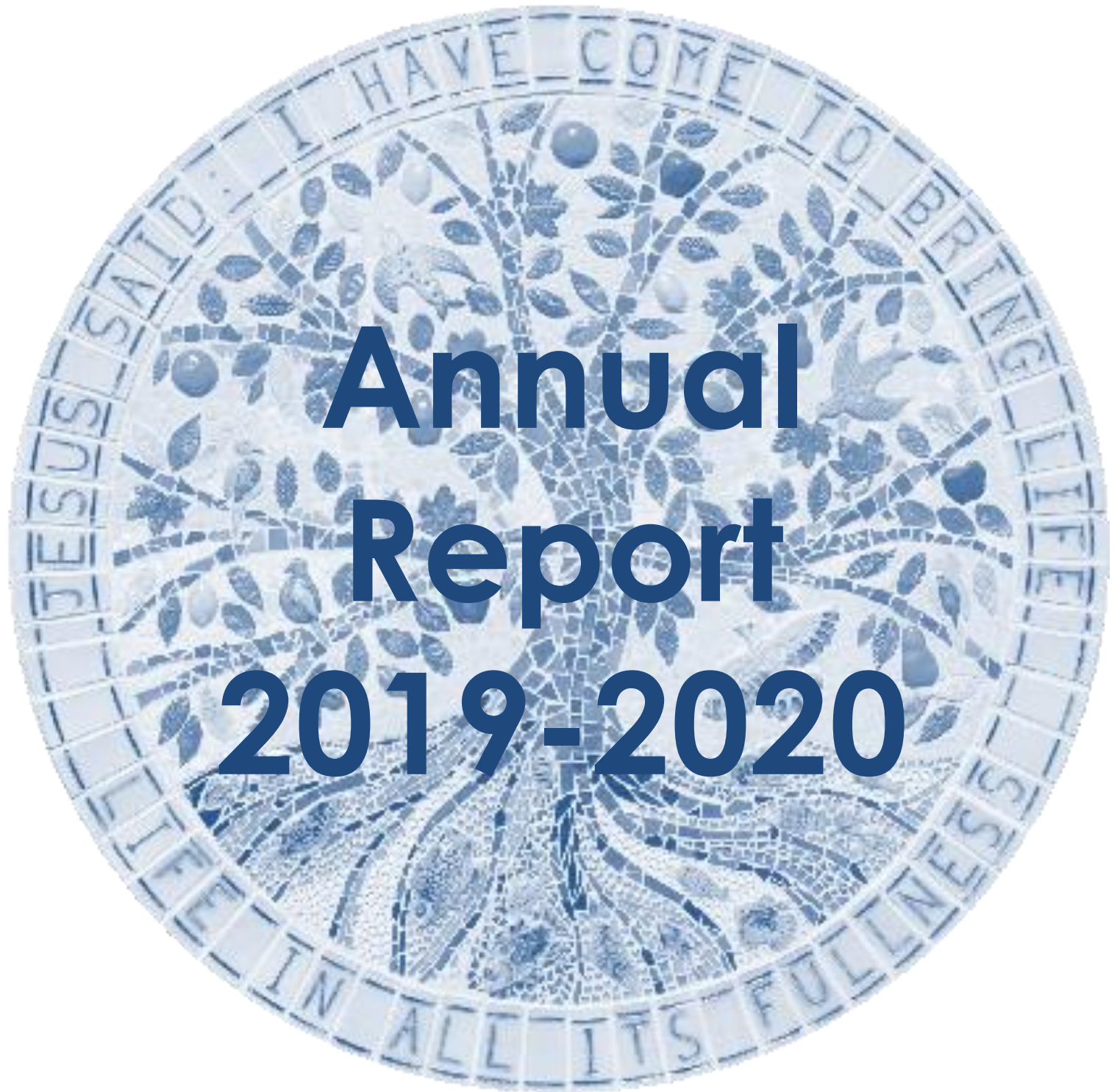




Christ
Church
Orpington



Annual Report 2019-2020

THE ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING
will take place at Christ Church on Sunday 11th October 2020
immediately after the morning service

Annual Meeting of Parishioners

1. Apologies for absence
2. Minutes (already circulated) and matters arising
3. Election of Churchwardens
4. Appointment of Deputy Wardens

Annual Parochial Church Meeting

1. Minutes (already circulated) and matters arising
2. Electoral Roll report.
3. Annual report for the year 2019-20 (already circulated), incorporating:
Secretary's report on the work of the PCC;
Report of the proceedings of the Deanery Synod;
4. **Election of:**
 - (i) Deanery Synod representatives
 - (ii) PCC representatives
5. **Treasurer's report and appointment of Auditor**
6. **Any other business**

PCC Secretary's report to the APCM 2019-20

The outbreak of Coronavirus and the closure of the church building also interrupted the work of the PCC. Before March 2020 the PCC held five meetings. At its first meeting on 13 May the PCC appointed the Finance, Fabric and Human Resources Committees and was grateful for regular reports from these committees.

The PCC monitored the church's finances throughout the year, including setting a budget for 2020 and approving the accounts for 2019. The PCC was grateful to the congregation for its extremely generous giving on Gift Day 2019.

The PCC has been engaged on three major projects. First, the PCC has received a Quinquennial Report on the state of the church building. Many of the recommendations simply need some DIY, cleaning or clearing out. However, it is also recommended that in 4-5 years' time the whole of the church's interior should be redecorated, and that could cost £30,000.

Secondly, the PCC has discussed a proposition from Churches Together in Orpington that local churches should provide a shelter for homeless people, with the possibility that Christ Church would provide sleeping accommodation in the Undercroft. The PCC was ready to consult the congregation if there was a firm proposal, but the proposition is at present in abeyance.

Thirdly, the church's tech equipment badly needed replacing. Mike Bailey gave the PCC a list of the problems and helped to develop a specification. The PCC agreed to spend £30,000.

The congregation has been kept informed of all these developments through reports in the weekly noticesheet.

Safeguarding

The PCC remains committed to safeguarding all children, young people and vulnerable adults within its care. At its first meeting, the PCC adopted the House of Bishops' "Promoting a Safer Church; safeguarding statement", and a poster about this is on display in the café. All PCC members have passed scrutiny under the Disclosure and Barring Scheme (DBS). The PCC appointed Kate Munro as Parish Safeguarding Officer and Jennie Mapp as Lead Recruiter in charge of DBS applications. A Basic Awareness course open to the whole church was held in February 2019, with Andrena Palmer and Andy Goddard as trainers.

Appointment of Youth Minister

The PCC was grateful to its Human Resources Committee for carrying out a thorough recruitment exercise to recruit a full-time youth worker to replace

Andrena Palmer. The post was awarded to Andi Smith, who had already volunteered to cover youth work after Kim Curle's temporary appointment ended on 26 April 2020. The PCC was grateful for the hard work and devotion shown by both Andrena and Kim.

During the lockdown the PCC has made decisions by email. In particular, the PCC agreed to award to Wildfire the contract for the new sound system. And, in accordance with church law, there was consultation between Vicar and PCC to agree new patterns of church services in summer 2020, with no services up to the end of August but a resumption of services in September.

Don Bower
PCC Secretary

Electoral Roll

Roger Wilkinson, Electoral Roll Officer, reported that, since the full-scale revision of the electoral roll in 2019, the number on the roll had fallen from 184 to 177. 2 people had been added, 6 had moved away, and 3 had died: our dear friends Ann Bisset, Olwen Norwood and Eve Pyatt had gone to be with the Lord.

Of the 177, 105 (or 59.32 per cent) were female, and 72 (or 40.68 per cent) were male. 86 (or 48.59 per cent) lived in the parish and 91 (or 51.41 per cent) were non-resident.

Hall Bookings (written before lockdown)

For the most part of this year there has been little change with those that regularly hire out our facilities. This has therefore provided a steady regular income stream for the Church. There has been some expansion for our long-standing hirers including the Pilates class and some additions with Counselling sessions and Study classes.

Our team expansion with opening and closing the halls has continued to work well and has provided a degree of flexibility for all those involved as we work together. Our main caretaking team has again been an excellent asset to the Church, and we are looking at how we can keep on top of the regular maintenance for the ease of running for everyone and to look to general improvements.

We hope to free a lot more storage space with our review of all storage areas and are also looking to see how we can greatly improve our waste production and our recycling of all waste. With this in mind, we have contacted all those who use our facilities (regular and otherwise) and asked for their support in this initiative. Included in this is a reminder that all waste generated must be removed by the hirer and a reminder of the rules when hiring out the kitchen facilities.

Here at Christ Church we have continued to be the venue for fund raising activities both in-house and from various charitable organisations. The Diocese has been a consistent hirer for their training courses, workshops and conferences. Both the Men's Ministry and Women's Ministry are continuing and expanding, and we now run Messy Church on a monthly basis which has proven to be extremely successful drawing in many people from the local community. Indeed, we continue to provide a service to the general public as they hire us for their celebrations, gatherings and remembrances.

GIVE THANKS!

- for all those working together, especially caretaking team, to keep the facilities functioning well for the benefit of all,
- for the opportunity that our facilities provide us with to engage with all those who enter our premises whether they are part of a group or look to our facilities for support,
- for the expertise of the caretaking team and their ability to tackle the various issues that we have with the internal fabric and utilities of the buildings.

PRAY FOR:

- Our continued efforts to achieve the correct balance for the use of our facilities both for the church members and church activities and local community,
- Jim in his recovery and a speedy return to activities he chooses to do.
- Jim and Mike in their work to maintain the building and manage various repairs and improvements as they are required.

Jacqui Ko

Deanery Synod Report

The Deanery Synod has met on three occasions this year. Finances are in good order with a closing balance of £82-58 pence.

Brian Rowley has sadly had to retire due to ill health from the post of Lay Chair. His many years of service have been greatly appreciated and a gift has been presented to him. Mrs. Andy Goddard was thanked for kindly volunteering to take on the role.

After duly attending to the usual business items on the agendas, we have had some interesting and informative talks and discussions.

The first was given by Caroline Clark (the Diocesan Community Engagement and Social Responsibility Advisor) on Modern Slavery. She showed five films which did not contain violence but were emotional. Slavery has crept up on us, it cannot be seen and is hidden in plain sight. Modern slaves are men, women and children being bought and sold and being used for cheap labour. They are to be found working in nail bars, car washes, farms, as nannies or domestic servants. Gang masters make money out of them and they are trapped and frightened. We now have three times more slaves than in the 19th century.

Caroline is hoping to start a victim support centre in the Diocese for those who are rescued.

The second meeting concerned Messy Church, and an informative discussion took place with various church representatives detailing how they successfully ran their meetings. Unfortunately the due speaker, Rev. Carol Kitchener, was ill, but sent us a paper outlining what she would have said.

Our final meeting was entitled Desert Island Discs. Our Diocesan Secretary, Matthew Girt, was interviewed by the Area Dean, Rev. John Musson. Music has always played a big part in Matthew's life and he gave us an insight into his Christian walk and development since childhood, and reminded us of the passion and love Jesus has for each one of us.

His choice of music reflected his various jobs, from spending a year in America on leaving school to being an urban planner, working in deprived communities. He prayed for how his work would fit in with his faith.

As a keen student of history, he so appreciates people who have gone before us. How much is given and how much we inherit. It is important that we lay down foundations for the future and be remembered for what we have done - our legacy.

These meetings are usually open to the public and are well worth attending.

GIVE THANKS!

- For the interesting and informative talk we had on Modern Slavery and the opportunity to meet our Diocesan Secretary, Matthew Girt, who gave us an insight into his Christian work. An impressive and humble man.

PRAY FOR:

- For the right people to be appointed to fill the vacancies for the coming year and for wisdom in deciding when it will be safe to resume the meetings.

Muriel Spooner

Church Warden's Report

This year's review from the church wardens has been delayed for the rather obvious reason. We have all spent much of the past six months in some form of lockdown and the church has been closed. Well yes, the church premises have been closed, but the church has been highly active. We have been mindful of Paul's bold assertion in Philippians 1:

¹²Now I want you to know, brothers and sisters, that what has happened to me has actually served to advance the gospel. ¹³As a result, it has become clear throughout the whole palace guard^[a] and to everyone else that I am in chains for Christ.

Paul was in prison, chained up and on the face of things unable to complete his calling of preaching the gospel. Yet the gospel message was not chained and Paul goes further to say that because of his chains that his gospel preaching mission was actually better served. This defies what most of us would expect, chains and imprisonment are not generally associated with helping to spread a message. Yet, we have noted something similar at Christ Church during lockdown

It is most definitely true that we have missed seeing so many of our friends at Christ Church, including the third pillar in our warden team, Derrick, who has been excellent at just getting on and doing everything. Thank you, Derrick! It is equally true that there have been much of our physical gatherings and collective worship that we have missed too. Yet, there is plenty to report which is positive and for which we give thanks to God. There are people at Christ Church who have stepped up heroically and helped us to adapt the way that we do church, during a time when we have not been able to come together. The online services have involved many such people, some in front of the cameras and laptops and some behind the scenes, doing the vital working of piecing everything together and making everything work properly.

These online services have enabled us to worship and to learn together in a different way. Significantly, they have been viewed by many more people than those who attended physically when our premises were open, including to visitors. Many people have watched our online services during the week, at a time which best suits them. They have been able to view our services from the safety of their own surroundings. This is perhaps an important reminder to us that entering a church as a visitor can be intimidating for visitors who do not know what to expect. Yes, we give people a great and friendly welcome at Christ Church, but visitors do not know this until they arrive and many never get as far as finding this out. The online services have provided an accessible way to see what we get up to, without needing to cross our threshold. Our message has not been in chains either, thank you, Paul!

However, not everybody has had access to these online services. We have been worried about this and it is pleasing at the time of writing that the church premises are re-opening and services are being made available, including to some who have not been able to do any form of church for a long time. Communion is taking place again, albeit without the wine. Other restrictions also apply, but we know that the word of God is not in chains.

We also want to note all of the tremendous work that had been going on before lockdown, again being done by some people behind the scenes, with little fuss and little attention. You know who you are, wonderful people, and thank you to you from the wardens.

Finally, a late highlight of the extended review of 2019/2020 has been the appointment of a Youth Minister. Our very own Andi Smith has been appointed and he recently took up the post. We are so excited about the future of our Youth Ministry. It is also wonderful to have Sharon and Andi now working as a double act in service at Christ Church. We cannot complete the review of 2019/2020 without a mention of how brilliant it has been to have had them both here with us; they are such special people.

Pieter and Dave

Annual Accounts 2019

Summary Version

All are welcome to attend our services. The average weekly attendance during October (when the count is done for the Diocese) was 144 adults aged 16 or over and 31 young people aged under 16 (2018: 135 & 20)

Income.

Total receipts for the General Fund were £219,510 (2018 £247,572) down £28,062 on the previous year. This was mainly due to a drop in donations of £19674 (£125,245 this year and £144,919 for 2018) Having said this we received a fantastic response to our Gift Day appeal for funds to our media system which raised £29,993 after deducting 10% of the amount collected to go to our mission fund. What a privilege it is to be a member of such a generous church. Rental income rose to £37,458 (2018 £35,566) an increase of £1,892.

Expenditure.

Expenditure from the General Fund was £227,750 (£247,250 for 2018) a decrease of £19,500 as the church felt that it was prudent to keep expenditure to a minimum and therefore no exceptional items were expended and need to be reported.

Financial Review.

Christ Church depends on the continuing generosity of the congregation to meet its financial needs. The results of the year are set out in the Statement of Financial Activities. A deficit in unrestricted funds of £12,599 arose in the year (2018 - £18,593)

It is the policy of the Parochial Church Council to maintain unrestricted funds, which are free reserves of the church, at a level that equates to approximately six months unrestricted expenditure. This will ensure that the church is able to cover management, administration and support costs and respond to any emergency issues that could arise. Six months unrestricted fund expenditure amounts to approximately £114,000. unrestricted funds in cash at the bank were above this and available throughout the year.

If you would like clarification on any item in the accounts, please speak with me or any member of the finance team who will be more than happy to answer any questions you may have.

Thank you for your continued generosity.

Derek A Foxen
Treasurer

Statement of Financial Activities
including income & expenditure account

	Unrestricted funds 2019 £	Restricted funds 2019 £	Total 2019 £	Total 2018 £
<u>Income from:</u>				
Donations and legacies	150,547	44,846	195,393	194,969
Charitable activities	67,835	221	68,056	71,609
Investments	1,128	-	1,128	930
Total income	219,510	45,067	264,577	267,508
<u>Expenditure on:</u>				
Raising funds	217	-	217	141
<u>Charitable activities</u>				
Church activities	227,533	27,525	255,058	286,729
Total charitable expenditure	227,533	27,525	255,058	286,729
Total resources expended	227,750	27,525	255,275	286,870
Net incoming/(outgoing) resources before transfers	(8,240)	17,542	9,302	(19,362)
Gross transfers between funds	(4,359)	4,359	-	-
Net expenditure for the year/				
Net movement in funds	(12,599)	21,901	9,302	(19,362)
Fund balances at 1 January 2019	203,009	8,771	211,780	231,142
Fund balances at 31 December 2019	190,410	30,672	221,082	211,780

Balance Sheet as at 31st December 2019

	2019		2018	
	£	£	£	£
Current assets				
Debtors	12,250		8,015	
Cash at bank and in hand	214,715		209,347	
	226,965		217,362	
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year				
	(5,883)		(5,582)	
Net current assets		221,082		211,780
Income funds				
Restricted funds		30,672		8,771
<u>Unrestricted funds</u>				
Designated funds	42,600		42,600	
General unrestricted funds	147,810		160,409	
		190,410		203,009
		221,082		211,780

The financial statements were approved by the Parochial Church Council on 7 July 2020.

Missionary Expenditure – Restricted Funds

	2019	2018
	£	£
Grants to institutions:		
CPAS	1,738	2,577
London City Mission	1,472	2,454
Church Missionary Society	1,523	1,772
Tear Fund	4,571	2,414
Spinnaker Trust	2,003	2,586
Release International	1,300	1,500
Missionary Aviation Fellowship	1,750	1,500
Rochester Diocese for Kondo Churches, Tanzania	5,800	3,500
Orpington Foodbank	-	600
Latvia Bible College	-	9,986
The Bible Society	1,300	-
Other	3,339	3,264
	24,796	32,153
Grants to individuals	3,098	6,967
	27,894	39,120

We hope this summary version of the 2019 annual accounts is helpful. A full version will be available at the APCM.

Unity Church

It has been exciting to see God at work in Unity Church, even since Covid changed our lives. Perhaps the most exciting development has been seeing our practical outreach ministries growing. The CAP Job Club, held at Unity but with volunteers from other churches, including Christ Church, ran three more courses, each attended by about half a dozen people, some of whom came through working with the Bromley Job Centre. There was much celebration in 2019 as we saw a dear friend, who had previously attended a Job Club and been on a CAP Discovery Break, come to faith and he was baptized in the autumn - praise God! Unfortunately, the person who has led the Job Club since its inception will be stepping down due to deterioration in health, so we need to find somebody to take on this important role.

Another area of growth was Unity Café which was held on Tuesday mornings during the school holidays when the pre-school was not operating. Free drinks and cakes were provided and there were games and other activities for children. Many of those who attended had no previous connection with the church and it was particularly encouraging to see the Café appeals to both families with younger children and the older generation.

In January 2020, we launched the Community Fridge, offering free food from Greggs and Pret on Tuesday and Thursday mornings. After lockdown started, God has really opened some amazing doors. We quickly started receiving food from other sources, meaning that we could offer other items such as fresh vegetables and some high-quality ready meals. The fridge is now open on Wednesday and Saturday mornings, and we have supported over 100 different families during this time.

Pulse, our youth club for secondary school students continued to welcome young people from in and outside the church. Some of them went to NewDay, a Christian camping event at the Norfolk Showground. Sadly this, along with our Sunday children and young people's work, has been a casualty of lockdown. We are trying to keep in touch with the contacts we have made, and are keen to restart when it becomes possible.

We continue to be encouraged and grateful for God's provision financially. We have spent considerable amounts of money updating and improving our building. In 2019 we fully replaced the central heating system in the building and replaced the rotting windows at the front and rear of the building. We also decorated the main hall. This year, we have replaced the original flooring as it was going soft in places. We now have a carpeted floor throughout the hall and this is a much more pleasant and welcoming environment. In the closing months of the year, we are planning to replace some of the exterior panels that are rotting as well as some high-level windows.

Since lockdown, it has been sad to lose our meetings and times of worship together due to restrictions. For several months, our services were held online, with printed transcripts for those without the means to watch them. In September, we moved back to meeting in church. It has been hard to sit quietly in church and leave without our usual time of fellowship, but at least we can be together.

In May, the pre-school that has been running from our building (for well over 20 years) announced that they would not be returning after lockdown. This obviously has a significant impact upon those living on the estate, with some families needing to find new spaces for their children. However, it has provided us with a new freedom around the use of our building and we are very excited for what God is going to do in the coming months and years!

It has been an amazing journey in faith, seeing how God works through a small and faithful congregation of ordinary people. We look forward with eager anticipation to what He is going to do next. We don't know how things will develop, but we do know that God has plans for us, whatever is happening.

Our love to you all
Peter and Lynn Price, Dave and Kate Bell

GIVE THANKS!

- The new people who we have seen coming through our community-focused ministries.
- For God's continued provision for our needs.
- Our partnership with other churches in the CAP Job Club and the Community Fridge.

PRAY FOR:

- Continued growth in our mission and in our links with the community resulting in more people coming to faith.
- The resources to be able to staff and fund every ministry God wants to see at Unity.
- Someone to take on the leadership of the Job Club (could God be speaking to you?!)
- That God will guide us as we seek Him for how to use our building for His glory in the community of the Ramsden.

Children's Ministry

Children's Ministry Vision:

The vision for the Children's Ministry is **Sowing seeds, growing together and changing lives.** We have the wonderful pleasure of helping children to know Jesus and to grow together in faith. We can change and enrich their lives by encouraging them to have a loving relationship with God. Jesus said "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these."

I am pleased to report that the Children's Ministry has had a good year, this has however been very much disrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic, which brought groups and face to face activities to a standstill. We have as a result gone on-line and whilst we have lost the face to face contact, we have seen an increase in the numbers viewing our on-line sessions, that are run by myself and Caroline Rous, with music from Liesel and technical support from James Dunkerley – a huge thank you to everyone involved.

Messy Church

Prior to lockdown we established a very successful Messy Church with between 70-100plus people attending and enjoying, craft, drama, singing, bible stories and food. As well as monthly Messy Church we also held a **Messy light Party** and a **Messy Christmas Party & Christingle.** Since lockdown I have been sending 'Messy Church at Home' sheets to our members with activities and fun things to do around a bible theme. They have also been invited to join our on-line sessions and to Open Table. We are hoping to run a socially distanced Messy Light Party again this year and God willing another Christmas Party/Christingle

Schools Work: Prior to lockdown Caroline Rous and I were thankful that we were welcomed fortnightly into Warren Road, Chelsfield, Harris Primary Academy Orpington, Blenheim and the Highway Primary Schools, all local to Christ Church. Following lockdown video assemblies and other resources have been made available to schools via the Spinnaker website. Last school year we focused on Amazing Animals, People and Places for collective worship themes. Each collective worship includes a bible story or passage, and how it relates to the children's lives, and a time of reflection and prayer. I am incredibly grateful that I have been welcomed back into The Highway this September as they return to school and will be working with class bubble assemblies weekly throughout this term.

Tea and Toys: was very busy with 152 families on our register, with about 40 plus different families attending on a weekly basis, also a number of these families

attended Messy Church which was wonderful, as previously had not attended church.

The group has been led by a faithful group of helpers, including myself, Maureen Grandini, Pauline Dugard, Lesa Paton, Steph Fargie and Paula Lynch. We are also thankful to Jim Callaghan and Mike Bailey who have helped us with setting up/clearing away. This group is a wonderful outreach opportunity, as well as providing a warm welcome to those who come, it also shares a bible story and songs.

Sadly we have been unable to run this group through lockdown, whilst we hope restrictions will ease, a number of the volunteers also work in playschool settings which will mean they are unable to mix groups currently, so new volunteers would be required were we to open shortly.

We had hoped and planned for an afternoon cream tea for the Mum's this sadly had to be cancelled due to lockdown, but maybe possible in the near future, especially for those Mum's that we did not get the chance to say goodbye to as their children started school.

Sunday Groups: We currently have 25 children on our Sunday groups registers for Creche, Climbers and Explorers this is a drop of over in comparison to last year, we have however seen high weekly viewing numbers for our Explorers and Climbers Online (60-80 plus viewings) and regularly interact with c.10 children when we are live on Facebook on a Sunday morning. Attendance certificates are sent to those children who attend and their work is often posted on Facebook.

The current plan is to restart a **Explorer and Climber** group at church on 6th October following an **All Age Harvest Festival** on 27th September. We will continue on-line for those that cannot make it in person. **Creche** is sadly unable to return as yet and little ones are to remain in their family group in the main worship.

Praise Parties Just prior to lockdown we trialed a couple of Praise Parties for Climbers, Explorers and Pathfinders to replace Sunday Serving, this is something we will need to look to potentially try again once restrictions allow, we are currently limited to 15 children and leaders per group and therefore cannot do this within current guidelines.

Christingle We are really blessed to have a dedicated team of volunteers working with and supporting the children in a wonderful Christingle presentation. Last year as well as the Messy Christmas Party we held a Christingle service with the theme of Jesus Light of the World. We raised money for the Children's Society through the collection; helping those children in difficult and tragic circumstances.

We hope to be able to run this again this year in a socially distant way. This **Easter** we were in lockdown and therefore I recorded a 12 day Easter Eggs-experience for the children on-line. Hopefully next year we will be able to do something face to face,

GIVE THANKS!

- for the wonderful opportunity we have to meet either on-line or face to face with the children and share your love,
- for all those who serve in this ministry giving up time and resources to do so. Please bless the children and the volunteers.

PRAY FOR:

- Pray for volunteers especially as we start to return to church, give thanks as life is getting busier and pray for protection people are fearful due to the virus. Please pray that people are willing to continue to work with our children and step up to do new things. Please pray for new volunteers to join this important ministry bringing the next generation to God
- Pray for Messy Church as we look at socially distant ways we can meet face to face and for Creche & Tea and Toys that we are able to restart these groups safely.
- Pray for growth, and that we will meet more young families, and that they come regularly to CCO or view us on-line and grow in relationship with God
- Pray for our children and young people that they seek and find God's love for them, that they grow in relationship with Him and continue on their journey of faith throughout their whole lives.

Jo Gavin, Children's Minister

Youth Ministry October 2020

I am delighted to have become Christ Church's new Youth Minister, and I settled into this permanent role at the end of August, just seven weeks ago. I am very humbled to be appointed to this role and would like to thank both Andrena and Kim for all the hard work they have put into the young people, and my prayers are that I will build on their good foundations.

During the start of the Covid-19 period, Kim's Interim Youth Minister contract ended and the interviews for the full-time permanent position were postponed under the guidance of the Diocese. In that time, there were no groups allowed to meet face-to-face so I volunteered to help with the leading of the youth groups on a virtual basis using Zoom and social media, which I began to do in May. It was challenging to set all this up, but lots of fun too as Christ Church has the most amazing young people.

Pathfinders, which are school years 7 – 9, were given a Sunday morning teaching video based on the Church of England Roots course, and put up on our CCO Facebook site. Although the live watching numbers were relatively small, over the week the videos averaged 74 views, suggesting it was a very useful medium for reaching those who may have other activities on Sunday mornings. From the beginning of October, Pathfinders will hopefully meet face-to-face in the small hall, and the teaching element will continue to be recorded and streamed on-line so that those who cannot attend may continue to learn about Jesus.

Juice, which are school years 10-13+, met weekly on Zoom for either their choice of topics for discussions (which have included omniscience, omnipotence, infinity, suffering, Jesus in the Coronavirus, and the Transfiguration), or topics focusing on themes in the Bible (which included Pentecost, Covenant and Presence). From the beginning of September Juice began to meet face-to-face in the small hall, with those who couldn't meet up physically joining us via Zoom on the big screen. We had a socially distanced party to say goodbye to those going off to university, and now enjoy continuing to have them join us as often as possible via Zoom.

ATSOC, the youth bible study group met fortnightly on Zoom, and continue to meet on Zoom for the time being. This will be reviewed when it is deemed safe/acceptable for groups of more than 6 to meet again in coffee shops such as COSTA. In ATSOC, we studied Jonah and their choice of book which was Revelation. This term we are starting Philippians.

ReD and ReD ReuniteD, are the youth groups run by CCO to serve the local community. With the recent influx of school year 6's to ReD, the older age groups needed something more specific for them, so ReD ReuniteD was created for just that. The local youth were not so keen to meet on Zoom, and as yet government

guidelines don't allow us to meet face-to-face. We are looking forward to opening up again though as soon as regulations allow.

FN@TB, the youth group for those who appreciate a quieter setting, again will be meeting up once the restrictions allow.

I have also been joined in playing worship with some of our very musically talented young people, and I am hoping to develop this area over the next year.

As we look forward to the coming year, I feel online technology is going to continue to be important in the way we meet, as well as enjoying face to face meetings where possible. I believe the Lord is going to lead us into a season of fun and growth as we seek to grow numerically, spiritually, and in love, knowledge and service of Him. Hopefully we will be looking forward to exciting places to go next year together (Covid-19 allowing), and my prayer is that Jesus will be at the heart of all we are, all we learn, and all we do.

GIVE THANKS!:

- Big thanks to Juice who have been very kind and inviting. They are a great team of youth to work with.
- Thanks to Sarah Gardiner for all her help with both setting up and helping me with the admin.
- Thanks to Jo Gavin and Dave Humphries for all their help and guidance as I settle in.

PRAY FOR:

- Please pray for the young people as they settle into universities, new schools and new classes.
- Please pray that we will all go deeper in our knowledge and love of God this year, whilst having fun and fellowship, and that more will be added to our number.
- Please pray that we will follow the Lord's guidance in all that we do, including reaching out into our community in whatever way He leads.

Andi Smith, Youth Minister

Youth Ministry
27th October 2019 -26th April 2020

It has been a privilege to serve as part-time Youth Minister Interim at Christ Church over the past six months. I feel that I have got to know many of the congregation in addition to the young people and their families. I thank people for the warm welcome received and opportunity to share in friendship and fellowship in the Gospel. I praise God for the teams of volunteers without whom the work would not be possible, for their dedication and good teamworking; for the young people themselves who make the work so worthwhile, and for the interest taken by members of the congregation whose prayerful support is so invaluable. I would like to thank Sarah Gardiner for the assistance she has faithfully provided with the Youth Administration during the Interim period. Also, Jo Gavin for her joint leadership of ReD, and opportunities to work together for Sunday Serving, the new-style Praise Party, special Christmas services, and monthly *Messy Church*. Networking is the key. E-mailing families, Relationship building, making connections, earning trust. Working in collaboration. Making the most of training opportunities for professional development. Mindful of the foundation laid by previous workers, the overriding aim during the Interim period (18hrs/week) has been to maintain the pattern of youth activities at Christ Church set in place by my predecessor, Andrena Palmer, whilst at the same time bringing my own experience gained over many years, especially in using creative ways to enhance the biblical teaching. The Interim role has not involved going into Bishop Justus or other schools (I am a teacher by profession); although, I have kept links with Spinnaker Trust and *Pray for Schools* and met with local youth ministers to plan for ecumenical events under the banner of Churches Together in Orpington.

ReD – after-school discipleship group on Fridays was experiencing dwindling attendance towards the end of the Autumn Term. Following a promotion at Warren Road School in the New Year, and at The Highway School, we saw a surge in numbers which reached a steady 26/27 before lockdown. We set up a regular Table Tennis Tournament with certificate for winners and outdoor football is always popular together with the usual indoor games such as playing on the Wii. We are grateful to our team of volunteers and those who provide our hot meals. In the sofa room where we gather for our talk and DVD, we are often at full capacity. Behaviour has been good, and the craft area is a great space for a friendly chat and reflecting on the weekly theme which has been following a series on Bible Heroes.

FN@TB – on alternate Fridays is a special youth club for those who prefer a quieter small group setting. Here there is a strong sense of ownership, lots of one to one conversation and small group circle time. Members enjoy playing Pool, Air Hockey, Table Tennis, Jenga and Table Football. All in a safe space where we

pray, the young people can grow in confidence and friendship. A terrific opportunity also to support their parents with a listening ear and caring concern. In December, a group of young people went on an **ice-skating trip** at Ruxley Manor, organised by Sharon Russo and Jayne Taylor.

Pathfinders – meet in the Undercroft on Sunday mornings for those in school years 7-9. We have been using ROOTS Resources for the weekly lectionary supplemented by other materials. In Paul's second letter to the Thessalonians, we explored: enduring difficult times, recognising the truth, playing our part in the community of faith; and, in the first letter to the Corinthians, what it means to be church, what unites us in Christ, how the Spirit reveals God to us, and how spiritual growth happens; then, visiting the Gospels: being wise in a world that distorts what we want and what we need; taking the risk of deciding openly to follow Jesus, and discovering the life-giving water that Jesus offers. Sessions usually include a DVD or PowerPoint presentation, discussion, and mix of creative activities linked to the biblical theme.

ATSOC – meets on alternate Saturdays in COSTA Tesco Orpington for informal Bible study, fellowship, and prayer. This is a popular group. We have studied Bible verses around themes such as Hope, Love and Strength to cope with life's challenges. We aim to support one another in the Christian faith. We are friends together growing in discipleship and friendship and leadership potential.

Juice – meets on a Sunday evening, gathering in the café area before joining the first part of the service in church and continuing with fellowship, Bible study and discussion in the Undercroft afterwards. We have enjoyed socials together (Nando's and Pizza Express). We sometimes watch a film. We have had creative sessions with arts and crafts, all linked to a biblical theme. We have been grateful for hospitality offered by the Gardiner family, sessions led by Len, e.g. on Politics and the Bible, and the watching of *The Eric Liddell Story* at Sarah and Simon's. We have studied The Sacraments e.g. Baptism and Confirmation, exploring our own vocation and calling; and have sometimes followed the lectionary or special times in the Church's calendar. Members of the group have been very loyal and open to different approaches and willing to engage in discussion and take the lead. Indeed, during the Interim period we have been meeting weekly compared to alternate weeks as before.

Trip to LCM Centre for the Homeless – During February half-term a group of us visited the London City Mission Webber Street Homeless Day Centre at Waterloo. We were given a guided tour of the premises and presentation about the work. Our young people were invited to make up gift packs for the homeless with essential supplies. They enjoyed doing this and engaged well with the task. Before taking the train back to Orpington, we had a meal out together. I am

proud of our Youth who decided to donate £100 from their fundraising money to the mission to support its ministry to the homeless.

Sunday Serving – on the first Sunday of the month our young people participated in All-age Worship by reading the lessons or prayers. In January this was replaced with a new-style **Praise Party** in the large hall with Climbers and Explorers and Pathfinders combined – as we do during the school holidays, following the episodes of **Friends & Heroes**. We rejoice in the different ways in which our young people serve the church, helping with the children's ministry, music, welcome, tech and refreshments, and through *Arts of the Apostles*.

EPIC – Every Promise in Christ Youth Service – on Epiphany Sunday, together with other local youth ministers, I was involved in organising an ecumenical youth service hosted by Orpington Baptist Church. Another service was planned for 17 May at OBC and invitation for our young people to attend the *Limitless Festival* 7-11 August in Staffordshire under the banner of CTiO (although may be cancelled). Supporting **Wednesday morning prayers**, where we intercede for the world, our nation, the local church and people, activities, and events at Christ Church; and, **Community Club**, befriending members, and leading some of the morning Bible Study sessions; along with **Women's Ministry** and meeting people in **Café Mosaic**, have all been valuable ways of making connections and building bridges. I have been grateful too for opportunities to preach and lead worship and learn new skills such as Zoom and making videos! In January, I attended the Employed Worker Annual Retreat and in February, a Young People's Spirituality Day, both organised by the diocese; also a Spinnaker Training Day in January at the Jubilee Church in Bromley; and the Youth Evangelism Conference in Cambridge in February.

GIVE THANKS!

- All the young people who attend the different youth groups, for their enthusiasm, connections made, and friendships formed
- The dedicated teams of volunteers who enable the smooth running of the respective groups

PRAY FOR:

- Faithful discipling of the young people, that they would grow in Christian maturity and engage in outreach to their peers
- Recruiting and training of volunteers; nurturing young leaders
- Openings in local secondary schools and Orpington College

Kim Curle, Interim Youth Minister

Vicar's Report

What a strange time we have had since our last APCM in 2019, when I had been here just three months. In my report I wrote about how I felt that the church was at the point of entering a new season in Jay's vision of becoming "An above and beyond church – worshipping Christ above all things and going beyond the four walls in mission." How right that would turn out to be, but not at all in the way that I expected!

I also felt the Lord giving us Matthew 5:14-16, and this feeling has grown more and more strongly:

'You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.'

I felt that the Lord was calling us to be a beacon of light to our community. And just as beacons are situated on hills, so CCO is situated on a hill. This was no accident and was prophetic for what we were called to be. I was aware that this might involve the laying down of some things if He called us to, and the starting up of some things if He called us to. But we were to be a beacon of light on the hill, to our community.

In the autumn of 2019 Women's Ministry began a fresh season, and we began to reach out in new beginnings as we started Messy Church which welcomed lots of families who would never normally think of coming to church. But then, as the year continued, we began to watch with horror as the Coronavirus began to stalk China in December, before spreading out into the world and our own doorstep. In March 2020, it had tightened its grip on Britain and the country went into lockdown.

In that time Christ Church really stepped up to become a beacon on the hill in a way that nobody could have imagined. Here are just a sample of the things that our wonderful Christ Church volunteers have done as the need began to arise (with apologies that I don't have space to include everything that is being done):

Pastoral Care Team (led by Greta Kitchener)

The team usually take people to hospital and doctors appointments, and make home visits. Instead, in order to reach the entire fellowship now in lockdown a list was drawn up of the whole church so that nobody who might need them was missed out - and shopping, leaving goods on people's doorsteps, collecting and delivering prescriptions, phone calls, sending cards and doorstep visits became the new way of caring for everybody. The value of this love and care has been immeasurable. Pastoral Care also helps with Open Kitchen...

Open Kitchen (led by Liesel Stanbridge)

As it became obvious that there was increasing hardship in our community through lost income, what had once been a weekly FareShare collection was expanded to incorporate different shops and days, so that tables could be put outside the church three times a week and those who might benefit from free food invited to come and help themselves. The whole of the Saltwood estate and our local vicinity received leaflet invites and messages were spread by word of mouth. We are visited by regulars who collect food for themselves and other families on the estate, plus occasional drop-ins. This has also had an evangelistic effect as two or three passers-by and two regulars now join with us and help regularly.

Meals for NHS frontline workers (cooked by Colin Beesley, led by Liesel Stanbridge & Rev'd Sharon)

Over 1000 meals were cooked in the church kitchen and delivered to the PRUH and the Orpington Hospital so that exhausted frontline workers, mainly doctors and nurses, could have a free dinner ready cooked for them when they left shift. These were very well received indeed. Some meals were also taken to Crofton Oaks where there is a Free Shop for NHS frontline workers to collect from.

Meals for families and individuals (cooked by different congregation members, led by Mel Ketchin & Greta Kitchener)

For much of lockdown meals were cooked to make sure that individuals and families who were struggling, got home-cooked meals regularly. These, together with FareShare foods, are delivered to doorsteps so people may eat well and without effort.

Donations to Unity Church, Ramsden (cooked by Sally & Mel Ketchin, led by Mel Ketchin)

For much of lockdown puddings/cakes were cooked (over 1000 double portions) and given to Unity Church for their Open Fridge, for the community to help themselves, as well as some of the FareShare produce.

Community Club (led by Mel Ketchin)

Lists were made of names and tables and for most of lockdown every one of the nearly 90 people were phoned weekly for a chat and asked if they would like anything done for them e.g. shopping, prescriptions, taking things to the Post Office etc. Many are visited for doorstep chats. A regular newsletter is given to everyone for enjoyment and to keep them in touch, as well as birthdays still being celebrated.

Services (IT led by Mike Bailey & James Dunkerley)

By March 29th church buildings were in complete lockdown and we streamed the first of our home-based services via Facebook. The three Sunday services were rolled into one, with a simplified service order and shorter length for more attractive and easier online viewing. The service leaders, preachers and worship

groups had to learn how to make videos of their pieces, with the IT team putting everything together and creating it into a service. An average of 309 “hits”/households have tuned in each week to the Facebook services, with an unknown number tuning in to our website, meaning it is probably the best evangelistic tool we could have imagined. Zoom coffee meetings (led by Alan Goddard) offer the opportunity to socialise after each service. Children’s work led by Jo Gavin and Caroline Rous has continued online, as has our youth work led by Kim Curle and Andi Smith. Our weekly Family News (led by Vernon Mapp) has been a great source of information and fun, keeping us all in touch.

Our church also now boasts a beautiful new audio-visual system, thanks to Mike Bailey’s leading and expertise, and your generosity. Thank you so much.

On June 7th CCO celebrated its 80th birthday online with Alan Eaves, Jay Colwill and Bishop James bringing messages to us, along with two wonderful pieces from the Gospel Choir and the CCO choir. June 15th the church was allowed to re-open for private prayer. September 6th we opened with a socially distanced Holy Communion service, and we now have three services every Sunday to allow space for everyone who wants to come.

Morning Prayer & Thought for the Day

Throughout most of lockdown Morning Prayer was streamed daily (except Sundays) from different traditions with a Thought for the Day incorporated on Wednesdays to keep people connected, again with many more “hits” than expected.

Men's Ministry (Led by Pieter Van Rooyen)

Men's Ministry have done a sterling job of looking after the men in the church, and kept us laughing in the dark days.

I feel that we really have begun to step into God’s vision of being a beacon on the hill, and I feel we can be justly proud of the way CCO has risen to the challenge of this strange and difficult time and reached out to both the church and the parish communities, as well as reaching out to the NHS frontline workers in their fight against this terrible disease.

We are now looking forwards to how we might incorporate the best from the past, and the best from the present, to bring about the best for the future...whilst at the same time, seeking the Lord as to how He would like us to continue to grow and become evermore that Beacon on the Hill for Him.

Bless you all, it is wonderful to be here with you.

With much love,

Sharon