

St Thomas's, Stopsley Seeking to Share God's Love



Annual Reports For Annual Church Meeting 29th March 2020

Welcome!

Welcome to our Reports for the Annual Church Meeting 2020. It is wonderful to have you as part of our Church Family, and thank you for reading through these reports and (hopefully) attending our ACM this year. If you have any queries or comments please raise them at the meeting, or mention them privately if you prefer to me or one of the Wardens or Church Council (PCC) members. There is also a slip at the end of this document.

As we meet together it is so important to honour one another in the life of our church family and especially all those who do so much to care for members and to reach out to our community, and beyond, with the good news of Jesus. We are truly called to seek to share God's love with everyone!

This year we have participated in the LYCIG (Leading Your Church Into Growth programme. A small group attended an intensive course in Derbyshire, and then shared it with the whole church family.

And let us be praying ... that together we might be the Church God wants us to be, and the Church that Stopsley needs.

Welcome, indeed.

David Alexander (Vicar)

AGENDA

Stopsley Parish Church ACM 2020 - 29th March 2020, Noon in the Church Hall

- 1) Welcome and Prayers
- 2) Election of Secretary for the Meeting
- 3) Apologies
- 4) Minutes of the previous Annual General Meeting (at the back of this document)
- 5) Matters arising from the Minutes

MEETING OF PARISHIONERS OF STOPSLEY

Open to members of the Church family and residents of the parish (only Church electoral roll members and parish residents on local government electoral roll may vote).

- 6) Election of Churchwardens
 - a) Resolution under the Churchwardens Measure 2001 that the rule that a Churchwarden shall only serve for six successive terms of office (i.e. 6 years maximum) shall not apply in the parish of Stopsley, until this is subsequently revoked)
 - b) Election of 2 Churchwardens

ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING

open to members of the Church family (only Church electoral roll members may vote)

- 7) Vicar's Report
- 8) PCC Report
- 9) MAP and LYCIG ('Mission Action Plan' and 'Leading Your Church Into Growth')
- 10) Children and Youth Matters
- 11) Worship and Teaching Matters
- 12) Outreach & Communication Matters
- 13) Mission Matters
- 14) Pastoral Care Matters
- 15) Community & Social Matters
- 16) Fabric Matters
- 17) Administration Matters
- 18) Finance Matters, including
 - a) Election of: Independent Examiner for the accounts.
 - b) Financial Report & Independently Examined Accounts for year just ended.
 - c) Stewardship Report
- 19) Partnership, Deanery, Diocese, Ecumenical and World Church News, including Deanery Synod Report
- 20) Election of Parochial Church Councillors and Deanery Synod Representatives
 - a) Deanery Synod Elected Representatives
 - b) Parochial Church Councillors

(N.B Election of Sidesmen/women or Welcomers is now the responsibility of the PCC)
- 21) Any Other Business
- 22) Date of next PCC meeting
- 23) Closing Prayers

St Thomas's, Stopsley
Parish Profile & Mission Action Plan

Mission Statement: *Seeking to Share God's Love.*

- ❖ We seek to be a ***Mission-orientated*** evangelistic church, intent on sharing God's love with all in our local community, and beyond.
- ❖ We aim to reach out in ***love*** to all we can, witnessing for Christ through word and action.
- ❖ We wish to be a ***welcoming community*** in all we do.
- ❖ We offer a wide range of worship styles, including ***established*** services and ***Fresh Expressions*** for those presently unchurched and newcomers.
- ❖ We are aware of our need to be prayerful, seeking the power of the ***Holy Spirit***.
- ❖ We value being taught from the ***Scriptures***, desiring that they are expounded in a relevant and inspirational way.
- ❖ We endeavour to be a ***pastoral*** church, caring for the Church family and any others we can.
- ❖ We are a ***servant*** church seeking to serve people in our community and town, and further afield, in practical and caring ways in the name of Jesus.
- ❖ We prize our history and are ***forward-looking*** in faith to what God will do through us in the future.
- ❖ We are a ***friendly*** church, valuing fellowship, eating together, homegroups and hospitality.

SOME PARISH DETAILS

Population : 10,000 approx. (This figure gives some idea of the 'pastoral area' for our church, rather than exact count of the population).

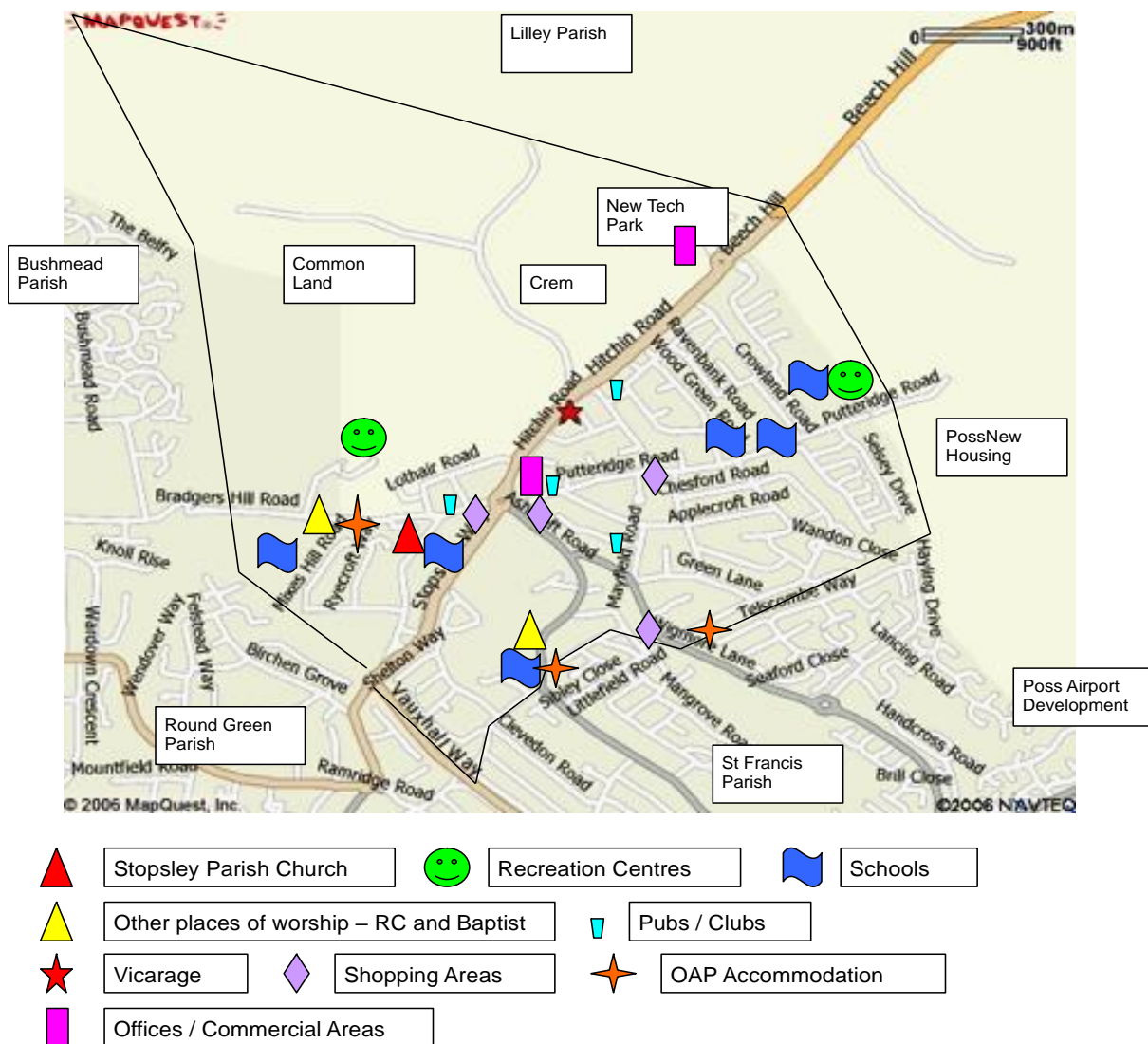
Location : North East area of Luton, at the boundary with Herts. The parish includes the wards of Stopsley and Putteridge. The busy A505 from Luton to Hitchin runs through the parish and separates the church geographically from much of the rest of the parish.

Type[s] of housing : Mainly owner occupied, with some rented accommodation, and pockets of housing association or council property.

Community facilities : Two high schools, two primary schools, one special needs school, and a large sports complex with Olympic swimming and diving facilities.

History of the community : In 1862, when the church was built, Stopsley was a village. Over the years since then Luton has gradually swallowed it up and it is now a suburb of the town. Some of the major employers of people in the community over the past 100 years have closed or declined in size, but employment remains fairly high. The airport and the car industry are major employers.

Parish boundaries: No longer quite the same natural cohesive community that it once was but boundaries mainly make sense except confusing boundary on Ramridge Estate with St. Francis.



PARTNERSHIP IN WORSHIP, MISSION & MINISTRY

We are active participants in the Luton Deanery in working together in mission to our town of Luton.

20 years ago we planted Christchurch, Bushmead, a thriving church largely within what was the much larger former parish of Stopsley.

Other Christian Churches : we have a good friendly relationship with Stopsley Baptist Church and Ramridge Baptist Church with whom we have co-operated on various events and projects. SBC has a much bigger congregation, and with its better facilities and style of worship it attracts younger people and people from a wider area. We have different styles of worship but complement one another in our evangelistic task. We have friendly relations with Sacred Heart (RC). Ministers are involved in local and town wide fraternals, and we also participate in a local evangelical hub for prayer and mission, and a similar but larger grouping for the whole town.

Annual Parish Report on 2019 (Prepared for AGM 2020) by Stopsley (St Thomas) Parish Church Council (PCC)

Background – What is the PCC?

Stopsley Parish Church P.C.C. has the responsibility of co-operating with the incumbent, the Reverend David Alexander, in promoting in the ecclesiastical parish of Stopsley the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical. Our Parish Mission Statement is as follows: ***Seeking to share God's love with everyone.***

During 2019 (after the 2019 AGM) the following served as members of the PCC:

Ex-officio Members

1. David Alexander (Vicar, Chairman)
2. Ian Marshall (Churchwarden)
3. Ruth Barr (Curate) Until 21st July 2019

Elected Lay Representatives We are entitled to 12 elected representatives:

(The rules state: 6 reps if up to 50 on the Electoral roll
 9 reps if up to 100 on the Electoral roll
 12 reps if up to 200 on the Electoral roll
 15 reps if over 200 on the Electoral roll)

	<u>Elected</u>	<u>Year Elected</u>	<u>Term of Office</u>	<u>Term Ends</u>
1	Deborah Bachini	2017	3yr	2020
2	Linda Clitheroe	2017	3yr	2020
3	John Pinnock	2019	1yr	2020
4	Rosemary Stipta	2017	3yr	2020
5	John Alexander	2018	3yr	2021
6	David Newbound	2018	3yr	2021
7	Neil Rolls	2019	2yr	2021
8	Karen Ritchie	2019	2yr	2021
9	Julie Bailey	2019	3yr	2022
10	John Kingham	2019	3yr	2022
11	Stewart Leary	2019	3yr	2022
12	Stella Marshall	2019	3yr	2022

Elected Representatives on Deanery Synod** who automatically also serve on the PCC

1	Steve Dolby	2017	3yr	2020
2	Christine Younger	2017	3yr	2020
3	Vacant	---	---	2020

** We have between 100-199 names on our electoral roll and so are entitled to 3 Elected Deanery Synod Representatives.

NB The clergy of the church also serve on the Deanery Synod

Co-opted

None

Office came to end at APCM 2019

PCC Members: John Barr
 Louise Winter
 Tony Holmes
 Neil Rolls*

* But eligible for re-election as office-holder(s). There are no restrictions on Deanery Synod member standing for re-election.

Elections at 2019 AGM

We are very appreciative of the significant contributions of the PCC members coming to the end of their period of office. Under the present rules in place for our PCC, elected members who have served for 3 years, apart from 'office holders'*, are not eligible for re-election until 12 months after the end of their term of office.

Deborah Bachini*

Linda Clitheroe*

John Pinnock

Rosemary Stipta*

** Eligible for re-election as an Office Holder*

There will be elections for the following positions:

4 PCC member(s)	to serve for 3 years to 2023
0 PCC member(s)	to serve for 2 years to 2021
0 PCC member(s)	to serve for 1 year to 2020
3 Deanery Synod member(s)**	to serve to 2020

** NB From 2020 Deanery Synod representatives can only serve for two successive 3 year terms (i.e. for a maximum of 6 years)

Committees

Standing Committee

The Standing Committee is the only committee required by law, and is our only official committee. It has power to transact the business of the P.C.C between its meetings, subject to any directions given by the council. We also have a number of 'Action Church Teams' (ACTs) that organise activities, or discuss matters, as directed by the P.C.C. and Vicar.

Electoral Roll

There are 140 parishioners now on the Church Electoral Roll. This represents a change of -9 from the previous year's AGM Electoral Roll. These changes are due to parishioners moving, changing church, death or people who live outside the parish and no longer regularly attend St Thomas's.

Review of the Year

During the last year we continued enthusiastically with God's help our task, as summarised in our Church Mission Statement, of **seeking to share God's love with all**.

We continued our 'Rolling Worship' Sunday service pattern which aims to provide a wide range of service styles, and enables different congregations meeting together as one Church. It is encouraging to see each element of the pattern developing new life. We also value the midweek service, which continues to be well supported. We sought to hold accessible services appropriate to different groups, blending the best of traditional and more informal styles. Much time and effort went into trying to prepare inspirational biblically based preaching.

We presently have two regular 'homegroups', one for women, and also a weekly Bible Study. These are developing well in nurturing fellowship and spiritual growth. We consider this to be a significant part of our church life and very important for future growth, and we wish to grow other groups in coming years. The Tent Project continues to meet with high numbers of attendees appreciating their weekly gathering.

It has been another encouraging year amongst children and young people. The Sunday Club has continued to grow in numbers and the children eagerly show off their work at the 10am service. A team led by Sara Sammons, Karen Ritchie, Ruth Marshall, and now In Marshall, leads the Sunday Club programme which is enjoyable and helpful for members. We continue to appreciate our strong links with Uniformed Youth organisations. However, the Scouts and Cubs have now decided not to regularly attend the Parade Services. However, the Guides continue to do so, although numbers are not what they used to be. We started in 2018 to hold 'After Parade Parties' for the young people (not just from the uniformed organisations) which includes games, activities, food and some appropriate Christian input. The children chose the name of STUFF - St Thomas' Unbelievably Fabulous Fun! These have flourished this year and have been well attended. They included a bonfire event at Haverings, pony rides, a film event, and a Christingle service.

We continue to seek to give a warm welcome to visitors to the Church. Much effort and preparation is given to provide services that develop further an atmosphere of welcome. We

particularly organised special events to welcome people over Christmas, Easter, Remembrance and throughout the year.

Our Lunch Club continues to be well attended, with fish and chip and other lunches. During lent we held successful Lent lunches. We have enjoyed social activities that enhance our welcome to people, including quiz events, meals, and a barn dance. We also held successful monthly Coffee Mornings.

A course on Christian basics is periodically held for people within and without the Church family. Sometimes we use Alpha, other times Christianity Explored, and more recently the START Course. We have a Confirmation planned for 2020.

Baptism policy for children offers a choice between a 'Thanksgiving Service' to families who want to have a celebration service in Church but who do not intend coming to Church regularly, and Baptism for those families willing to undertake preparation to make the commitment involved in that service. Thanksgivings are generally held after the Informal Service and Baptisms are held during the main Sunday Services. We also provide detailed preparation for weddings. The weddings themselves appeared to be thoroughly enjoyed by the couples and their guests. We believe that these continue to be an important opportunity to provide a good witness for the Church, although along with a national trend the number of weddings in church have greatly decreased in recent years.

The choir continues to help lead the worship at the weekly 10am Family Communion and other services. Thanks are due to John Alexander, our Director of Music, who leads the Choir and plays our church organ. Our Music Group continues to creatively lead our Informal Service, and this is much appreciated by those who attend that service. Thanks are due to David Newbound who leads the meditation group, which is much valued by those who attend, and which enhances our spiritual life. We are grateful to all who have helped with the maintenance of Church and Churchyard, especially Ian Clitheroe, and those who clean our Church, and to the flower arrangers. Their hard work enhances our worship.

The Pastoral Care Team continued to meet regularly to oversee some of the pastoral needs in the Church, and have done marvellous work, which has included visiting, delivering cards and arranging lifts. Parishioners are asked to inform the Parish Office if visits or help is needed. We are very fortunate that David Newbound is 'released' (not least by the sacrificial support of his wife Debbie) into his ministry as Pastoral Worker. This has enabled the Church to greatly enhance the pastoral ministry and support that the Church offers. During 2019 Debbie began her ministry as Parish Nurse and this has been very successful and highly valued by church members and also those outside the church family. Early in 2020 Debbie's submitted portfolio passed the examiners with flying colours, and full accreditation will be achieved.

The witness of individuals in their community, work and leisure environments remain vital for our evangelistic mission. The Vicar is involved in ministry to the workplace with chaplaincy work at Vauxhall Motors. David Newbound has been chaplain at NOAH centre of the homeless and at the coffee shop in the village. Steve Dolby is also involved in chaplaincy at Asda. Many of our members help serve at the NOAH 'Soup Kitchen' for the homeless. We have also been keen to support the World-wide Church, particularly focussed through our links with 'Hands of Mercy' in the Philippines. Our Church has been open for prayer and visitors during weekday mornings. We served the community in caring for bereaved people

at the time of funerals and welcome them to an annual Commemoration service, as well as other services.

The Parish Office continues to handle much of the administrative work of the Church. We are grateful for the service of Linda Clitheroe, who during the year stepped down as our Administrator after 18 years! Deborah Bachini has efficiently stepped into her shoes and is now our Church Administrator. We are very grateful for the hard work she does in the Office.

Communications within the Church are good through a new website, advertising our events, and a weekly newsheet, the details of which are also projected onto the Church screen. Communications with the wider parish through our magazine is greatly appreciated by large numbers inside and outside of the Church family. Our thanks to the editorial team and to Tony Clitheroe for all their hard work in producing our magazine. We also contact interested people through emails and WhatsApp messages advertising services and events, and have a social network presence on Twitter and Facebook.

We have continued to run our Stewardship Scheme. We are grateful to everyone who responded to stewardship initiatives, and all the Finance Team, our Treasurer, Neil Rolls, and our Stewardship Secretary, Les Sims, and the skilled help of Sarah Vyvyan. Full details of the finances are provided in the relevant reports and the presentation at the AGM.

We wish to thank many, both Church members and others, who have contributed to the ongoing work of the Church in the last year. Gratitude is due to all involved in leading and preaching at services, especially Ruth Barr, whom was our Curate until July 2019, for this and all her much appreciated ministry in the church and wider parish. She has now taken on a parish near Hatfield and a large contingent of StTs people went to her Licensing Service on 23rd September 2019.

Many thanks are also due to Rosemary Stipta and John Pinnock for all their work with the audio and visual enhancement at our services. We are also very appreciative of the sacrificial work of our

Churchwarden Ian. The PCC wishes to thank all those who contributed to the services: as sanctuary assistants, sidesmen/women, readers and intercessors, not forgetting all who provided welcome refreshments after the morning service and on other important occasions, and also to those who have helped provide such excellent food at Lunch Club and at other events. We are also grateful for the group of volunteers who have helped at Coffee Mornings and in many other ways as well.

We look forward to the future with confident hope in God as we share His love together.

David Alexander, Vicar. On behalf of the P.C.C

Warden's Report

After serving St Thomas' as a Warden for 8 years, Steve, reluctantly, decided to step down as a church warden, to allow more time for his growing commitments in other areas of his home and church ministry. I owe Steve (and his lovely wife Ann) a huge debt of gratitude for all the support and encouragement he gave me while I was getting my feet under the desk

and I shall miss him greatly. He still gives me a lot of support and encouragement on working groups and elsewhere.

Partly due to the above, 2019 has been another challenging year at St Thomas' given the range of problems and issues that we are facing as a church but I am very glad to say that my workload has been lightened considerably thanks to the unstinting work that Deborah Bachini puts in week after week, largely making sure I don't make a complete idiot of myself. This has been a blessing especially given that we have had a 'quinquennial' survey to cope with.

That has raised a host of costly issues that need to be dealt with, some immediately, some within 12 months and the rest over the next five years. Given our parlous financial state, as income reduces while expenses go up, and the fact that we are heading towards a possible deficit in the coming year of approximately £25,000, finding the extra money needed to cover essential repairs to the fabric will prove exceedingly challenging.

As ever, our financial situation is a continuing source of concern as we struggle to balance our books. We are simply not generating enough income on a regular basis to cover our monthly costs which we have pared down almost to the bone. This has brought into question whether or not we can continue to share our God given wealth with those who are much less fortunate than we are. At the moment we are committed to give 10% of our income to a small number of very worthy charities but inevitably we may have to reconsider this if things don't get better. It is our firm belief that, within the body of St Thomas', God has provided us sufficient resources financially and in human skills and talents to not only make ends meet but to create an abundance of material and spiritual wealth.

Part of Discipleship is accepting that, as all things come from God and that we are only returning to Him that which He has given us in the first place, we must seek His will for every part of our lives and trust and obey Him, even if it 'hurts'. If we embrace this, then He will shower us with innumerable blessings, riches and good gifts. If we don't, then we shall be facing yet another year of agonising decisions in connection with our finances and having to cope with the consequences of our actions.

On a more positive note, the alarming cracks in the sanctuary walls look much worse than they are and the architects say there is no risk of collapse or immediate danger.

Notwithstanding that, this situation will need to be addressed at some point. Also, our heating system is now up and running and we are all reaping the benefits of a cosy church building.

Following a conference last March run by Revd. Canon Robin Gamble on church growth we have adopted, and are adapting and applying the recommendations put forward by Robin and his team. It is early days yet as this campaign is designed to bear fruit over a long term and should provide a strong foundation for building up a church of discipleship in service and giving: however, there is still the more immediate need to make ends meet financially.

'START' is a course on fundamental issues and concerns which all Christians, both new and established, can benefit from, so I would suggest that everyone gets booked onto the next 'START' course and gets 'stuck in'.

Our Sides men and women, now referred to as the 'Welcome Team', continue to do a magnificent job every Sunday and we have received several encouraging comments from regulars and visitors to the church about the warm and genuine welcome that they receive. First impressions mean a great deal and, for most people, the first person they see on a Sunday is a member of the Welcome team. So, well done to all.

Hopefully, 2020 is not going to be a year of more stumbling blocks where we lurch from one problem to another: rather that we all commit to trust and obey Him with our God given time, skills, experience and money and embark on a journey of 'stepping stones' allowing God to honour His promise to shower us with countless blessings, gifts and riches? Only God knows the answer to that question.

Ian Marshall, Church Warden

Sunday Club



Sunday club has again had a very positive year, well attended by children of all ages. We have now split into 2 groups in the hall, so that the older group can look into the topic in more depth and both groups can have more age appropriate activities.

We have enjoyed activities outside of our Sunday mornings including a trip to Woodside Animal Farm and our epiphany party.-

Having the 2 groups in the same space does however bring its own challenges of both space and noise. In the coming year we would like to have the opportunity to move the older group to another room to address this issue. To make this possible we will need another leader and another 3 helpers who could assist one Sunday a month.

We would like to thank the whole Sunday club team for all their hard work, the parents for their support and the children for making Sunday club so enjoyable.

Sarah Hillyard



STUFF (St Thomas's Unbelievably Fabulous Fun)

2019 was a great year for St Thomas's Unbelievably Fabulous Fun (STUFF). We increased our volunteer team base; Deborah, Richard and I were delighted to welcome Rachael Matthews, Kirsty Matthews, Stewart Leary, Helen McGowan and Stella Marshall to the team; this has allowed more events to be scheduled this year bridging the gap between the Parade Services and maintaining the continuity of the group.

We held a series of theme based events ranging from Mother Earth to our annual Lite Party (our Christian alternative to Trick or Treat) and we had two major anniversaries which are worth a mention.

The first in July being St Thomas's Church 157th year birthday; we celebrated this in style with the 'Quack Quack race' and Space Hopper relay..... who knew the Vicar had 'form' from his youth... his legs and abs were put to the test that day. The youths had the last laugh when the water pistols came out later in the day..

The second of our significant events was STUFF's very own 1st year anniversary; this was marked by our 'Fun of the Fair' event; where amongst others we had a Coconut Shy; Fishing Challenge, 'Splat the Rat' and Hoopla stalls alongside Pony Rides - there's a classic photo of our much loved vicar doing his bit for the environment by leaving his car at home and hitching a ride on Crystal the pony (Heh Haw).

The youths were a credit to us and behaved impeccably, exhibiting patience and good manners; Kimberley the owner of the ponies expressed her surprise and pleasure at how well behaved they all were.

Throughout the year the group has fostered and promoted a 'Caring for others' attitude. This resulted in the youths donating gifts of promises to be more considerate to Mum on Mothering Sunday; followed by several crates of Toys being donated to the Children's ward at the L&D; subsequently leading to our youth donating their pocket money to further support the Children's ward at the L&D; finally a joint initiative between the Sunday Club and STUFF where funds were raised for the Children's Society at this year's Christingle. Consideration is being given as to which charities we may wish to support for the coming year.

STUFF started with a handful of youths and now there are in excess of 15 attendees to each event. Our vision is that this group will continue to grow; that all the youths will choose to attend our Sunday Club and eventually become leaders and champions of both groups.

God Willing !!!

Angela Scarlett-Marshall

Safeguarding

Judi and Linda meet up monthly with the Vicar to review our safeguarding at St Thomas's. This important role has become more demanding since the end of 2019, due to new Church of England recommendations.

There is now a safer recruitment procedure that we have to follow whenever a person, volunteer or paid, would like to take on a new role within Church life.

Judi and Linda have spent a lot of time this year attending courses and trying to make this practical for our church. There is now a full application, interview and acceptance process to be followed for helpers in all areas.

Using this new process, we have completed seeing one person through for Sunday Club and are in the process of getting others through too. This is all in addition to DBS clearance and relevant training for those with roles involving children and vulnerable adults.

Although this all sounds a lot of hoops to jump through, we are happy to do so if we can keep St Thomas's a safe place. It is known that certain people with problems are attracted to Churches, where they are welcomed into the Church family. This has long been recognised and even more so in the light of some of the more serious historical abuse cases which have come to the forefront of the news in recent years. It is the task of all of us to be observant and know that the correct procedure for reporting any concerns, **however small**, is to contact either the Vicar or Safeguarding Officers as soon as possible, and all concerns will be treated with confidentiality.

We are very grateful to the Safeguarding Officers at St Albans for their help and guidance in any problem we have raised.

Judi Kingham Linda Clitheroe
Safeguarding Officers

Home Groups

Our Home Group meets weekly on a Thursday during term time. We meet in our home and have a regular membership of about eight people. Meetings last about 90 minutes starting at 8pm with refreshments.

We look at various topics and issues surrounding the Christian faith all of which are bible based. We usually follow the sermon series and at Lent a specific bible based lent course to help us all grow in our understanding and knowledge of the bible, our relationship with God and issues facing Christians. We are a very friendly and welcoming group and get on well at our meetings, at church and on other occasions. Often we start and end a term with a social event especially at Christmas.

New members are always welcome and there is no pressure on anyone to make a long term commitment. We suggest anyone who is thinking about it to 'try us out' for say six weeks. This gives you a truer feel for what happens at a meeting and better helps you to decide whether or not you wish to stay. All evenings end in a short time of prayer and no one is under any pressure to contribute verbally if they prefer not to. All discussions and comments are treated in the strictest of confidence so everyone feels 'safe' to say what they think or share what may be bothering them.

Why not give it a go, maybe after Easter, and see what you think.

NB Evenings can often be blighted by my jokes!!

Ian Marshall

Morning Prayer

We meet for Morning Prayer on Mondays and Thursdays between 9.15am and 9.45am in church, and we have Morning Prayer with Communion on Tuesday at the same time. We come together and worship God and pray for the Parish, the Deanery, the Diocese and the wider world. It is wonderful to think that as we gather for Morning Prayer and Communion

we are coming together with Christians and the Church to seek God's guidance, direction and to ask the Holy Spirit to enable and empower us for service to the glory of God the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Please come and join us, everybody welcome.

David Newbound

Christian Meditation

The Christian Meditation group has taken a break and will resume again after Easter on a Wednesday afternoon.

David Newbound

Noah Soup Kitchen

We have a group of volunteers from St. Thomas' and surrounding churches who help at Noah Homeless Shelter on a Monday evening. They attend one Monday a month, on a rota basis, and support the Soup Kitchen. This involves warming premade soup and preparing sandwiches to serve alongside crisps, biscuits, tea and coffee. The volunteers arrive at 6.30pm and are usually cleared up by 8pm.

The Soup Kitchen opened in September 2010 and was only supposed to run for six months. It is however still going strong every night of the week. Without the volunteers providing this service, many homeless people in the town would have no food from lunchtime that day until breakfast the following morning.

I would like to thank all those from St. Thomas' who volunteer on a regular basis, many of whom bake or take in additional food for the homeless. Those who help at the Soup Kitchen really find it rewarding to help the service users, who always show their appreciation.

If you would be interested in helping at the Soup Kitchen, please contact Karen Ritchie on 07432 778082

Karen Ritchie.

Hands Of Mercy



Recently Samantha Graham, the ChairPerson of Hands of Mercy International made her first visit to the squatter communities of Mandaluyong, Manila, Philippines. She was very grateful for the prayer support of many people and the following are some of her first thoughts.....

"Thank you so much for your prayers for me whilst I was visiting the Philippines. It really was an incredible trip. I have never seen such poverty - thousands of people crammed together,

*living in dwellings that were ramshackle. Some of the homes were awful - tiny, claustrophobic, no natural daylight, barely enough space for one person let alone all the people living there. The streets were often cramped, with stray dogs, stray cats, cockerels (and rats) abiding, open drains and electricity cables (many of them illegal) running through. The living conditions are **really tough** out there.*

*I really thank God that I also saw incredible love out there - love from the staff who themselves are so reliant on programmes like the Family Support Programme so that they can feed their own families. Love within families for one another - without which there would be great cause for despair. Love from God expressed through the practical help and support that **Hands of Mercy** provides."*

If you are a supporter of the compassion ministry of Hands of Mercy International, you are making a MASSIVE difference in the Philippines. The staff asked Sam again and again to thank you for providing support – whether it's food each month, education for a child or medication that literally keeps people alive, every single pound and prayer makes a difference.

Thank you too, to everyone at St. Thomas' who gave a gift to help the victims of the Taal volcano that devastated a large area south of Manila where many families live. In the photograph the Hands of Mercy staff are giving out various items that people need, as well praying with the families.



Thank you for your prayers and loving support – it is much appreciated by so many.

Warmest greetings,

Fran Gunn and the UK Trustees.

Care Team

The Care Team meets every fourth Monday of the month, excluding January and December. At present the Care Team members are Maureen Austin, Jim Hearnshaw, Vreni Hearnshaw, Phyl Luck, David Newbound, Debbie Newbound, Louise Winter, Angela Scarlett-Marshall,

Richard Scarlett-Marshall and Margaret Boniface. Our aim is to prayerfully and practically support and uphold each and every member of the Church Family. We seek to meet individual needs by :

- Friendly chat
- Telephone call
- Visiting
- Sending of a card at Easter and Christmas

I would like to thank everybody on the Care Team for their hard work and continued support.

David Newbound

Director of Pastoral Care

As your Pastoral Worker it is my role to work alongside the vicar and on behalf of the Church Warden and PCC, sharing responsibility for the Pastoral oversight here at St Thomas, in the community and across our town. Some of my responsibilities involve the following :

- Home Communions
- Home visits
- Hospital visiting
- Care Team (Chairperson)
- Luton Town Centre Chaplaincy (Chaplain Stopsley)
- Food Bank (Link person)

I can be found in church or the parish on Sunday, and through to Thursday, with a retreat day on Friday and a day off on Saturday. I am more than happy for people to approach and chat with me before or between services. Leave a message for me on the Church Office phone (01582 729194) or on my mobile (07885605977) or you can email me (david.newbound@btinternet.com).

I see my ongoing ministry here at St Thomas's as taking the Church beyond the walls of the existing building and out into the community and across the town. By being available, accessible and approachable a great part of my ministry involves attentively listening to others, seeking to share God's love and compassion with them. In creating a safe, secure space and place. It involves meeting people where they are, and sharing their journey with them as long as they feel it is necessary. Matching my pace with theirs, keeping step with them and as we travel together with Jesus as our guide and enabler.

The pastoral work has been further blessed by Debbie who after her commissioning service took up the role of Parish Nurse. This month she has completed her portfolio and induction period and she will be attending the Parish Nurse Symposium in March where she will receive her accreditation and badge. After some final paperwork completed by our vicar the church will be accredited by Parish Nursing Ministries UK.

I would publicly like to give thanks for Debbie who is a real woman of faith, a constant support and encourager who daily makes a very real sacrifice in allowing me to grow in this calling that God has given me.

David Newbound

Parish Nurse

I have now been parish nurse at St Thomas church in Stopsley for 9 months, caring for the holistic needs of the church and wider community. I have 15 clients at the moment, both in church and the wider community. I run health promotion coffee mornings. My first one being Diabetes and Support which was in October 2019, which 30 people attended. In February I will be having another coffee morning speaking about heart disease and prevention and support. I work closely with the Director of Pastoral Care and am involved in many community projects. We hope to have the service accredited by mid March to early April. Many thanks to St Thomas's church and the wider community for your support and my husband David Newbound for his continued love and support.

Debbie Newbound

Social and Fundraising Team

Throughout the last year we have enjoyed several events, including a parish picnic, which was relocated at short notice to the church hall and proved to be a thoroughly enjoyable afternoon. The afternoon tea, barn dance, harvest supper, Christmas meal, Christmas tree festival and many more.

The Christmas tree festival was particularly successful with a positive feel throughout the whole afternoon and the church looked lovely for the whole of advent with all the trees.

Over the year we have found some events have had particularly low attendance so have decided that many of our regular events will be taking a rest year this year and we are planning to hold some new style events in their place.

If anyone has any ideas they would like to put forward for new events please contact myself or Ruth M.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone involved in the social and fundraising events for all their hard work and dedication.

Sara, Ruth and the Social Team

Lunch Club

We have a monthly lunch club where we offer a hot meal, often fish and chips, and good company. It is run on a sign up basis, with a sign-up sheet left in the porch for a few weeks prior. If you would like to sign up, please do - it is not a membership club, but open to all.

Lunch clubs are on the first Wednesday of every month. Usually it has been a fish and chip lunch. When Ian (my husband) has offered his services we have provided a hot meal and pudding. For the December lunch club we had a three course traditional Christmas dinner. On the occasions when I am unable to be there David N or Deborah have stepped in to help. Lunch club will carry on through 2020. Thank you for your support.

Linda Clitheroe

Men's Breakfasts

These have now gone into their third year. They are proving to be a great success. In 2019 we met four times and had a fantastic time enjoying good food, great camaraderie and lots of chatting. We try to meet every two to three months on a Saturday morning at 9 o'clock for about an hour or so. We have now introduced a 'God slot' at the end when we digest a short 'thought for the day' and then go our separate ways. We meet at a café which provides a full English breakfast although if anyone prefers a continental style breakfast, they are able to enjoy that. Between 8 to 12 have been meeting up and these breakfasts are open to any menfolk who want to meet up with other men and enjoy their company. Friends are always very welcome. Many churches in the diocese have Men's breakfasts which are proving to be popular and meet a need for the menfolk so we are hoping that this will grow and develop over the coming months and years. If any man wants to taste the event (and the food) please don't hesitate to come along and if you want more details of who, where, when and costs, please contact Ian Marshall on 07968131997. Lifts are always available to those who need one so that will not be a problem. Looking forward to the next one.

St Thomas' Volunteers

We are a group of 8 ladies and 2 gentlemen who run the Coffee Mornings on the first Saturday of every month. At the Coffee Mornings, as well as refreshments, we have a raffle, a cake stall, a book stall, DVD stall and a stall with bric-a-brac and various other items. We are happy to help on other occasions when asked.

The Coffee Mornings are very popular and well attended and raised over £1,300 for the church during 2019. The money from one of the Coffee Mornings each year is donated to a charity and last year the one in May raised £200 for Happy Days.

We meet in the Church Hall on the third Wednesday of the month between 11.00am and 12 noon for discussion and we would be pleased to welcome anyone who would like to join our very friendly group.

Georgina Cook

Stewardship Report

Thank you to everyone who has faithfully committed to supporting the Church this financial year (2019). The "Gift Day" appeal at the end of November raised £3607.00 and resulted in a final figure of £4169.50 after taking gift aid into consideration. As you can appreciate, with increased running costs year on year, regular stewardship giving and "Gift Day" donations are more important than ever. However, stewardship is not only about money, it is also about giving time and practical help to St. Thomas's Church.

At 31st December, 2019 there were 78 members (couples counted as one) in the Scheme. This is a net reduction of 11 members from the previous year. This is a mix of people leaving and the deaths of some of our long- standing members. Therefore, as we press on into 2020 there is a continuous challenge to meet the Church's running costs and the Parish Share.

As you will be aware from last year's report (2018) a card payment scheme was introduced in December, 2018. It is aimed at those who do not carry cash and enable them to contribute to St. Thomas's work within the church and the parish. It has become a regular item at our services, and I am informed that £1889.00 was donated by this method in 2019. A splendid achievement considering this is money that would not necessarily have been collected through the plate offerings.

In terms of giving your time and practical help to St. Thomas's Church there is a need for Sunday Club helpers, cleaners, litter pickers and people to carry out odd jobs, etc. The list is endless. If you are in a position to help please talk to the Churchwarden or the Parish Administrator at the Parish Office.

Finally, I would ask that you take this opportunity to pray and reflect on your giving. If you would like to join the Stewardship Scheme and make regular donations please ask me, the Treasurer or the Churchwarden for details.

Leslie Sims

Stewardship Secretary

Administrators report

Every day in the parish office is different, I never know how the day will unfold or who I will have the pleasure of speaking to, so many lovely people pass through with a friendly word.

The office is often the first point of contact for many people and I aim to continue to provide an efficient and caring service during the office hours, answering emails, responding to contact made on the website, by telephone or in person. The office is seldom quiet, there is always someone coming and going or working alongside me on other parts of the table. It's a lovely, friendly atmosphere.

I am enjoying the work and am grateful for the help that Linda still gives when I come across something new – she is always on the end of the phone and willing to give me advice. I still miss her, I enjoyed working with her. Thanks also to David A for his patience when I ask the same question again and again, and when I have made a mistake.

I have also enjoyed working with our Church Warden Ian, who is always checking up on me to make sure I am coping and not working too hard! Thank you to everyone who supports the administration of the church, everyone from John P for his IT knowledge through to Neil R with his financial knowledge and everyone in between! God bless you all,

Deborah Bachini

Church Flowers report

We still have the same small team of regular helpers, Elaine Deacon and Sylvia and David Saunders. We try to provide lovely flowers in church each week. With fewer weddings and less financial help this past year we have sometimes tried to keep the flowers going longer than we would perhaps usually do, but hopefully they still look good. Huge thanks to the helpers and also the couple of people who do give us some donations through the year to keep us in flowers! And thanks to some of you for the encouragement we receive through the year. It really is appreciated.

If you would like to come and have a go at flower arranging, please let me know and you would be welcome to join us.

Linda Clitheroe

Lent Lunches

This year we are running lunches through Lent, which have proved to be a great success and enjoyed by everyone who attends. They consist of soup, bread, cheese fruit and tea or coffee. I have been asked to continue these as a regular event on Wednesday lunch times from 12.30pm to 1.30pm.

David Newbound

Deanery Synod Report

Joe Pienaar stood down as Area Dean at Easter and Fr David was licensed to this role at a Deanery Eucharist in July.

The deanery synod met and considered the following issues over the year

- January – Knife Crime
- June – Credit Unions
- October – Wenlock School

There was also a Deanery evensong on June 2nd and a Deanery BBQ at All Saints on July 30th

The main issue facing the deanery are the two schemes for Pastoral reorganisation which are under consideration.

1. It is proposed to end the benefice at Holy Trinity Biscot and divide the area of the current parish between St Augustine of Canterbury, Limbury, St Andrews Blenheim Crescent and Holy Cross Marsh Farm. The Church itself will continue – perhaps as a “Chapel of Ease” under the care of St Augustines.
2. The second proposal is to change the way St Matthews operates. It would move from being a parish church to a being operated as a Christian Trust under lease from the diocese.

Neither proposal involves the closure of a church.

We welcomed Revd Tim Madely as vicar of Christchurch Bushmead and Ven Dave Middlebrook as the new Archdeacon of Bedford.

Steve Dolby

Diocese of St Albans
Parish of St Thomas Stopsley

Seeking to share God's love

Diocese of St Albans

Minutes of the Annual Church Meeting held on Sunday 7th April 2019

At 12 noon in the Church Hall

Present:

David Alexander (Vicar and Chairman)
Ruth Barr (Curate)
Steve Dolby (Churchwarden)
Ian Marshall (Churchwarden)
Neil Rolls (Treasurer)
And 32 other parishioners

2019.1 Welcome and Prayers

The Vicar opened the meeting by welcoming all and explaining the need to use microphones if anyone wished to speak – there was a handheld microphone that would be passed around. He then opened the meeting with prayer.

2019.2 Election of Secretary for the Meeting

Rosemary Stipta was proposed as Secretary by Anne Dolby, seconded by John Barr and elected unanimously.

2019.3 Apologies

Apologies were received from John Alexander, Liz Fagan, Helen McGowan, Sarah Newbound, Frank Weedon, Ruth Marshall and Louise Winter.

2019.4 Minutes of the previous Annual Church Meeting on 23rd April 2018

These had been distributed with the AGM papers and had been checked by the PCC. Acceptance was proposed by David Newbound, seconded by David Stipta and agreed.

2019.5 Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

MEETING OF THE PARISHIONERS OF STOPSLEY

2019.6 Election of Churchwardens

The Vicar thanked Steve and Ian and mentioned particularly all their work behind the scenes. He said that Steve had reached the end of his term of office and now needs a break. Ian presented Steve with a gift and Anne with a bouquet on behalf of both the PCC and the church to thank Steve. Steve thanked everyone and commented that God wants to adopt you, not enlist you!!

At this point the Vicar offered thanks to Linda, who would shortly be retiring from her post in the Office. He explained that he had interviewed Linda on 11th September 2001 and that she had started work in the choir vestry, before the hall was built. A gift, card and flowers were presented to Linda.

The Vicar then went on to read the message from the Bishop, which had been given during the morning service, that Ruth Barr has been appointed Team Vicar in the Bishop's Team Ministry of Hatfield, with responsibility for St Mary's Church in North Mymms. She would also be Chaplain for the Royal Veterinary College.

The Vicar then turned to the election of churchwardens. He said only one nomination had been received, for Ian Marshall, proposed by Neil Rolls and seconded by Bev Rolls. He therefore declared Ian elected. The Vicar then went on to say that the intention was to form a leadership team over the next few months to bring forward leaders. Ian commented that he has, in fact, completed 6 years as Churchwarden!

ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING

2019.7 Vicar's Report

The Vicar opened by thanking everyone who makes a contribution to the life of the church. He mentioned the news about Ruth and her new posting. He also mentioned that St Thomas's had been selected by the Diocese to send a small group to a conference on Leading Your Church Into Growth (LYCIG). He outlined what this means for the church and invited everyone to be part of a small group for 6 weeks. He then introduced the "super 6", those who had attended the conference – Linda and Ian Clitheroe, Ruth and John Barr, Stella Marshall and himself. Stella, Linda, John and Ruth spoke briefly about the conference. There was then a short video about this conference. The Vicar then closed his report in prayer.

2019.8 PCC Report

This was included in the papers for the meeting and all were encouraged to read it at their leisure.

2019.9 Children and Youth Matters

These would be taken later.

2019.10 Worship and Teaching Matters

The Vicar encouraged all to comment about services etc.

2019.11 Outreach and Communication Matters

Facebook – Donna Alexander is taking over the Facebook page. In addition, the weekly emails are being resumed. The website now has the notice sheets and talks on YouTube.

2019.12 Mission Matters

Donna Alexander is taking over Twitter and Instagram. Vauxhall Chaplaincy continues to go well, also the Noah Chaplaincy. Karen commented that the Soup Kitchen is still in need of more helpers on a Monday evening between 6.30pm-8pm(ish). If interested, speak to Karen. The Asda Chaplaincy also continues to go well, as does the Hands of Mercy work.

2019.13 Pastoral Care Matters

This is ongoing- Parish Nursing begins on 12th May and Debbie Newbound explained this.

2019.14 Community and Social Matters

Ian Marshall commented that socially is the easiest way to reach out to other people and said there was a programme of social events. He also commented that there was a short flyer and asked everyone to complete it.

2019.15 Fabric Matters

The Vicar explained briefly that the heating had now been repaired/replaced and other issues were dealt with as and when they arose.

2019.16 Administration Matters

The Vicar said that Linda's retirement had already been mentioned and said that Deborah was increasing her hours to cover the role of Administrator as vacated by Linda.

2019.17 Finance Matters

a) Election of Independent Examiner for the accounts – Neil Rolls proposed Godfrey Laws, seconded by Anne Dolby and agreed unanimously.

b) Financial Report – Neil explained various items from the report, including the balance sheet, use of Reserves. He said it was still a challenge to break even. The Parish Share was increasing this year and he felt there was a need to pray about meeting the deficit.

2019.9 Returning to the Children and Youth matters item, the Vicar thanked Angela and Richard, also David Ritchie for naming Stuff. Also to the Sunday Club – Karen commented on the split into two age groups and said it was working well. The older group was developing. More adult volunteers are always welcome. Ian Marshall commented that it was a privilege to be part of the leadership team and that what the children come out with is inspiring, encouraging and spiritual and that the adults learn from them. Any potential volunteers should speak to Karen, Ruth Marshall or Sara Sammons.

Accounts – Ian asked about the underpayment of the Parish Share over the last 2 years – unless something happens on income, he wondered how long we could keep going? Neil suggested that people needed to look at their own situations as there was a need to increase giving to enable payment of the Parish Share.

The adoption of the Accounts was proposed by David Stipta, seconded by Maureen Austin and agreed unanimously.

c) Stewardship Report – thanks to Les Sims.

2019.19 Election of Parochial Church Councillors and Deanery Synod Members

The Vicar commented that the following vacancies existed:

4 x 3 years

2 x 2 years

1 x 1 year

1 x Deanery Synod

Nominations were received as follows:

- 3 years: Neil Rolls, proposed by Geraldine Sims, seconded by Les Sims
 Stella Marshall, proposed by Linda Clitheroe, seconded by Helen McGowan
 John Kingham, proposed by John Barr, seconded by David White
 Stewart Leary, proposed by Les Sims, seconded by Bev Rolls.
- 2 years Karen Ritchie, proposed by Lorraine Pinnock, seconded by Steve Dolby
 Julie Bailey, proposed by Maureen Austin, seconded by Steve Dolby
- 1 year John Pinnock, proposed by Rosemary Stipta, seconded by David Stipta

As there were no other nominations, all were duly elected.

There were no nominations or volunteers for Deanery Synod.

2019.20 Election of Sidesmen/Sideswomen

Ian Marshall proposed renaming to Welcome Team and said they were fundamental and crucial to the life of the church. Steve and Ian thanked all those who were serving and had done so for years. He said that if anyone wished to volunteer, there would be a meeting on 24th April in the evening in the hall. He was suggesting volunteers should do one Sunday a month on average.

Election of Sidespeople was proposed by Rosemary Stipta, seconded by Ian Marshall and agreed unanimously.

2019.21 Any Other Business

- i) Stewardship – Les Sims said there were two issues – time and practical help; and card reader. With regard to the first there is a long list of vacancies and suggested people should speak to Churchwardens, Parish Office, Vicar or Curate. Card Reader – this is now a regular thing. It took over £260 in December and has taken £728 to date overall. Congratulation to Ruth for getting it set up.
- ii) Steve Dolby said ideas were needed to raise money.
- iii) Thank yous – to David Alexander, to Ruth and John Barr, to Jane Alexander, who was presented with flowers from PCC, as was Ruth Barr.

2019.22 Date of next PCC meeting

29th April – with Communion

2019.23 Closing Prayer

The meeting closed with the LYCIG prayer and Ruth gave a blessing

David Alexander thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting in prayer.

Comments and Questions for the AGM or PCC or Vicar.

Any Comment:

Any Question:

**Independent Examiner's Report to the PCC of
St Thomas' Church, Stopsley, Luton**

This report on the accounts of the PCC for the year ended 31 December 2019, which are set out on pages 2 to 7 is in respect of an examination carried out under Regulation 3(3) of the Church Accounting Regulations 2006 and under section 145 of the Charities Act 2011 (the 2011 Act).

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

As the members of the PCC you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts, you consider that the audit requirement of Regulation 3(3) of the Church Accounting Regulations 2006 and section under section 144(2) of the Charities Act 2011 (the 2011 Act) do not apply and that an independent examination is needed. It is my responsibility to issue this report on those accounts in accordance with the terms of Regulation 25 of the Church Accounting Regulations 2006 and Regulation 7 of the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 1995.

Basis of independent examiner's report

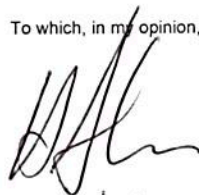
My examination was carried out in accordance with the General Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145 of the 2011 Act and to be found in the guidance from the CBF. That examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the PCC and a comparison of the accounts with those records. It also includes considering any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts and seeking explanations from you as trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently I do not express an audit opinion on the view given by the accounts.

Independent examiner's statement

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

- 1 Which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements
 - To keep accounting records in accordance with section 130 of the 2011 Act; and
 - To prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and to comply with the requirements of the Act, as also contained in the Church Accounting Regulations 2006 have not been met; or
- 2 To which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Signed:



Date:

2 October 2020

Howard Ashmore
Godfrey Laws & Co. Ltd
Chartered Accountants
& Registered Auditors
69 Knowl Piece
Wilbury Way
HITCHIN
Hertfordshire
SG4 0TY

St Thomas' P.C.C. Stopsley, Luton
Statement of Financial Activities
For the year ended 31st December 2019

Incoming Resources (all unrestricted)

	Note	2019	2018
		£	£
Incoming resources from donors	2(a)	78,843	86,350
Other voluntary incoming resources	2(b)	12,515	12,881
Income from charitable & ancillary trading	2(c)	1,425	1,668
Other ordinary incoming resources	2(d)	3,467	3,805
Total Non-Designated Incoming resources		<u>96,250</u>	<u>104,704</u>

Resources Used

Grants	3(a)	(20)	10,000
Activities directly relating to the work of the Church	3(b)	105,794	91,309
Publicity, Church management & admin.	3(c)	4,450	2,790
		<u>110,224</u>	<u>104,099</u>
Net Annual Surplus / (Deficit)		<u>(13,974)</u>	<u>605</u>

St Thomas' P.C.C. Stopsley, Luton
Balance Sheet as at 31st December 2019

	Note	2019 £	2018 £
Fixed Assets	4	<u>2,761</u>	<u>549</u>
Current Assets			
Debtors	5	7,084	11,828
Bank Accounts		<u>31,650</u>	<u>24,591</u>
		38,734	36,419
Liabilities: Amounts due within one year	6	<u>8,669</u>	<u>5,768</u>
Net current assets		30,065	30,651
Total assets less current liabilities		<u>32,826</u>	<u>31,200</u>
Funds			
General Account	7	496	8,750
Legacy Funds	8	31,255	21,375
Youth Project		<u>1,075</u>	<u>1,075</u>
		32,826	31,200

St Thomas' P.C.C. Stopsley, Luton
Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year ended 31 December 2019

1. Accounting Policies

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the Church Accounting Regulations 2006 together with applicable accounting standards and the Charities SORP.

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention except for the valuation of investment assets, which are shown at market value.

Funds

General funds represent the funds of the PCC that are not subject to any restrictions regarding their use and are available for application on the general purposes of the PCC. Funds designated for a particular purpose by the PCC are also unrestricted.

The accounts include all transactions, assets and liabilities for which the PCC is responsible in law. They do not include the accounts of church groups that owe their main affiliation to another body nor those that are informal gatherings of Church members.

Incoming Resources

Voluntary income and capital sources

Collections are recognised when received by or on behalf of the PCC.

Planned giving receivable under covenant is recognised only when received.

Income tax recoverable on covenants or gift aid donations is recognised when the income is recognised.

Grants and legacies to the PCC are accounted for as soon as the PCC is notified of its legal entitlement and the amount due,

Income from investments

Interest is accounted for when received.

Resources Used

Activities directly relating to the work of the Church

Fixed Assets

Consecrated land and buildings and movable church furnishings

Consecrated and beneficed property is excluded from the accounts by s.96 (2)(a) of the Charities Act 1993.

No value is placed on movable church furnishings held by the churchwardens on special trust for the PCC and which require a faculty for disposal since the PCC considers this to be inalienable property.

St Thomas' P.C.C. Stopsley, Luton

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year ended 31st December 2019

Equipment

Office Equipment and sound equipment is depreciated on the straight line basis at a rate of 33.3% per annum.

Churchyard Maintenance Equipment is depreciated on the reducing balance basis at a rate of 30% per annum.

Individual items of Equipment with a purchase price of £250 or less are written off when the asset is acquired.

Current Assets

Amounts owing to the PCC at 31 December are shown as debtors less provision for amounts that may prove uncollectible.

2. Incoming resources (all unrestricted)

	Note	2019	2018
		£	£
2(a) Incoming from donors			
Planned Giving		56,578	60,216
Gift Day		3,607	5,962
Income Tax recoverable		13,511	14,273
Collections (open plate) at all Services		3,958	5,638
Collections (credit card) at all Services		1,189	261
		<u>78,843</u>	<u>86,350</u>
2(b) Other voluntary incoming resources			
Coffee mornings, Lunches & Teas		1,876	1,942
Hire of and Donations for use of hall		1,288	680
Social Events		2,777	1,623
Donations towards Roof Repairs & Graffiti		0	1,750
Miscellaneous Donations & Receipts		4,837	6,887
Parish Nursing Donations & Receipts		1,737	0
		<u>12,515</u>	<u>12,881</u>
2(c) Income from charitable and ancillary trading			
Magazine Subscriptions		887	763
Magazine Adverts		538	905
		<u>1,425</u>	<u>1,668</u>
2(d) Other ordinary income resources			
Wedding and funeral fees & receipts		<u>3,467</u>	<u>3,805</u>

St Thomas' P.C.C. Stopsley, Luton
Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year ended 31st December 2019

	2019	2018
	£	£
3 Resources Used		
3(a) Grants to Charities		
World Relief	0	4,510
World Mission	0	160
UK Social Concern/Relief	0	5,250
UK Church Mission	(20)	80
	<u>(20)</u>	<u>10,000</u>
3(b) Activities directly relating to the work of the Church		
Ministry: Parish Share	67,374	47,258
Clergy Expenses	4,616	5,188
Pastoral Worker	4,680	4,290
Pastoral Discretionary Expenditure	791	509
Church Office Wages	7,752	8,254
Church: Running Expenses	7,315	6,634
Routine Maintenance	2,448	3,874
Major Repairs	3,188	10,438
Service Costs	1,071	1,137
Parish Nursing	1,208	345
Depreciation	1,049	282
Telephone Charges	1,569	1,669
Miscellaneous	2,732	1,431
	<u>105,794</u>	<u>91,309</u>
3(c) Publicity, Church Management & Administration		
Stationery & printing (incl. magazine)	3,863	2,133
Independent Examiner's fee	120	120
Miscellaneous	467	537
	<u>4,450</u>	<u>2,790</u>

St Thomas' P.C.C. Stopsley, Luton
Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year ended 31st December 2019

4. Fixed Assets

	Sound Equipment	Office Equipment	Churchyard Equipment	Total
Cost/Valuation				
At 1 January 2019	10,233	2,339	1,540	14,112
Additions during year	0	3,261	0	3,261
At 31 December 2019	10,233	5,600	1,540	17,373
Depreciation				
At 1 January 2019	10,233	1,806	1,524	13,563
Charge for year	0	1,033	16	1,049
At 31 December 2019	10,233	2,839	1,540	14,612
Net Book Value				
At 31 December 2019	0	2,761	0	2,761
At 31 December 2018	0	533	16	549

5. Debtors

	2019 £	2018 £
Income Tax recoverable	7,024	9,761
Other Debtors	60	2,067
	<u>7,084</u>	<u>11,828</u>

6. Liabilities: Amounts due within one year

Donations	660	680
Other Creditors & Accruals	8,009	5,088
	<u>8,669</u>	<u>5,768</u>

7. Funds

	General Account	Legacy Funds	Youth Project	Total
At 1 January 2019	8,750	21,375	1,075	31,200
Legacies received in the year	0	15,600	0	15,600
Deficit for the year	(8,254)	(5,720)	0	(13,974)
At 31 December 2019	<u>496</u>	<u>31,255</u>	<u>1,075</u>	<u>32,826</u>

8. Legacy Funds

	2019 £	2018 £
John Shaw for Church Maintenance	875	1,595
J L Kingham	10,000	10,000
James Dyer	1,000	1,000
Francis Estdale	2,280	2,280
Toyer	1,000	1,000
Waters	500	500
Bryan Sexton	5,000	5,000
B Cox	600	0
S Rutty	0	0
B Harris	10,000	0
	<u>31,255</u>	<u>21,375</u>

**Independent Examiner's Report to the PCC of
St Thomas' Church, Stopsley, Luton**

This report on the accounts of the PCC for the year ended 31 December 2019, which are set out on pages 2 to 7 is in respect of an examination carried out under Regulation 3(3) of the Church Accounting Regulations 2006 and under section 145 of the Charities Act 2011 (the 2011 Act).

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

As the members of the PCC you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts, you consider that the audit requirement of Regulation 3(3) of the Church Accounting Regulations 2006 and section under section 144(2) of the Charities Act 2011 (the 2011 Act) do not apply and that an independent examination is needed. It is my responsibility to issue this report on those accounts in accordance with the terms of Regulation 25 of the Church Accounting Regulations 2006 and Regulation 7 of the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 1995.

Basis of independent examiner's report

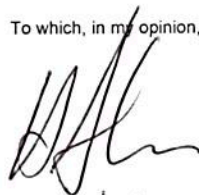
My examination was carried out in accordance with the General Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145 of the 2011 Act and to be found in the guidance from the CBF. That examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the PCC and a comparison of the accounts with those records. It also includes considering any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts and seeking explanations from you as trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently I do not express an audit opinion on the view given by the accounts.

Independent examiner's statement

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

- 1 Which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements
 - To keep accounting records in accordance with section 130 of the 2011 Act; and
 - To prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and to comply with the requirements of the Act, as also contained in the Church Accounting Regulations 2006 have not been met; or
- 2 To which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Signed:



Date:

2 October 2020

Howard Ashmore
Godfrey Laws & Co. Ltd
Chartered Accountants
& Registered Auditors
69 Knowl Piece
Wilbury Way
HITCHIN
Hertfordshire
SG4 0TY

St Thomas' P.C.C. Stopsley, Luton
Statement of Financial Activities
For the year ended 31st December 2019

Incoming Resources (all unrestricted)

	Note	2019 £	2018 £
Incoming resources from donors	2(a)	78,843	86,350
Other voluntary incoming resources	2(b)	12,515	12,881
Income from charitable & ancillary trading	2(c)	1,425	1,668
Other ordinary incoming resources	2(d)	3,467	3,805
Total Non-Designated Incoming resources		<u>96,250</u>	<u>104,704</u>

Resources Used

Grants	3(a)	(20)	10,000
Activities directly relating to the work of the Church	3(b)	105,794	91,309
Publicity, Church management & admin.	3(c)	4,450	2,790
		<u>110,224</u>	<u>104,099</u>
Net Annual Surplus / (Deficit)		<u>(13,974)</u>	<u>605</u>

St Thomas' P.C.C. Stopsley, Luton
Balance Sheet as at 31st December 2019

	Note	2019 £	2018 £
Fixed Assets	4	<u>2,761</u>	<u>549</u>
Current Assets			
Debtors	5	7,084	11,828
Bank Accounts		<u>31,650</u>	<u>24,591</u>
		<u>38,734</u>	<u>36,419</u>
Liabilities: Amounts due within one year	6	<u>8,669</u>	<u>5,768</u>
Net current assets		30,065	30,651
Total assets less current liabilities		<u>32,826</u>	<u>31,200</u>
Funds			
General Account	7	496	8,750
Legacy Funds	8	31,255	21,375
Youth Project		<u>1,075</u>	<u>1,075</u>
		<u>32,826</u>	<u>31,200</u>

St Thomas' P.C.C. Stopsley, Luton
Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year ended 31 December 2019

1. Accounting Policies

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the Church Accounting Regulations 2006 together with applicable accounting standards and the Charities SORP.

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention except for the valuation of investment assets, which are shown at market value.

Funds

General funds represent the funds of the PCC that are not subject to any restrictions regarding their use and are available for application on the general purposes of the PCC. Funds designated for a particular purpose by the PCC are also unrestricted.

The accounts include all transactions, assets and liabilities for which the PCC is responsible in law. They do not include the accounts of church groups that owe their main affiliation to another body nor those that are informal gatherings of Church members.

Incoming Resources

Voluntary income and capital sources

Collections are recognised when received by or on behalf of the PCC.

Planned giving receivable under covenant is recognised only when received.

Income tax recoverable on covenants or gift aid donations is recognised when the income is recognised.

Grants and legacies to the PCC are accounted for as soon as the PCC is notified of its legal entitlement and the amount due,

Income from investments

Interest is accounted for when received.

Resources Used

Activities directly relating to the work of the Church

Fixed Assets

Consecrated land and buildings and movable church furnishings

Consecrated and beneficed property is excluded from the accounts by s.96 (2)(a) of the Charities Act 1993.

No value is placed on movable church furnishings held by the churchwardens on special trust for the PCC and which require a faculty for disposal since the PCC considers this to be inalienable property.

St Thomas' P.C.C. Stopsley, Luton

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year ended 31st December 2019

Equipment

Office Equipment and sound equipment is depreciated on the straight line basis at a rate of 33.3% per annum.

Churchyard Maintenance Equipment is depreciated on the reducing balance basis at a rate of 30% per annum.

Individual items of Equipment with a purchase price of £250 or less are written off when the asset is acquired.

Current Assets

Amounts owing to the PCC at 31 December are shown as debtors less provision for amounts that may prove uncollectible.

2. Incoming resources (all unrestricted)

	Note	2019	2018
		£	£
2(a) Incoming from donors			
Planned Giving		56,578	60,216
Gift Day		3,607	5,962
Income Tax recoverable		13,511	14,273
Collections (open plate) at all Services		3,958	5,638
Collections (credit card) at all Services		1,189	261
		<u>78,843</u>	<u>86,350</u>
2(b) Other voluntary incoming resources			
Coffee mornings, Lunches & Teas		1,876	1,942
Hire of and Donations for use of hall		1,288	680
Social Events		2,777	1,623
Donations towards Roof Repairs & Graffiti		0	1,750
Miscellaneous Donations & Receipts		4,837	6,887
Parish Nursing Donations & Receipts		1,737	0
		<u>12,515</u>	<u>12,881</u>
2(c) Income from charitable and ancillary trading			
Magazine Subscriptions		887	763
Magazine Adverts		538	905
		<u>1,425</u>	<u>1,668</u>
2(d) Other ordinary income resources			
Wedding and funeral fees & receipts		<u>3,467</u>	<u>3,805</u>

St Thomas' P.C.C. Stopsley, Luton
Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year ended 31st December 2019

	2019	2018
	£	£
3 Resources Used		
3(a) Grants to Charities		
World Relief	0	4,510
World Mission	0	160
UK Social Concern/Relief	0	5,250
UK Church Mission	(20)	80
	<u>(20)</u>	<u>10,000</u>
3(b) Activities directly relating to the work of the Church		
Ministry: Parish Share	67,374	47,258
Clergy Expenses	4,616	5,188
Pastoral Worker	4,680	4,290
Pastoral Discretionary Expenditure	791	509
Church Office Wages	7,752	8,254
Church: Running Expenses	7,315	6,634
Routine Maintenance	2,448	3,874
Major Repairs	3,188	10,438
Service Costs	1,071	1,137
Parish Nursing	1,208	345
Depreciation	1,049	282
Telephone Charges	1,569	1,669
Miscellaneous	2,732	1,431
	<u>105,794</u>	<u>91,309</u>
3(c) Publicity, Church Management & Administration		
Stationery & printing (incl. magazine)	3,863	2,133
Independent Examiner's fee	120	120
Miscellaneous	467	537
	<u>4,450</u>	<u>2,790</u>

St Thomas' P.C.C. Stopsley, Luton
Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year ended 31st December 2019

4. Fixed Assets

	Sound Equipment	Office Equipment	Churchyard Equipment	Total
Cost/Valuation				
At 1 January 2019	10,233	2,339	1,540	14,112
Additions during year	0	3,261	0	3,261
At 31 December 2019	10,233	5,600	1,540	17,373
Depreciation				
At 1 January 2019	10,233	1,806	1,524	13,563
Charge for year	0	1,033	16	1,049
At 31 December 2019	10,233	2,839	1,540	14,612
Net Book Value				
At 31 December 2019	0	2,761	0	2,761
At 31 December 2018	0	533	16	549

5. Debtors

	2019 £	2018 £
Income Tax recoverable	7,024	9,761
Other Debtors	60	2,067
	<u>7,084</u>	<u>11,828</u>

6. Liabilities: Amounts due within one year

Donations	660	680
Other Creditors & Accruals	8,009	5,088
	<u>8,669</u>	<u>5,768</u>

7. Funds

	General Account	Legacy Funds	Youth Project	Total
At 1 January 2019	8,750	21,375	1,075	31,200
Legacies received in the year	0	15,600	0	15,600
Deficit for the year	(8,254)	(5,720)	0	(13,974)
At 31 December 2019	<u>496</u>	<u>31,255</u>	<u>1,075</u>	<u>32,826</u>

8. Legacy Funds

	2019 £	2018 £
John Shaw for Church Maintenance	875	1,595
J L Kingham	10,000	10,000
James Dyer	1,000	1,000
Francis Estdale	2,280	2,280
Toyer	1,000	1,000
Waters	500	500
Bryan Sexton	5,000	5,000
B Cox	600	0
S Rutty	0	0
B Harris	10,000	0
	<u>31,255</u>	<u>21,375</u>

