

# Christ Church Erith



## Annual Reports 2020 – 2021

- Vicar
- Churchwardens
- Secretary
- Electoral Roll
- Deanery Synod
- Anna Ministry
- Hall report
- Bell Ringers
- Kids Club and Toddler Worship
- Powerhouse Youth Club
- Safeguarding
- Choir
- Parish Magazine
- Christmas Tree Festival
- Friends of Christ Church Erith
- Social Committee
- Christ Church School
- Men in Sheds
- Scouts

## **Report from the Vicarage – Rev Mthr Monica Cameron**

2020 has certainly been an exceptionally testing one for all. Our Church has been unable to operate as usual due to the effects of COVID 19 and thanks be to God there has not been any COVID 19 deaths from among our congregation although every one of our lives have been affected by it in one way or another. When we have been able to be in Church it has been with keeping our distance from each other; wearing face masks and not being able to participate in Holy Communion as one in the Body of Christ as we are used to doing. We have all had to learn and develop new ways of growing in faith and fellowship as we continue to be disciples and grow new disciples. However, by God's grace there is light at the end of the tunnel.

With the help of technology, we have learnt new ways of doing Church online. Using Zoom, Facebook and You Tube we have been able to reach out to more people in ways that that were previously unimagined, people well outside of our regular congregation. With the help of the Holy Spirit, we hope to work to help these new contacts get to know the love of God through Christ and grow in faith.

The continuing endeavor is to continue to find ways of reaching out to everyone in the parish as much as possible. To identify, and support everyone who is willing, to use their gifts in serving God through the activities in our Church.

It is regrettable that at a time when Pastoral support is required more than ever, with increased numbers of sickness and funerals and cancelation of weddings and baptisms, Pastoral work has been mainly via telephone calls. The remaining constant in pastoral care has been the ability to pray for each other and to share concerns through the Whats App support group and through shared morning prayers.

### **Church Wardens**

Many thanks to our Church Wardens Doreen Ives and Natalie Slator. Throughout the year we have still managed to meet regularly using social distance and or zoom. Our Church has been closed but much work has gone on in Church. Long outstanding quinquennial repair work has been done, broken stained glass window has been repaired, and damage to the Paintings have also been repaired. This work has involved their time and effort in applying for grants, applying for faculties and dealing with contractors. I am very grateful to them for all that they do and for their encouragement and support not just for me but for all the congregation and all who visit Christ Church. I am delighted that they are willing to continue as our churchwardens. My grateful thanks to the Deputy Wardens who so willing help them so that our services run smoothly.

## **Financial & Fabric Matters – PCC and Standing Committee**

My grateful thanks to the PCC and the Standing Committee for all their efforts commitment and hard work in dealing with all the financial matters and concerns in our Church including DBS checks and database, general Safeguarding, and Data protection.

Finance remains a major concern and it has been adversely affected by our Church being in lockdown. We urgently need more regular and committed planned giving which will enable us to budget for the financial needs of our Church. The PCC has agreed to make the account details readily available on our Pew Sheet and we now have an online giving platform, give a little, which enables donations to be made more readily with fewer and fewer people carrying cash.

I am thankful for the Friends of Christ Church for all that they do, the quiz nights and all the fundraising they do behind the scenes to maintain our historic building and helping to make it a place of welcome. The long, awaited project to install toilets in the West Porch has now been completed. It will make a major difference in the Churches ability to engage in different ways with the wider community the old and the very young. I have never been more excited about toilets. Well done Doreen, Chris and all the members of FOCCE, a major achievement.

Having a beautiful church is always a mixed blessing, as fabric issues tend to be an ongoing concern. We look forward to being able to replace the sound system as soon as we are able to raise funds for it and for the upkeep of the organ.

## **Distinctive Deacon, LLM and Ordinand**

Many thanks to Ann Norman who although officially retired has been a tremendous support to me in getting to know the parish and its peoples and providing cover for me over the Christmas period. I am ever grateful for her time and friendship. She continues to make herself available to us as well as other Churches, in the area, for preaching and to provide cover whenever possible, which is a blessing to us.

Many thanks to Funmi for her ministry as LLM and as Anna Chaplain. She leads a team that attends Meyer House to take a service of the word once every month, which unfortunately has been stopped due to COVID-19. I am thankful for her prayers, support and encouragement. Funmi is looking forward to completing her module on Funerals. As I continue to support her training and with our prayers, she is looking forward to building up her ministry in this way. I hope she will find it more and more a privilege to walk alongside those who mourn.

Eucharia, our Ordinand in training is doing very well, I continue to facilitate her training as she looks forward to completing her academic training, I hope we will all continue to

support and encourage her as she looks forward in her ministry.

### **Kids Club**

Our Kids Club had to move to being shared online. This has been made available every Sunday when Jackie Clement our project Worker has not been on Annual Leave. The feedback and engagement have been going well, my appeal is for more volunteers to assist with this. Help and support will be available, a clean DBS check is the only necessary requirement.

### **Christmas Tree Festival**

Although the event had to be scaled down this year the Committee and its Chair Claire Perkins worked very hard to ensure that the event went ahead and was well planned. It is clear that this is a major event in the churches calendar and what is needed is more committed volunteers to be present to welcome visitors during the festival weekend. suggestions as to how to get more volunteers please let me know.

### **Christ Church primary School**

Attendance at school has been limited throughout the year, contact has been mainly by providing videos and information for posting on the school website. I continue to engage with the governing board via zoom. I have asked the Chair of Governors to provide a report for us and it is available further on in this document.

It is a thriving outstanding school, and a debt of gratitude is owed to all staff on how they have coped with the challenges throughout the pandemic. I look forward to the time when the children, by class rotation, can once again join us in church for morning prayer on Wednesday mornings and we are looking at new ways to increase the relationship between our school and Church families.

### **Planning for the future and the Diocesan Strategy**

Last year I did say that my hope and prayer for the year ahead is that we will continue to work together to grow our Church in a variety of ways, to grow in discipleship and fellowship, with Christ and each other; to grow in love, unity and service to each other and to our community, to engage with our young people and those who are unfamiliar with Church. This hope had to take a different shape to what was in mind and continues to be my hope for Christ Church, and in the year ahead working with the PCC to develop a mission plan for Christ Church.

### **SDF - outreach projects**

In 2019 fund was awarded to Christ Church, through working with the diocese, from the Central Church Commission, Strategic Development Funds, to help us to grow new

worshipping; included was the cost of having our project worker Mrs. Jacki Clement. In the past year some of the activities/projects that were planned had to be postponed and for some there had to be flexibility in how to get the projects up and running. The memory support group is up and running via zoom. Toddler church has started by pre-recorded videos made available on Facebook and on our YouTube channel. There is a quiz night that was started with our young people in mind. It runs once per month and currently it has developed into a family quiz to encourage engagement. The SDF Committee includes me, Mrs. Jacki Clement, Mrs. Angie Penn, Mr. Francis Egege, Mrs. Vanessa Curtis and Mrs. Laura Webster. We meet once every two months to discuss what can be done to develop the projects that fits with the purposes for which the funding has been given, growing new worshipping communities. This continues to be a very exciting opportunity for our Church and community. My thanks and appreciation to the Committee for their time and Commitment to the projects.

### **My General Thanks, and Appreciation**

A special word of thanks must go to Paul Hyde who gives so much of his time and talent in editing our Parish Magazine and producing our weekly pew sheet. As everyone is aware, we do not have a Parish Administrator as many other parishes do. I am hugely thankful to Paul for his willingness to always help. Thanks to Joan our Sacristan for ordering supplies ordering and to Heather for assisting with the flowers. Together sorting the Advent wreath changing the altar frontal seasonally in spite of being lockdown.

Thanks to the choir and all who have managed to continue to help us to worship God through singing when we have been allowed to in spite of the restrictions of the Pandemic, all hugely appreciated.

Finally, it is not possible for me to name everyone so thank you to all members of the congregation, from the messages you have been sending me I know you are praying for me and encouraging me, as I pray for you and encourage you. Please know that I give thanks every day for the privilege that I enjoy in serving God; thank you so much from the depths of my heart for your support, as I will always continue to support you.

Yours in Christ  
Rev Mthr Monica Eunice Cameron

## **Report from the Church Wardens – Doreen Ives & Natalie Slator**

Such an odd year let us hope that we never have to experience another one like it.

Our congregation in church has been small this year caused by the COVID 19 restrictions as lot of our congregation have spent most of it shielding, watching our services online. We did not compile a new Sidesperson rota from April as Doreen and I have been able to cope with the smaller numbers. Now we have the promise of the return to a normal existence we will be asking for people to volunteer so that we can form a rota again.

The broken window has been repaired also the wall painting was repaired and renovated just in time for the Christmas Tree Festival. It is unfortunate that two of the paintings on the North side have started to lift away from the wall, so we are now looking to obtain a faculty to repair them and also to clean and repair where necessary the painting on the brickwork. A thorough search for grants to pay for it all lies ahead. I have been taking with the firm who did the conservation work in 2005 but Mrs. Grenville has been ill, given up work for the present and has moved down to the south coast.

The quinquennial repairs that we were able to pay for with the help of the Archdeacon have been completed and we are hopeful that the path on the south side of the church leading to the car park will soon be brought up to standard. Covid has brought a lot of work to a standstill and it has been difficult for our contractor to get a team who can work together.

This Christmas we replaced the lock of the door in the North Transept with 2 new locks so that we can use it as a fire door. It was used as the exit at the Christmas Tree Festival so that we could keep the church in line with safety guidelines and not have people crossing too close to each other.

Our greatest money saving by far has been made by Doreen's industrious search through charities as she has found one that refunds VAT to listed buildings. Her claims to this charity have saved us thousands of pounds.

Continuing with the need to watch our finances carefully we have decided to change our electricity suppliers to Bulb and trying to get smart meters fitted to stop having estimated bills which have resulted in inflated invoices. We are expecting Bulb's costs to be less and therefore more beneficial to us.

Chris Wakeman is improving the hall curtain fittings to make them more secure and to make curtain opening and closing smoother. We will have wooden support poles and wooden rings on the curtains themselves. We are also washing all the curtains and lengthening them. Joan and Grace are helping us with the machining necessary to redo the hems.

## **Report from the Secretary - Claire Perkins**

With the Covid-19 lockdown the Parochial Church Council (PCC) continued to meet but switched from in person to virtual meetings on Zoom. This worked well and the upside of lockdown is that with less conflicting arrangements attendance improved. The Standing

Committee continued to meet on alternate months from the full PCC.

With advice from the Diocese for the APCM to be delayed, instead of the usual April meeting this was switched to October. In a first for Christ Church the meeting was held both in person in church and broadcast via Zoom so that it was fully inclusive.

The following officers were elected by the PCC for 2020:

- Chair of PCC – Mother Monica Cameron
- Vice Chair of PCC – Doreen Ives
- Secretary – Claire Perkins
- Treasurer – Gwen Fayemi

We were delighted that Natalie Slator and Doreen Ives continued as Church Wardens.

The working groups remain as the Social Committee, Hall Committee, Christmas Tree Festival Committee, Friends of Christ Church Erith (FOCCE) and a Media/Magazine Committee.

### **Electoral Roll – Davison Simbagegavi, Electoral Roll officer**

It's been a very difficult year for us all due to the pandemic caused by covid and as such for almost an entire year and ongoing it has not been possible for the Church to open its doors to bring in regular worshippers and or attract new members to the fore due to lockdown restrictions.

During the course of this reporting year the Church lost four of its regular members, namely Mr. Jonathan Reid, Mrs. Andrea Lynn Reid, Ms. Eugenia L.M. Clarke and Retired Major Alex Shobowale who, all, sadly passed away. Our heartfelt condolences to their families and friends. May their souls continue to rest in Eternal Glory.

The number of Church members on the register has therefore gown down by four and we now have one hundred and seventeen (117). Without physical attendance in Church that is ongoing due to lockdowns it has been an impossibility to ascertain if any other members might have left or moved to other parts of the country or overseas.

### **Outlook**

With the continued roll out of the government vaccination program and easing of lockdown restrictions soon it is hoped the Church will be opening the doors soon to welcome worshippers both old and new and hopefully our membership might begin to increase again.



## **Report from the Deanery Synod Secretary - Sylvia McLean & Okechukwu Iwuagwu**

This annual report was compiled and prepared from the Minutes of the Deanery meeting held on 7 December 2020. Unfortunately, none of the Deanery Representatives were present at this meeting.

Matters arising are outlined below: -

Hearing God's Word / Speaking God's Word: This course was not finished due to Covid-19 and will re-launch on Zoom in February 2021. There will be a recap at the start of the course to enable new people to join the course. No further update on this so far.

Dates of the sessions are:

Hearing God's Word Mon 1st, 15th and 22nd February 1st, 15th and 22nd March.

Speaking God's Word Monday 19th and 26th April 3rd, 17th and 24th May, and 7th June.

The Spring Concert featuring Belvedere Concert Band at St Peter's, Bexleyheath did not go ahead because of Covid-19.

Elections were held and officers elected.

Linda Dowell - Deanery Secretary and David Baldwin - Treasurer

House of Clergy Representatives elected to standing committee are: Rev. Gordon MacBean, Rev. Trevor Wyatt and Rev. Jim Bennett. Rev Jim Bennett was also elected as Deputy Secretary.

House of Laity Representatives elected to standing committee are: Peter Green, Linda Dowell and David Baldwin.

Guest speakers for the Next Deanery meeting.

Abi Hiscock, the Called to Grow advisor will be invited to speak.

Then Billy-Jo O'Leary from Home for Good. Billy-Jo advised that Home for Good have partnered with Bexley Borough Fostering Services which will be an opportunity to equip, inspire and resource church members to the need for more foster carers. There are currently no beds available in the Bexley borough, Covid-19 has resulted in a 200% increase in demand, so they have to outsource.

Dates and venues for the next Erith Deanery Synod Meetings are Wednesday 28th April 2021 at Christchurch Bexleyheath and Thursday 1st July 2021 at St John's Welling.

## **Anna Ministry Report - Funmi Makanju LLM Christ Church Erith Anna Chaplain**

The team is currently made up of 1 Anna Chaplin and 4 Anna Friends, Euclid, Sophia, Margaret and Dayo respectively. Of the four three have completed the DBS checks. Margaret Oluniyi will complete hers when she returns to the UK. All the Anna friends understand the need to have the necessary checks completed before they can engage with the clients.

Since the pandemic, we have stopped attending Meyer House. we are in contact with the staff checking on the residents and carers. Fortunately, none of the deaths in 2020 were due to Covid.

### **Individuals**

Before the lockdown the Anna ministry was involved in providing support and prayers for late Major Shobowale and Lynn Reid who both sadly passed on and have since been buried and cremated respectively.

Despite the pandemic we are still in touch with the lonely and vulnerable and have continued to stay in touch with them. where we have had concerns, individuals have been flagged up to Rev Monica for guidance as to how to deal with the individual situations.

Before the pandemic we had done some home, visits attending to those who cannot attend church or who have requested to see the Anna Chaplain. One of our parishioners is still currently abroad due to lack of family support here. Funmi is in touch with the resident who is looking forward to returning to the UK soon after the COVID 19.

### **Future**

The vision is that we engage with other churches and provide a support for them.

The memory loss group has commenced and is being managed and led by Jacki Clement and Angie Penn. This is being funded by the dioceses. the purpose of this group is to create an opportunity for the clients to feel Gods love and presence as they engage in art and crafts activities with an opportunity to attend and participate in the church premises.

Due to the pandemic this has only been possible vis ZOOM. Now the team need to advertise and reach out to the parish at large so that more people who have the need for this opportunity can engage.

Meyer house have been approached to attend the memory loss group. They stated they had issues with linking up via zoom. They will revisit this when the opportunity arises. The activities they attended on they alleged was not one the residents were interested in. we will work with them and find out what they would like so that we can arrange if possible, to have something interesting for them. They are happy for us to continue to have the monthly service of the word.

Funmi is liaising with Ms. Burton Jones on a celebration with residents at Meyer House after the pandemic on a date to be agreed.

We are endeavouring to embrace other churches in the parish with a joint approach in supporting our elderly and vulnerable residents.

The BAME project is still to be revisited probably after the pandemic. The conversation is still on going.

This is a fulfilling ministry which we hope will grow.

### **Hall Report - Ayodeji Akande, Hall Manager**

Due to Covid-19 restrictions and government guidelines which led to a national lockdown, our regular hirers and occasional hirers were notified that the hall will be closed.

After the national lockdown was lifted, we partially opened the hall for regular hirers. They had to carry out a risk assessment and adhere to the Government guidelines especially around the following.

- Social distancing
- Wearing of face mask
- Washing of hands
- Separate exit and entry door
- Use of a sanitising station.

We appointed a temporary cleaner for the days the hall was in use.

We had to close the hall for a second time due to lockdown 2.0. Due to the lockdown, one of our long-term serving group, line dancing group, made a difficult decision to cancel their bookings and won't be coming back to the hall post lockdown. On behalf of the PCC, I wish to express our gratitude for the many years they spent with us.

The revenue generated by the hall has been massively affected due to the fact that there has been no Saturday booking and the regular weekday booking has also affected by the lockdown.

The following work was carried out when lockdown was lifted,

- Hall redecorating by Community payback.
- Major roof repairs by Ellan Gray.

We went through a tender process for the hall roof repairs and awarded the contract to Ellan Gray who has completed phase 1 of the work. Phase 2 will commence shortly.

For the reopening of the hall, we plan to embark on the following work program

- Replacement of the hall lights to LED
- Install waterless or push button for urinals to save on our water bills. We are waiting on the contractor to install push button urinals.

- Chris Wakeman and the Church wardens have scheduled some time to replace the curtain rails in the hall. A big thank you for taking this forward.

Please see below for the fees the year 2020 / 2021

Hours / Hire Type	Hall Fees
11am - 11pm (12Hrs) All Day Hire	£695
2pm – 11pm (9Hrs) Evening Hire	£575
12 – 7pm (7Hrs) Afternoon Hire	£400
8am – 2pm (6Hrs) Morning Hire	£300

The regular hirers fees also remain the same for the year.

I wish to express my gratitude to the committee members for their continued support.

### **Report from the Bellinger's – Natalie Slator, Tower Captain**

It is a shame that this year as we have not been able to attend our usual practice night sessions on Monday evenings since the first lockdown in March last year. We have all missed them, but we have rung for a few weeks on Sunday mornings between the first lockdown and Tier 4 last November. Because of the restrictions we could not normally ring on 6 bells as we would have been standing too close to each other, but sometimes when our married couples were able to be there they could stand closer together and ring adjacent bells so we managed 5 and on one occasion 6.

Due to health and safety concerns we always have two people in the tower when any work is being carried out or a bell is rung. Shirley and Tom have kept us going, when we were given permission to ring, on one or two bells for special occasions such as VE Day and Remembrance Sunday. Both Tom and Les have worked on the bells making sure the ropes are in good condition and all moving parts are able to move freely.

I am hoping that it will not be too long now before we are given permission to ring again and can get back to our training programme before our learners have filled their time with other hobbies.

Apart from looking after the bells and keeping them working safely we have taken on the church clock which kept stopping last year and seem to have persuaded it to keep going. It does however need to be corrected periodically. It is unfortunate that through this lockdown when the church was closed it lost 10 minutes but we have corrected it again and will keep a close eye on it. Les with Liz in attendance has changed all the lights in the clock faces with LED which will keep costs down.

It is a hobby that keeps giving! Absorbing, helps with fitness (especially climbing the 34 tower steps to the ringing room), co-ordination, lots of ringing patters to learn (we call them methods), it has a nationwide association which means that you are given the opportunity to ring in various churches in our area, also all over the country. It is also very a very inclusive society; I have never met anyone who has not been welcoming and helpful. If you are interested in learning please contact me. My phone number is in the magazine and I am in church on Sundays.

### **Report from Kids Club and Toddler Worship – Jacki Clement**

Keeping our children and young people engaged throughout lockdown remains a priority. Both Kids Club and Toddler Worship are running online only and will continue to do so until safe to meet in person without restrictions, effectively this means we should be able to meet physically by the end of June.

Both sessions are pre-recorded and posted to Facebook, the Church Whats App group and YouTube weekly.

The sessions include a prayer, a reading and an activity which can be easily done in the home with available resources.

The parents receive an email at the end of the week with details of what the activities will require.

Kids Club has an average of 18 views weekly and an average feedback of 2.

Toddler Worship has an average of 5 views weekly, poor feedback of activities but verbal feedback is encouraging.

In addition, the Children's Crib service was posted online and had 354 views on Facebook and YouTube, the most popular video we have done.

Plans to restart physical meeting are laid out and we are hopeful this will be achieved as soon as safe.

### **Report from Powerhouse Youth Club – Patricia Iwuagwu**

The Youth Club remains closed due to the Covid 19 Pandemic.

Three zoom quiz nights were organised for 11- to 20-year-olds via zoom in August, September and October 2020. The youths of powerhouse YC were invited to attend and also asked to invite their friends. The attendance was good, for August and September but the October had just one attending, and our youths enjoyed the quiz nights.

Nothing specific has been done since then, however family quiz nights via zoom have been organised by Mother Monica and Jacki Clement the Christ Church Erith (CCE) project worker. This has been advertised on CCE social media handles including Powerhouse Youth Club Whats App group.

At present I have no information on when Powerhouse YC is likely to resume. But presume this would be monitored in line with the covid 19 pandemic situation.

### **Safeguarding Children Annual Report – Jacki Clement, Safeguarding Children Lead**

No reports of any safeguarding concerns have been reported to me over the past year.

## **Choir Report – Heather Taylor**

This has been our quietest year ever thanks to Covid 19. Unfortunately, we have not sung as a full choir since last March when lock down was imposed.

We did no singing for 3/4 months until lockdown was eased and we were allowed a limited number of choristers following strict covid guidelines.

I was able to quickly get 5 of our older established members who were missing their worship and singing as much as I was and were eager to return but Mother Monica pointed out that we could accommodate 6 choristers in the choir stalls within these restrictions so Sylvia using the information provided by myself and Mother Monica would contact other members for their availability on certain Sundays. We were only singing the hymns but it was a start. A carol Service was hoped for at Christmas but unfortunately circumstances prevented that. Midnight Mass at Christmas was sung joyfully but then in January churches were closed again.

We now await the outcome of the Government exit strategy to see if we will be celebrating Easter in church.

Thank you to all Choir members for their patience and loyalty during such a difficult time.

## **Parish Magazine Report – Paul Hyde, Editor**

### **Overview**

- Report covers September 2020 to March 2021 due to the late ending of the previous year.
- Best-selling edition was December 2020 which sold about 40 copies in total.
- Circulation was severely affected by COVID-19.
- Advertising also affected.

### **Subscriptions**

The number of persons subscribing to the magazine has remained broadly similar to those for the previous year:

Year (April – March)	Hand delivered	Postal	By email/PDF
2019/20	6	2	0
2020/1	5	3	2

### **Advertising**

This year, I have temporarily discontinued the advertising section until life returns to some semblance of normality. I hope to resume advertising and hence the advertiser income from April.

### **COVID-19**

During this year sales of the magazine have been severely reduced due to the pandemic. The church was closed from early January until 7 March, making sales of hard copies impossible. At other times, attendances at our services have been much reduced with consequences for magazine sales. In addition to subscriptions, the magazine historically sells about 50 copies

each month. Except for January/February, this figure dropped to 20-25 during this year, although thanks to the Christmas Tree Festival, the December edition sold about 35 copies. Due to a lack of material for inclusion in the magazine at the dawn of the new year, there was a combined edition for January and February, published in early February. A very limited number of printed copies were produced for the handful of subscribers living close to the church. This edition was otherwise circulated by email and contained an appeal to contribute at least the cover price to church funds by bank transfer. I have no info on the extent to which this appeal was successful.

All editions during this year contained a summary of COVID related general advice and restrictions as announced by the Government, in addition to the normal parochial fare.

### **General content**

There have been no significant developments in the “look and feel” of the magazine, nor the scope of its contents, during this period.

My sincere thanks to the few parishioners of have sent me articles and other material which has been included in the magazine over the last year. My role as Editor is to compile and collate these into a consistent format so as to produce a unified magazine each month. Once again, I have myself contributed at least one article each month.

### **Pew Sheet**

During the January/February lockdown, the Pew Sheet was expanded to include the Order of Service and hymn lyrics, for the assistance of the “online” congregation. It was circulated electronically together with Zoom joining instructions each week.

## **Report from the Erith Christmas Tree Festival - Claire Perkins**

A Go/No Go decision for the 2020 event needed to be taken in August, which was challenging given we could not predict how the lockdown situation would be in the months ahead but after careful consideration it was decided the event could take place with necessary precautions. Another factor was that following the long-awaited installation of the toilets in the Porch, a change to our usual layout was required.

Every precaution was taken to make the event Covid secure – tree numbers reduced from 80 to 50, we employed a security guard to control entry to the festival, had track and trace (via both the NHS app with a QR code and manual), multiple hand sanitisers on entry, a one-way system and lots of posters advising people to wear masks and observe social distancing requirements.

The Charity Fair, evening concert and carol concert did not take place this year, but we were honoured to host the Mayor who enjoyed his visit.

The print order for posters and flyers were cancelled, so the only advertisement was in the Parish magazine, word of mouth and Facebook. We did have a steady flow of visitors, but numbers in church were considerably down on previous years, the plus side of this was that social distancing was maintained and there were never sufficient visitors in church to mean a

queue outside.

Thanks as always go to David Fitch for providing and installing all the electronic equipment during the weekend and to Danielle and Darryl Mercer at Bexley Garden Centre

Attendance by the church congregation as visitors and volunteers was very low, possibly due to Covid. It really does need to be addressed as the work falls on the few. Whilst I am happy to remain on the committee, it would be good to see a new Chair with fresh enthusiasm and ideas to take the festival forwards.

Given the reduction in visitors, bucket collections were down on previous years, but we were delighted to be able to make a donation of £100 to the Greenwich and Bexley Community Hospice in addition to making a donation to Church funds.

### **Report from Friends of Christ Church Erith (FOCCE) – Doreen Ives**

The Church closure due to the pandemic has allowed Christ Church to proceed with building a brand-new toilet block in the West Porch along with continuous ramped entrance into the main body of the Church. We have one large toilet suitable for those in wheelchairs or with other needs, one toilet with baby change facilities and a further small general toilet. The finish of the block is beautifully in keeping with our 2\* listed building and each toilet has its own stained-glass window. We have new carpet in the West Porch and I know everyone will be so pleased with the improvement of our special historic Erith landmark. The architects have issued their completion certificate so now all we are waiting for is permission for people to gather in the Church for services as normal and then we will arrange for a suitable opening ceremony when we will unveil a plaque noting the event. The Mayor of Bexley has asked to be invited to attend the ceremony and Mother Monica has also suggested we ask the Bishop of Rochester to be present. We shall have to see who can be available. Toilets are a funny subject for an opening ceremony but all those who have had to run round to the Church Hall in bad weather for such facilities, will agree, having them in the Church is a much-awaited asset which will enable us to take forward the planned exciting outreach programme funded by the SDF funding, secured by Mother Monica.

### **A few facts and figures for you.**

The design was done by Thomas Ford and Partners, Chartered Architects and Surveyors who also managed the project. The Installation was done by Ellan Gray Contractors Limited. Health and Safety matters by Pierce Hill Project Services Limited.



The total costs were:	£
Thomas Ford	7,419.00
Ellan Gray	42,146.00
PHPS	995.00
 TOTAL	 £50,560.00

We were very much helped with the expense by charitable grants from

Marshalls Charity (£20,000),  
 Friends of Kent Churches (£5,000),  
 Congregational and General Charity (£7,300)  
 Allchurches Trust (£2,300).  
 Listed Places of Worship Grant Scheme (This repaid all VAT included on the invoices)

The balance was provided from FOCCE membership fees and donations supplemented by community participation in fund-raising activities organised by FOCCE and members of the Christ Church congregation. Tremendous thanks go to everyone who has made this happen.

**Please become a member of FOCCE. Your support will make future projects happen.**

### **Social committee Report – Funmi Mekanju and Marlene Elugande**

This has been a very quiet year due to the pandemic.

#### **Latest Developments**

1. We look forward to the opportunity of having our Easter celebrations if restrictions are lifted and such interactions agreed by the government.
2. The social committee still has need to have a designated storage space as we have all our items in various corners in the church hall. Some are currently being kept in individual homes.
3. The social committee has acquired many items which can now be rented out for a token sum to assist the committee be self-sufficient and a 10% of profit paid to the church. Now we are liaising with the church treasurer in maintaining our account for transparency and accountability.
4. We look forward to appointing a lead for this committee when things resume back to normality.

**Report from Christ Church (Erith) Church of England Primary School**  
**– Diane Khanna, Chair of Governors**

‘God’s children, your children, our children.  
Creatively Learning Together’

In March 2020, schools in England closed to all but children of key workers and vulnerable children. This was in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and the wider lockdown of society and business. At Christ Church (Erith) Church of England Primary School like other schools we followed the same guidelines, only open to vulnerable and key worker children. Throughout this time our Principal and senior leadership team have made vital decisions about keeping the school safe for its children and staff, as well as decisions about pupils’ education in the interim. It has also ensured that vulnerable children have been and continue to be cared for working with staff at Bexley Local Authority. The support of the Trinitas Academy Trust has been a strong constant in these challenging times.

The rapid move to home and online remote learning when pupils were not in school has made governors begin thinking about children’s experiences of learning remotely. Inequality of access to digital media and quality of online teaching and activities were key concerns. However, the Principal and Senior Team have done sterling work to ensure that children do have access to the right IT equipment to close potential disadvantage. Staff have also had opportunities to develop and enhance their technical knowledge, to deliver high quality home school learning.

The work of governance in the immediate response to the crisis involved rapidly adapting to new challenges using web-based video conferencing. What is clear from our ‘virtual visits’ are that children’s spirituality is being taken care of through collective worship both online and in school. Collective worship is an effective outworking of our school’s Christian vision and values, that serves to express and deepen the spirituality of the school. Prayer areas are still in place in school and in use, with ‘catch ups’ planned for pupils learning about world faiths in a creative way. We also give thanks for the work of Christ Church Erith leading on spiritual guidance and service especially during this special time coming up to Easter.

Parents are very appreciative of the work done by teaching and support staff over this challenging time.

As we prepare to reopen our school again just before Easter, our main priority for our children and school community is wellbeing. We are confident in the school’s leadership and staff that we will once more return to being a very happy school, where children, staff, families and the Diocese work together to provide an exciting and caring learning environment. We know that the school in conjunction with the Trust will work hard to support children’s catch-up learning. As governors we too are looking forward to being able to get back into school and seeing the children flourish.

## **Report from Men in Sheds – Emily Willey**

Coronavirus restrictions during 2020/21 disrupted Men in Sheds project activity. In person sessions at the primary shed workshop were suspended between 17<sup>th</sup> March- 12<sup>th</sup> July 2020 and suspended again from 4<sup>th</sup> January 2021. Despite this, project activity has remained throughout with both in person and digital provision.

### **Output- 54 men's shed sessions run at primary workshop at Christ Church Erith 01/04/20 - 31/03/21**

Sessions from July 2020 had infection control measures in place which meant activity was limited to outdoors and had restrictions on group size. Despite these challenges, member activity included peer-led support groups, initiating and designing a garden space, and a complete revamp of the inside project space.

### **Output- 45 digital sessions delivered 01/05/20 - 15/03/21**

A weekly zoom coffee morning with lively discussion and games started in May 2020. Although in person activity resumed in July 2020, the digital session continued throughout the year at the service user's request. This allowed those who were in isolation or nervous of leaving their homes to have some access to the project every week.

### **Feedback from members in December 2020, when asked about the support they had received from the project during the pandemic:**

"The shed has helped quite a lot actually, it's given me a focus, it gets me out of the house for the time I come down here. And the camaraderie and the friendship you get here is excellent. All worth it." Mr S

"If it wasn't for the shed, I would just be sitting in doors doing nothing, it gets me out for a few hours. I really enjoy it." Mr W

"The shed has help me a lot because its therapy for me because I've got prostate cancer. Coming here makes me feel a lot better, it's the camaraderie. Everyone sits and talks about different things and I find it helps me a lot" -Mr P

## **Report from Beavers and Scouts – Eve Ives**

The Beavers have had contact through emails and have been set challenges and badgework, the Cubs have had some Zoom meetings and the Scouts have been contacted but have not participated in meetings. Some of the Explorer Scouts meet each Friday on Zoom but, as with all Sections, have not been able to meet together. All Sections made the stars to decorate our tree at the Christmas Tree Festival in December. We are hoping that we can get back to face to face Scouting in the near future.

**ERITH CHRIST CHURCH**  
**STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2020**

	Note	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2020 £	Total Funds 2019 £
<b>Income and endowments</b>					
Voluntary income	2	49,425	65,671	115,096	67,203
Activities for generating funds	3	24,269	-	24,269	51,306
Investment income	4	4,781	-	4,781	80
<b>Total income</b>		<b>78,474</b>	<b>65,671</b>	<b>144,145</b>	<b>118,589</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>					
Charitable activities	5	73,079	77,455	150,534	106,441
<b>Total expenditure</b>		<b>73,079</b>	<b>77,455</b>	<b>150,534</b>	<b>106,441</b>
<b>Net income/(expenditure)</b>		<b>5,395</b>	<b>(11,784)</b>	<b>(6,389)</b>	<b>12,148</b>
<b>Transfers between funds</b>		(3,333)	3,333	-	-
		2,062	(8,451)	(6,389)	12,148
<b>Net movement in funds</b>		<b>2,062</b>	<b>(8,451)</b>	<b>(6,389)</b>	<b>12,148</b>
<b>Reconciliation of funds:</b>					
Total funds brought forward		25,808	19,721	45,530	33,382
<b>Total funds carried forward</b>		<b>27,871</b>	<b>11,270</b>	<b>39,141</b>	<b>45,530</b>

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year.

All income and expenditure derive from continuing operations.

The notes on the pages following form part of these accounts.

Charity number: 1133966

**Christ Church Erith**  
**Annual report and financial statements of the Parochial Church Council**  
**for the year ended 31 December 2020**

## Christ Church Erith

### Contents

	Page
Legal and administrative information	1 - 2
Trustees report	3 - 5
Independent examiners' report	6
Statement of financial activities	7
Balance sheet	8
Notes to the financial statements	9 – 17

## **Christ Church Erith**

### **Legal and administrative information**

The full name of the parish is The Ecclesiastical Parish of Christ Church Erith

Charity registration number      1133966

Church address                      The Vicarage Victoria Road Erith Kent DA8 3AN

### **PCC members**

Chair	Mother Monica Cameron
Vice Chair	Doreen Ives
LLM	Funmi Makanju
Ordinand in training	Eucharua Asiegbu
Project Worker	Jacki Clement
Wardens	Doreen Ives
	Diana (Natalie) Slator
Deanery Synod Rep	Sylvia McLean
	Okechukwu Iwuagwu
Treasurer	Gwen Fayemi
Secretary	Claire Perkins
Elected Members	Ayodeji Akande
	Gloria Asiegbu
	Gwen Fayemi
	Paul Hyde
	Patricia Iwaugwu
	Claire Perkins
	Davison Simbagegavi
	Sarah Sweet
	Ed Sage (To July 2020)

## **Christ Church Erith**

### **Legal and administrative information**

Independent Examiner	Martyn Burt ACMA CGMA Adventus Accounting Solutions Ashby Acres Chapel Lane Ashby-cum-Fenby Grimsby DN37 0QT
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Bankers	HSBC Bank High Street Dartford Kent DA1 1DG
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## **Christ Church Erith**

### **Annual Report of the Parochial Church Council for the year ended 31 December 2020**

The Trustees of the Parochial Church Council present their report and the financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2020. The Trustees who served during the year and up to the date of this report are listed on page 1.

### **Structure, governance and management**

The Parochial Church Council (PCC) is a charity registered with the Charity Commission under number 1133966. The method of appointment of PCC members is set out in the church representation rules. All church attendees are encouraged to register on the electoral roll and stand for election to the PCC.

### **Objectives and activities**

Christ Church Erith PCC has the responsibility in promoting in the ecclesiastical parish the whole mission of the church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical.

It also has maintenance responsibilities for the church and community hall at Christ Church, Victoria Road, Erith.

### **Review of the year**

The Parochial Church Council (PCC) continued to meet during the Covid-19 lockdown switching to online Zoom meetings instead of in person. The Standing Committee continued to meet on alternate months from the full PCC.

Meetings were well attended, and in-depth discussions took place about many different issues. It was a particularly challenging year for the PCC having to investigate an aged matter regarding Church Finances, this prompted a number of extra ordinary meetings in addition to the scheduled bi-monthly meetings.

Regular reports were received from our working groups on their aims and achievements through the year.

The following officers were elected by the PCC for the year:

- Chair of PCC - Mother Monica Cameron
- Vice Chair of PCC - Doreen Ives
- Secretary - Claire Perkins
- Treasurer - Gwen Fayemi

The Diocesan safeguarding policy was fully adopted by this parish.

## **Financial review**

As with all churches the financial situation for our church has been severely affected by the closure of church for a major part of the year due to the Covid-19 lockdowns.

Total income for the year was £144,100 (2019: £118,600) of which £60,300 was from various grants (2019: £5,500). We are grateful to all our donors and those organisations, including the FOCCE, who have contributed generously to the church.

Throughout the year the Hall, the main source of income, has not been available for hire as in previous years and this has had a major effect on income with a reduction to £15,600 (2019: £35,300).

Every effort is being made to encourage the use of online giving, either directly into the Churches bank account or via the givalittle, and the easyfundraising, online portals.

Churches were invited to apply for grants of £5,000, on a needs basis, from the diocese to help with paying utility bills. Our Treasurer made applications on behalf of the PCC and we were successful, also making claims under gift aid where possible which is now up to date. We are still unable to pay our Parish offer, as calculated by the Diocese, with the PCC having to continue to negotiate monthly payments with the Diocese. We are fortunate, however, to have the Rant Bequest, currently held by the diocese, which generated £4,600 in investment income, which has been used to contribute towards our Parish offer, the total finally given in the year being £12,800 (2019: £9,000).

On a positive note, we received a grant of £10,000 from the Archdeacon to help with the quinquennial repairs in church and that has now been completed. We also received from the Archdeacon a grant of £5,000 toward the cost of repairs to the Hall roof. Every effort is also being made to recover VAT charges whenever possible, on works done in or on our Church a listed building.

There has been other repair works in Church that needed to be financed and the work has been completed supported by insurance claim and charities' grant in covering the policy excess.

The Toilets in the West Porch has been completed funded by FOCCE and successful applications for grants to various Charities, applications made by the Chair of FOCCE. The total cost of the work in the year, including fees, was £50,400.

The Verger, Choir and Bells fees have remained unchanged, fees for weddings and funerals have increased in line with the Church of England fees table. Almost all the weddings that would have taken place were cancelled due to Covid-19 restrictions and it has affected our income.

Total expenditure for the year was £150,500 (2019: £106,400), and apart from the Toilet project referred to above, we spent a further £26,600 on repairs (2019: nil), £21,500 on church running expenses (2019: £15,100), and £22,700 on hall expenses (2019: £35,400).

## **Reserves policy**

It is the PCC's policy to maintain a balance on unrestricted funds (if possible) which equates to approximately 3 months unrestricted payments, to cover emergency situations that may arise from time to time. This amounts to a figure of around £18,000. The amount at the end of 2020 was £18,400, so only just above this figure; the PCC acknowledges that it has been difficult to maintain this policy during 2020 but is taking steps to improve this position.

These accounts have been prepared on a going concern basis as the members believe that the Church will have sufficient funds to meet its operating costs in the next 12 months from the date of approval of the accounts.

### **Risk management policy**

The PCC has considered the major risks which it faces. In its opinion, the PCC has established systems which, under normal conditions, should allow those risks to be mitigated to an acceptable level in its day-to-day operations.

### **Statement of the Trustees' responsibilities**

The Trustees of the PCC are responsible for preparing the PCC Annual Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

Law applicable to charities in England and Wales requires the PCC's Trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the charity and of the incoming resources and application of resources of the charity for that year. In preparing these financial statements, the PCC's Trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable UK Accounting Standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements; and
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in operation.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Charities Act 2011. The Trustees are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the PCC and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

This report was approved by the PCC on ....., and signed on its behalf by

Mother Monica Cameron, Vicar .....

Gwen Fayemi – Treasurer .....

22 march 2021

**Independent Examiner's report to the Member/Trustees  
of Christ Church Erith**

I report on the accounts for the year ended 31 December 2020 which are set out on the pages following.

**Respective responsibilities of the Trustees and Independent Examiner**

The church's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The church's trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 144(2) of the Charities Act 2011 (the 2011 Act) and that an independent examination is needed.

**It is my responsibility to**

- Examine the accounts under section 145 of the 2011 Act;
- Follow the procedures laid down in the General Directions given by the Charity Commissioners section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act; and
- State whether particular matters have come to my attention.

**Basis of Independent Examiner's Statement**

My examination was carried out in accordance with the General Directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from the trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair view' and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

**Independent Examiner's statement**

Since the gross income for the year exceeds the amount provided in section 143(3) of the Act, I confirm that I am qualified to act as an Independent Examiner under the provisions of that section of the Act and that my qualifications are set out as below.

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

- 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; or
- to prepare accounts which accord with these accounting records have not been met; or
- to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Yours sincerely



Martyn Burt B.Sc.(Hons), ACMA, CGMA

adventus accounting solutions

Ashby Acres Chapel Lane

Ashby-cum-Fenby Grimsby DN37 0QT

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