter and food for the homeless during the winter. As the Guest House was not operating again in 2021, there was just a small amount of interest, and administration costs of £15, leaving the fund with a balance of £4,491.

Our only Investment fund is the Sears Fund, which yielded a good level of interest.

The Redevelopment fund is for the major work taking place to the church building. Receipts were £184, and payments £7,756 (architect's costs). The balance at the end of the year was £70,171.

Reserves Policy

The PCC has no stated policy on the minimum balance of unrestricted funds. The end-of-year balance of £8,494 in the restricted Fabric Fund is to pay for any urgent maintenance of the church building (for which our policy is to maintain a minimum balance of £5,000). Any expenditure beyond this will involve raising additional funds.

The Guest House fund balance of £4,491 will be used towards our future care for the homeless in Colchester. The Redevelopment Fund balance of £70,171 is for the work to be carried out for our Redevelopment project. Our Reserve Fund had a balance of £16,491.

It is our policy to invest our funds with the Central Board of Finance Church of England Deposit Fund (although this is under review).

page 16 – Deanery Synod Report

The Deanery Synod Representative is Mr Duncan Breckels

The Deanery Synod is the level of church government that is immediately above the Parochial Church Council. It also provides the electorate for General Synod, a responsibility the members were called upon to exercise this year.

Normally the Deanery Synod meets three times a year. The first meeting of Synod after our last APCM was held in June, via Zoom. The notices at the end of the meeting revealed that the financial crisis in the Diocese continue, but now that there is a new bishop and top team there is “new energy and a new sense of listening”. It was also revealed that some individual parishes had run out of funds during the lockdown period.

However, the main part of the meeting was an address by Beverley Vincent, the Area Advocate for Living in Love and Faith. Back in 2017 General Synod debated a report on Marriage and same sex relationships and declined to take note of it (ie voted against it). The Archbishops then called for a report, and the (ambiguously named) ‘Living in Love and Faith’ is the result. It is described as a ‘learning journey’, that is to say it does not say what we are to believe, but presents different perspectives drawing on the Bible/Theology/ Sociology/Biological Sciences/History using a book, podcasts, a 5-session course, film clips and a library of 300+ resources.

There was quite a bit of talk about the course, which encourages “creating safe spaces” to learn together well “braver and safer” and works within a set of pastoral principles which are *acknowledge prejudice *speak into silence *address ignorance *cast out fear *admit hypocrisy *pay attention to power. This list, given as part of the slideshow, seems to owe more to Critical Theory than to the Bible, and while it might delight some people in the church, it might also ring alarm bells for those of traditional thought. Also of concern is the way the material presents a variety of views, some Biblical, some not, and invites the participants to give their opinions.

I asked Beverley Vincent a question about the feedback process the described, and she confirmed the details. The PCCs, Deanery Synods and Diocesan Synods do not get to discuss or vote on the report. Feedback comes from a survey that is to be anonymously completed by those who take the course. There are the local ‘advocates’ (three in Chelmsford Diocese) plus various groups set up to have ‘diverse’ membership. This feeds into a ‘Next Steps’ group in the diocese, from where views go the House of Bishops and so to the General Synod.

Various other questions were asked and comments made. We learned that the Church of England Evangelical Council have produced leaflets on how to run the course (St Johns), that the

Deanery Synod Report (cont.) – page 17

course does not go into depth on what the Bible says but is more about how people feel (Myland), and a question from St James' on whether this was a precursor to the church changing its marriage policy received a "don't know" answer. Mary Durlacher (Fordham, General Synod) asked the pointed question as to whether LLF is inviting us to ask "Did God say...?" but the presenter did not recognise the reference to the story of the Garden of Eden.

Synod met again in October, this time in person at Christchurch, the first in-person since the start of the lockdown.

The main talk was by Revd. James Gilder, the Diocesan Environment Officer. The Church of England has committed to a requirement that all its operations should be carbon 'Net Zero' by 2030 and that includes central functions, all its schools, and each and every parish church and church hall. Much of this will come at a huge cost or perhaps leave churches unheated. James Gilder suggested a number of steps that could be taken, and there were some presentations afterwards - Christchurch had done some gardening and tree planting, for instance. His suggestion that about a one-third cut could be produced by merely changing to a 'green' electricity supplier, produced one of the two lively responses of the evening, from a Professor who is studying green energy, who pointed out that whoever the energy is purchased from makes no difference to where it comes from. Another lively contribution came from a retired building surveyor who wanted to know why the church had done so

little to insulate buildings when he (among others) had been promoting that for 35 years? Afterwards I asked the speaker if the carbon emitted by our energy use could be offset against the carbon absorbed by the trees and other vegetation in our churchyards and vicarage gardens. I did not get a clear answer. Paul Norrington, from the chair, did however give a very relevant comment that it would be good for people to get as enthusiastic about proclaiming Jesus as they are about environmental issues.

One of the initiatives of Bishop Guli since her appointment to Chelmsford Diocese, has been to propose that we should give up meetings for Lent. As a result, the Deanery Synod meeting planned for 16 March was cancelled.



page 18 – Appendices

PCC Membership

The full PCC have met eight times since 27th April 2021 (the date of the most recent APCM). The Covid-restrictions meant that many of these meetings had to be held online.

Members of the PCC are either ex officio or elected at the APCM according to the Church Representation Rules and serve for a three year term.

PCC members who have served during this year are:

Incumbent & Chairman	Rev Mark Wallace	ex officio, as Incumbent
Churchwardens	Dr Matthew Cox	ex officio, as Churchwarden
	Mrs Anne Kavanagh	ex officio as Churchwarden
Deanery Synod Representative	Mr Duncan Breckels	ex officio, as Deanery Synod Rep (until 2023)
Elected Members	Mr James Coe	elected to serve until 2022
	Mr Tim Hearn	elected to serve until 2024
	Dr Mick Kavanagh	elected to serve until 2023
	Mr Richard Lawn	elected to serve until 2023
	Mrs Val Morris	elected to serve until 2022
	Mrs Clare Reid	elected to serve until 2024
	Dr Dan Watts	elected to serve until 2022
Co-opted Members	Mrs Wendy Whitfield	elected to serve until 2023
	Mrs Bernice Watts (Secretary)	co-opted, to serve until 2022

Committees of the PCC

The PCC operates through committees, all of which report back to PCC meetings:

Standing Committee

Has power to transact any urgent business between meetings. Its members are the Vicar, the Churchwardens, the Treasurer and the Church Administrator.

Finance Sub-committee

Assists the PCC in overseeing financial and budgetary matters. Its members are the Vicar, the Treasurer, Mr Duncan Breckels, Dr Mick Kavanagh and Dr Dan Watts.

Safeguarding Committee

We are grateful for the work of Miss Sue Almond as the Parish Safeguarding Officer. The Safeguarding Committee currently consists of the Vicar, the Parish Safeguarding Officer, the Pastoral Care Co-ordinator, the Children & Youth Worker, Mrs Clare Reid, Mrs Caroline Sheldrick, and Mrs Bernice Watts (as Secretary).



Miscellaneous information

St Peter's Church is situated on North Hill, Colchester. It is part of the Diocese of Chelmsford within the Church of England.

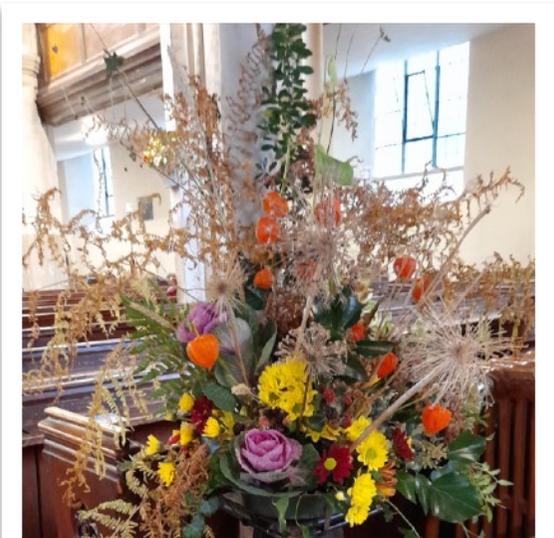
St Peter's receives the pastoral and sacramental ministry of the Bishop of Maidstone, in accordance with the 2014 House of Bishop's Declaration on the Ministry of Bishops and Priests, by permission of the Bishop of Chelmsford.

The PCC is a body corporate (PCC Powers Measure 1956, Church Representation Rules 2006). The PCC was granted charitable status in its own right on 24th October 2015.

The PCC's Electoral Roll Officer is Mrs Clare Reid.

Our website is <https://www.stpeterscolchester.org>

The correspondence address is The Vicarage, Balkerne Close, Colchester CO1 1NZ.



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I hope you have enjoyed reading this Annual Report. There are many encouragements, but there remain many challenges for the future. And as we look to the future, there is much still to be done – on the buildings, in the parish, and within the church community – as we seek to reach people for Christ, to build them up in Christ, and to send them out for Christ. As much as anything else, I trust this gives you plenty of fuel for your prayers.

Personally, I will continue to balance the work at St Peter’s with my role as Senior Chaplain to the Bishop of Maidstone, both before Bishop Rod’s retirement in October and then during the vacancy period that will presumably follow. I am deeply conscious how often I am being pulled in different directions, and would like to place on record my gratitude to the PCC and the Staff Team when things have not always worked out as I had hoped, or have taken longer to conclude than intended. The role as Bishop’s Chaplain is due to end in August 2023.

As we conclude this report, however, there are a number of words of thanks to be expressed.

First, to the Churchwardens, Matt and Anne. They have been tremendous servants of the church through a very difficult period in the midst of lockdown, and I am grateful – as I am sure we all are – for their wisdom, their support, and all their hard work.

Secondly, to Richard Lawn, who continues to combine the roles of Organist and Treasurer with great grace and diligence. We are very blessed to have someone like Richard in both these roles, and we are so grateful for his ongoing ministry amongst us.

Thirdly, to the Staff Team, to Bernice, to Lizzie, and to Vivienne. We have had a lot of fun this year, but it has also been very hard work and involved very long hours. I am grateful not only for your good humour, but also for your commitment to the gospel ministry here.

There are, of course, many others to thank: to the PCC members for their service and wisdom, to Geraldine and her team for the flowers (photos of which grace this report), to those who help each week with sweeping steps and serving coffee, and all who have given so much to the life of our church.

Most of all, though, let us thank the Lord for all his goodness to us, and give him the glory.

*Not to us, O Lord, not to us, but to your name give glory,
for the sake of your steadfast love and your faithfulness!*

[Psalm 115.1]