

EAST BARNET 
PARISH CHURCH
St Mary the Virgin



Annual Report 2021

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About St Mary's, East Barnet

The charity's full name is The Parochial Church Council of the Ecclesiastical Parish of East Barnet.

It is governed according to the Parochial Church Council Powers Measure (1956) as amended. It operates according to the Church Representation Rules (2020).

At the time this report was issued, the PCC consisted of:

The Revd Dr Alec Corio (Rector, PCC chair, ex officio member)

Mr Roger Melling (Churchwarden, PCC vice chair, ex officio member, and deanery synod representative)

Prof Alison Blunt (PCC secretary, representative of the laity)

Dr Chris Yates (PCC treasurer, Electoral Roll officer, representative of the laity)

Mr Matthew Eade (deanery synod representative)

Mr Stephen Edwards (representative of the laity)

Mr John Hawkins (representative of the laity)

Ms Gail Phillips (representative of the laity)

Rev Shaun Sanders (Methodist minister, ex officio observer)

Mr John Savage (representative of the laity)

Mrs Christine Watson (representative of the laity)

The charity exists to advance the gospel in the ecclesiastical parish of East Barnet, according to the doctrines and practices of the Church of England, for the benefit of the public.

The charity cooperates with the Rector to provide and maintain a building used for religious purposes; provide and maintain a building as a local heritage asset; conduct public worship, including services marking life events; sponsor cultural and artistic events; support local community formation; support educational activities; further the ecumenical and inter-faith engagement of the Church of England; and provide pastoral care to peoples of all faiths and none.

The parish church is located at:
The Church of St Mary the Virgin
Church Hill Road
East Barnet
Hertfordshire
EN4 8XD

The parish office (for all correspondence) is located at:
East Barnet Parish Office
Brookside Methodist Church
2 Cat Hill
East Barnet
Hertfordshire
EN4 8JB
Email: administrator@stmaryseastbarnet.org

The PCC's charity number is 1143134

The Independent Examiner of the PCC's financial reports was Ms Victoria Neil of 30 Cedar Avenue, East Barnet, EN4 8XD.

Rector's Report and Introduction

During 2021 the Parochial Church Council of the Ecclesiastical Parish of East Barnet has continued to faithfully fulfil its charitable objects, and to respond to the blessings we have received as a community called by God to his work in the world. The circumstances under which we have operated during 2021 have been extremely difficult, and I would like to begin my report by thanking all those who have supported this work: from the congregation, PCC and Standing Committee. In particular, acting as sole Churchwarden, and much more beside, Roger Melling has been constant in his availability, support and advice during this challenging period.

Toward the end of 2020, the PCC and I decided that the declaration of a state of emergency in London and a high local rate of Covid-19 infection necessitated the closure of St Mary's for public worship. That meant that our pattern of worship remained online only until Holy Week 2021, when it was judged appropriate for in-person services to resume, as well as maintaining the provision of online services. St Mary's was able to remain open for periods to facilitate personal prayer, with printed resources available in the church building and for download online.

Some positive developments resulted from the sad restrictions of the Covid-19 pandemic: for example, even as early as January we were able to pack and deliver bags of Christingle-making supplies to all of the families connected with St Mary's, so that they then made Christingles while watching a recorded service. That provided an opportunity to visit many families and to catch up with them, from a Covid-safe distance, as well as offering them a liturgical experience to close the Christmas season.

Throughout 2021, St Mary's broadcast 139 videos on YouTube and Facebook – including services, sermons, collective worship for schools, discussions, and a short digital evangelism course. This course was coordinated by our ordinand on placement, Francesco Aresco, and featured guests from our local community such as Sarah Edwards, Maria Constantinou and Alan Danson, and Alan Smith, Bishop of St Albans, talking about finding truth, goodness and beauty as signs of God's presence in the world. Our videos have together received 2 934 unique views, with large civic and seasonal services achieving the highest viewing figures, and videos within the digital evangelism course being shared the most through social media. These have therefore boosted our visibility as a community. Viewing figures have varied in relation to the progression of the Covid-19 pandemic and public health restrictions: in the early part of the year, viewing figures for Sunday services and their sermons were in the 30s every week; these dropped when in-person services became possible, and declined further as in-person services became better attended. By the end of the year, viewing figures for videos of Sunday services were in the teens.

The promotion of events and sharing of news through our monthly email list, *News from St Mary's*, our new website and social media channels was further developed in 2021; and to coincide with Holy Week, new fence banners were obtained to highlight the church site and improve its visibility. We were also able to produce two editions of the East Barnet Herald, under Matthew Eade's careful editorship, and to distribute 3 500 parish Christmas cards, in an effort organised by Roger and Chris Yates. Communication work has become a much larger element of parish administration than ever before, and yet unfortunately we have not been able to finance the employment of a parish administrator in succession to Margaret Cranfield, who retired in 2020.

That is because our operational expenditure has been pruned to the minimum to support the development of the new community hall; and we have engaged in some creative fundraising for the same purpose, most enjoyably our collaboration with the Urban Alchemy Brewery to produce a St Mary's Ale. Though our increased emphasis on communication has been prompted by the pandemic, this work is probably the beginning of a long-term trend, seeking to reach people better wherever they are: it will need dedicated resourcing by a new parish administrator, when the Church's financial situation makes that possible.

We were able to further develop the use of music – especially choral music – within online services in the early spring. Our Church Choir faithfully persevered with their rehearsals over zoom; and Alan, our Director of Music, developed new techniques to teach and record a larger repertoire in this period. The concentration of the Church Choir's efforts during lockdown has been obvious in the standard of their recorded music, and in their confidence providing live music in services when that became possible again, later in the year.

January saw the beginning of a monthly book club on zoom, in partnership with Brookside Methodist Church, where each month there is a discussion of an accessible and enjoyable piece of writing. Zoom was also used to offer a course for adults exploring confirmation, 'This is My Faith', and of the five who were regularly attending, two candidates were confirmed by Michael Beasley, Bishop of Hertford, on 16 May. A group for children and young people exploring baptism, communion and confirmation was able to meet in-person in the Autumn, with their baptisms, admissions to communion and confirmations planned for 2022.

We were also able to use zoom to facilitate Lent and October learning courses, 'In the Beginning God Created the Heavens and the Earth' and 'Exploring the Bible: Different Ways of Reading', in partnership with Brookside Methodist Church and now also working closely with St John's United Reformed Church. Our shared focus on ecology and theology – inspired by 'In the Beginning...' – and overlapping membership of Barnet Green Christians with our congregations also led to a joint Celebration of Creation service in April.

Online social events have included regular meetings for coffee on a Sunday morning, tea parties, and times for conversation. The level of engagement with in-person social events, however, was much higher when these were possible. Two outdoor plant sales, held under the lych gate, were very enthusiastically received by the local area; and the Harvest supper – our first in-person social event since the start of the pandemic – was brilliantly organised by Gail Phillips and the events team including Heather Melling and Lesley Danson.

The relatively low attendance at online social events has emphasised the importance of the ministerial and Pastoral Team, including Francesco, Roger, Brian Gregory, Chris Mears, Debbie Windler, Bridget Bowden and Helen Ball, in keeping networks connected within the congregational community; in offering telephone support and befriending; and in providing means of practical help where necessary. Since September, I and some members of the Pastoral Team have also been able to perform home visits and to take communion to the housebound, operating within a Covid-19 risk assessment. A number of acute pastoral situations within our congregational community have also been responded to, safely and appropriately. Informal friendship and support networks also operate among the congregational community, and the level of care and communication these provide has been sustaining for a number of people.

When in-person services resumed for Holy Week, it was wonderful to observe those traditional services and then to celebrate Easter in our church building with a festal Eucharist. In the following development of in-person services again, we have prioritised the provision and growth of an All Age Messy Eucharist. This is now celebrated as the main act of worship on the first Sunday of the month. It has been designed to appeal to children, families, and their friends, and within the confines of our Covid-19 risk assessment it offers a crafty, noisy, messy and informal approach to a Eucharistic celebration. We have also resumed the celebration of a Parish Eucharist on other Sundays in the month, and have gradually increased the musical elements of that service, slowly aiming to build toward what would have been normal before the Covid-19 pandemic. As well as this being made possible by Alan working intensely with the existing Church Choir, our music and our work with children and young people have both been enriched by the launch of Young Voices: the youth choir of St Mary's in September.

Children and youth work has also continued through the close relationship St Mary's has with its parish school, and the provision of governance and support to school leaders. Stephen Edwards has proved a dedicated and effective Chair of Governors there; he has supported Maria Constantinou and Mel Adams in their excellent working relationship as joint Headteachers. Under their leadership, the school has adapted throughout 2021 to a series of severe challenges caused by the Covid-19 pandemic, prioritising always the development and needs of our pupils. Toward the end of the year, Mel announced her retirement, following 26 exemplary years as a Headteacher at St Mary's School, and a special service of thanksgiving for her work will be arranged in 2022. School collective worship, which has long been a recognised strength of St Mary's School, has continued online, or in-person whenever possible, throughout the Covid-19 pandemic.

Our links with other schools and nurseries in the parish have also been deepened, despite the circumstances of the pandemic, as I have visited or received visits to St Mary's from children at Brunswick Park Primary School and Church Hill Primary School. We maintain links with St Mary's Brownies and Guides, who have also returned to their meetings at Brookside Methodist Church. And I have become Chaplain to 1374 Squadron of the Air Training Corps, and begun to visit them on a monthly basis for 'Padre's hour', which is part of their programme of character development and pastoral care.

Attendance figures for in-person services at St Mary's grew very slowly but steadily from Holy Week to November, so that average weekly attendance in October reached 57 adults and 52 children. The resurgence in Covid-19 infection rates in November has lowered attendance figures since then. It is difficult to take these figures as a reflection of the size of the worshipping community connected to St Mary's: they are much more an indication of the progress the Church has made to maintain its ministry during the changing conditions of the pandemic, and the ongoing stresses of the pandemic. While some members of the congregational community have moved away or died in 2021, new members have of the community have also been attracted to St Mary's, especially by its Inclusive Church identity.

There have been a small number of pastoral offices performed in the church building during 2021, consisting of 4 weddings, 2 funerals, 5 christenings (one within a wedding), and special memorial and remembrance events. I would like to thank those clergy who visited us to enrich our services with their diverse voices and preaching: Brian Blackshaw, John Bradbury, Ayla Lepine, Laurence Price and Martin Wellings. I am also grateful for those occasions

when Francesco, Roger, Chris Mears or John Savage were able to take a leading role on Sundays, when I was forced to self-isolate or was ill with Covid-19.

Seasonal services, such as the Memorial Service for All Souls; the Act of Remembrance; the Advent Carol Service; Crib Services; and the Christmas Carol Services; were creatively and imaginatively reimagined for the current conditions. They were also relatively well attended, and outdoor services such as the Act of Remembrance and a gathering to sing Christmas Carols at the nativity scene at Brookside Methodist Church and outside the Prince of Wales pub drew large crowds. The nativity scene, built for the second year by a team from both St Mary's and Brookside Methodist Church including John, Roger and Derrick Setchell, was a fantastic focus of public art and theology within our community, and Francesco's design continues to communicate the incarnation's theme simply and elegantly.

An important area of the Church's mission has been our engagement with the planned development of the North London Business Park for residential housing, through the creation of regular prayer walks and the establishment of creative relationships with the site developer, Comer Homes Ltd. Along with civic leaders and colleagues from St Paul's, New Southgate; Brookside Methodist Church; St John's United Reformed Church; and other denominational representatives; I believe that a welcoming and community focussed ministry on the site could enrich the local area and enhance its wellbeing. Plans for possible pioneer ministry on the site, and to highlight the need for community facility provision, will be taken forward in 2022.

In terms of our charity's governance, the PCC has held its meetings on zoom throughout 2021, and its focus has been on the strategic direction of our Church. Very prayerful and productive sessions of reflection have led to the creation of a new Mission Action Plan, which will guide the PCC in the coming year and provide clear criteria for the work we are called to do. To resource the PCC for this work, and deal with urgent issues such as the revision of Covid-19 risk assessments, the Standing Committee has developed further in the direction of being a problem solving group; and Roger, Chris Yates and John have, as a separate group, assisted me in meetings related to the construction of our new community hall. Chris and John Hawkins have also completed a church building energy use audit, to encourage greater responsibility in our use of natural resources.

2021 has been an extremely demanding year in the history of St Mary's. But it has not been the end of our life together as a Church, or of our mission and ministry together in Christ. Indeed, though there have been struggles, disappointments and many reasons for lament, there have also been seeds of the kingdom sown in ways and places that we could not have anticipated, which are already growing. These may bear good fruit that will challenge and transform us further, into the future.

Alec Corio

Methodist Minister's Report

Despite the difficulties and challenges of 2021, our Partnership has continued to find different ways of working.

Our monthly Book Club is an example of how we are strengthened by the opportunities to work together. Books we have focussed on have included 'Luminaries: Twenty lives that

illuminate the Christian Way' by Rowan Williams, and the novel 'Slaughterhouse Five' by Kurt Vonnegut based on his experiences as a prisoner of war in the Second World War. With a new lockdown in place from January 2021, we met on zoom to allow people to join us from many other places.

After our Lent course was interrupted in the first lockdown of 2020, we restarted the course in 2021 on zoom. It was based on the book 'Saying Yes to Life' by Ruth Valerio, and we talked about our care for the creation which God has entrusted to us. We concluded this course with a shared online service with St Johns United Reformed Church, New Barnet.

Our October Teaching Course looked at different ways of reading the Bible. We were back in-person for the annual Memorial Service and Poppy Appeal launch in October, and outside for Remembrance Sunday services.

My colleague and the Circuit Superintendent Minister Rev Dr Martin Wellings became a school governor at St Mary's School.

Much of our shared work goes beyond our two Churches to include other Churches, faith traditions and community groups. It's a reminder that God's presence doesn't end at the church doors but extends through all creation.

Shaun Sanders

Churchwarden's Report

In my report for 2020 I commented 'What a year!' and talked about how our Church life and personal lives had been disrupted. Fortunately, as 2021 has progressed we were able to take small steps towards 'normality'. At church we were able to hold services in-person – albeit initially using a booking system, have coffee after the service, and get back to singing hymns. Hopefully in 2022 we will be able to get back to 'full normality'. The numbers attending church have not yet returned to pre-lockdown levels. It is understandable that some people are still cautious about gathering in groups, and so there are still a few who follow our worship online.

I could not do the job of Churchwarden without a huge amount of support. First of all I must thank Heather who keeps me on the straight and narrow, reminds me when I forget things, makes very helpful suggestions and proof reads the rotas! I am also very grateful for the support of the three assistant Churchwardens (the three wise persons!) Chris Mears, John Savage and John Hawkins. When I need help they are always there with their time and their advice. I am also grateful for the support I receive from Alison Blunt, our PCC Secretary, Chris Yates, our Treasurer, and members of the PCC.

We are very grateful to all those people who are prepared to be sidesmen, read in church, make the coffee, organise the flowers, undertake sacristy duties, clean the church, tidy the churchyard, welcome St Mary's School to collective worship, support Young Voices rehearsals, open the church on Saturday afternoons, organise fundraising activities, and run Brownies and Guides. The list of your names is too long to include here, but your work is so important to the functioning of our Christian community – even when your duties are not necessarily visible. Music is very important at St Mary's and I would want to express our

appreciation of the work undertaken by Alan Danson during these difficult times, including launching Young Voices. Many thanks to the choir who mastered the technology to bring us music during lockdown. We are also grateful to Francesco Aresco for his invaluable contribution to our worship.

Sadly I have to report that due to pressure of work Matthew Eade has stood down as Editor of the East Barnet Herald. We are very grateful for all the time and effort Matthew has put into the Herald becoming a first class magazine, that is much appreciated throughout the local community. Until we find a successor to Matthew it will not be possible to publish the Herald.

The Churchwarden's report of 2020 made reference to the stream of difficulties we have encountered in progressing our building project. I am sad to say that further obstacles arose in 2021, in spite of Alec's tremendous efforts to get the project off the ground. We must all be very grateful for the grip he has maintained on these projects, despite the many frustrations he has encountered. There is a separate report on the projects, below.

A number of long standing members of the congregation who in the past have made a big contribution to the work of St Mary's are no longer with us. Tony Ure, a past Churchwarden, has moved to Ware to be near his daughter. Pauline Hayes now lives with her daughter on the Isle of Man. Pauline had spent her whole life at St Mary's undertaking a range of activities including running Brownies and the Monday Club. Pauline sends us all her best wishes. Sadly, Kathy Horton died on Christmas Eve. Kathy had been deeply involved for many years in activities at St Mary's and until lockdown had taken care of flower arranging in the church.

I have already commented on the considerable effort that Alec puts into the building project, which frankly takes up a disproportionate amount of his time. Our finances prevent us from employing an administrator, so part of this role falls on Alec's shoulders, again eating into his available time. In spite of these demands he is diligent in carrying out his duties as Rector. On behalf of the congregation I would like to express our appreciation of all he brings to St Mary's.

Finally, an appeal: I have paid tribute to all the people (apologies to anyone I have left out by accident) who make a contribution to our community. But you may have noticed that many of these people are, shall we say, 'not as young as they were'! If St Mary's is to continue as a thriving community it is essential that younger people step forward into leadership of our activities. We 'oldies' will be very happy to support you. On a personal note there is a vacancy for a second Churchwarden!

My thanks to you all for your prayers, support, friendship and love.

Roger Melling

PCC Report

All meetings of the PCC and Standing Committee have continued to be held online (via zoom) over the past year because of the Covid-19 pandemic. As online PCC meetings are not legally binding, resolutions have been communicated by correspondence and their

outcomes have been recorded in the minutes of the subsequent meeting. These will be accepted as an accurate record in the first in-person PCC meeting of 2022.

The PCC has continued to play a crucial role in providing collective leadership for the Church during the pandemic, including the regular review of Covid-19 risk assessments after the church building reopened for services.

Over the past year, PCC meetings have also focused on mission and ministry, including the development of a new Mission Action Plan, and work with other Churches to partner on a pioneer ministry project at North London Business Park. The PCC has also overseen the sale of the old hall land and the new hall building project, including the finances, exchange of contracts, and progress of work. An Extraordinary PCC meeting in October 2021 authorised the exchange of contracts. PCC meetings have also discussed communications; St Mary's School; fabric and building maintenance; finance; fundraising; safeguarding; the East Barnet Anglican-Methodist Partnership; and deanery and diocesan news.

The PCC has agreed that over the next year (from September) it will hold four business meetings and two or three reflection and social sessions, to help the PCC set strategy and think creatively and for the Standing Committee to focus on more operational matters. This will be reviewed after a year.

Dick Selby stood down from the PCC at the APCM in 2021. The PCC thanked him for all of his work as a member and previously as Treasurer. The PCC also thanked Jenny King for her ministry at St Mary's as she stepped back from her role as Assistant Priest.

The Standing Committee has also met regularly over the year, with an expanded membership consisting of the Churchwarden (Roger Melling), Secretary (Alison Blunt), Treasurer (Chris Yates) and two Assistant Churchwardens (John Hawkins and John Savage).

The PCC would like to express its sincere thanks to the Rector for his ministry, leadership and work during the pandemic and in ensuring progress on the development project.

Alison Blunt

A vision of St Mary's

East Barnet Mission Action Plan 2021-2022

We have reflected on our vision for the future relationship between our Church and parish community as a PCC during the first part of 2021.

We are aware of the blessings we have received as members of the Church of St Mary the Virgin, and the signs of inclusivity, welcome, commitment and care that already exist within our congregational community.

Following the example of Mary, and learning from the words of the Magnificat, we are seeking to share them more effectively with our parish community, and become a people of God who are confident to speak words of hope and perform signs of service in the world.

The Anglican 5 Marks of Mission, the PCC's related objectives within our parish, and SMART goals for the 2021–2022 PCC year

To proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom we will communicate effectively with those resident in the parish of East Barnet by seeking to recruit a larger team to produce the East Barnet Herald

To teach, baptise and nurture new believers we will create a welcoming atmosphere in our church building and at congregational events by formulating a clear plan to develop our work with children and young people

To respond to human need by loving service we will provide facilities for Church outreach and community use activities by delivering a new community use hall at St Mary's

To transform unjust structures of society, to challenge violence of every kind and pursue peace and reconciliation we will further develop St Mary's commitment to being an Inclusive Church by working with ecumenical partners to create an Inclusive, ecumenical pioneer ministry on the North London Business Park

To strive to safeguard the integrity of creation, and sustain and renew the life of the earth we will reduce our consumption of resources, and our contribution to climate change by conducting a church building energy use audit

These goals will be a standing item on every PCC agenda, so that our progress can be monitored. The MAP will be renewed annually.

Electoral Roll Report

To be inserted

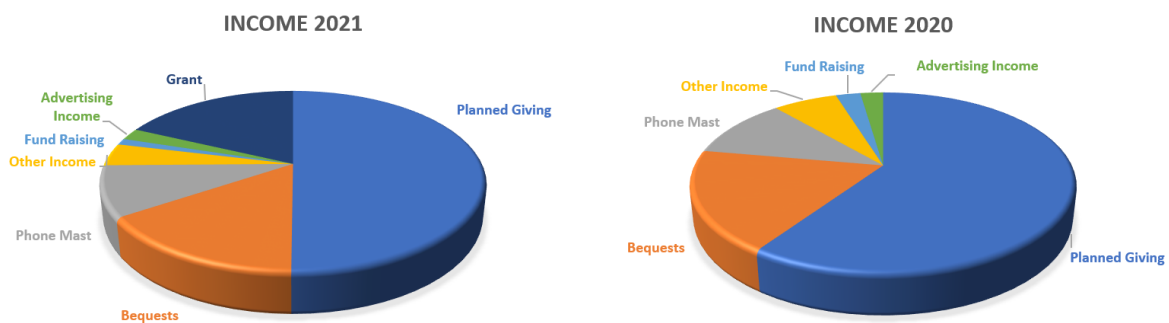
Treasurer's Report

Throughout another difficult year, we have made good progress with our mission and have continued to take the actions required to place our finances on a better ongoing footing. Further reductions have been made to our cost base allowing us to protect our limited reserves through a further lockdown period where we have been unable to generate fundraising income.

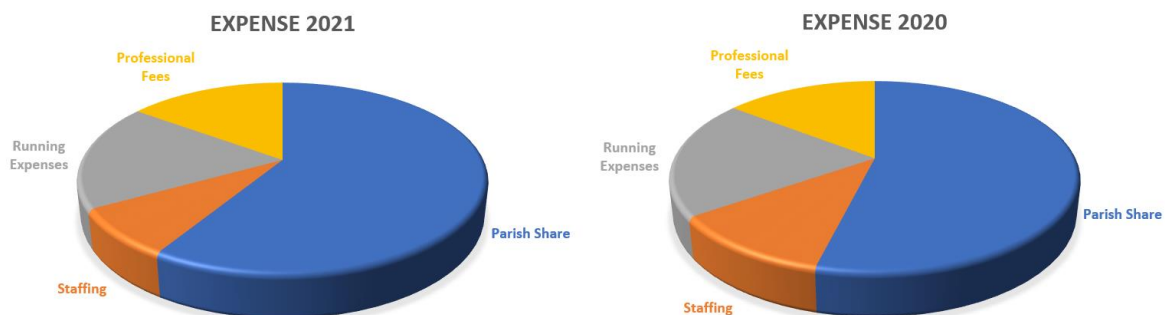
2021 Income exceeded expense by £10 281 allowing the Church to build additional resilience ahead of the financial uncertainty presented by our new hall building project.

Receipts (excluding the schoolhouse fund) increased by £11 279 to £126 471. However, the Church benefited from two one-off items: a generous bequest of £20 000 and a grant from the Garfield Weston Foundation of £20 000.

Planned giving was relatively stable year on year with a slight decline being recorded in the accounts due to the timing differences of gift aid reclaims between the two periods. Income from housing the mobile phone mast in our tower remains an important and stable part of our income and provided £11 500. Fees earned from weddings, baptisms and funerals remained stable year on year as did the advertising income received from the parish newspaper (The East Barnet Herald).



In 2021 the parish share payable to the Diocese, to cover items such as the Rector's stipend, pension and central costs decreased by 4.7% to £68,308. The parish share will be reduced by a further 0.5% to £67,958 for 2022. Against a background of inflation and rising costs this represents significant work by our Diocese to reduce expenditure through this period of pandemic uncertainty. Overall expenditure was reduced to £116,190 from last years expense of £133,019 (2.7%).



Exceptional expense items in 2021 included higher than budgeted electricity costs due to historical billing issues. Professional services payments for the hall building project were £17 405 down 10% from 2020.

I would like to thank Victoria Neil for her support in acting as an independent examiner for these accounts.

Signed

Dated

Chris Yates

Financial Statements

Receipts and Payments Accounts

The Parochial Church Council of the Ecclesiastical Parish of East Barnet For the year ended 31 December 2021

	2021	2020	VARIANCE
Receipts			
Voluntary Receipts			
Planned Giving			
Parish Giving Scheme	40,212	40,081	131
Regular Donations	11,663	12,458	(795)
Gift Aid	11,514	16,049	(4,536)
Total Planned Giving	63,389	68,589	(5,200)
Bequests	19,608	21,000	(1,392)
Other Donations	3,078	2,853	225
Total Voluntary Receipts	86,074	92,442	(6,367)
Church Activities			
Phone Mast	11,550	12,550	(1,000)
Fundraising [2]	1,436	2,881	(1,445)
Fees for Weddings and Funerals	1,418	1,594	(176)
Advertising Income	2,670	2,657	13
Total Church Activities	17,074	19,682	(2,608)
Investment Income			
Interest Income	599	1,331	(732)
Other Receipts			
Other Receipts [3]	22,724	1,738	20,987
Total Receipts	126,471	115,192	11,279

Statement of Assets

The Parochial Church Council of the Ecclesiastical Parish of East Barnet

As at 31 December 2021

Cash Basis

	31 DEC 2021	31 DEC 2020	VARIANCE
Current Assets			
Cash at bank and in hand			
CBF2 - Deposit	65,000.00	65,000.00	-
Current Account	500.00	1,051.22	(551.22)
Fees Account	2,316.48	1,872.58	443.90
High Interest Account (Tracker	0.52	0.52	-
Savings Account	96,221.49	36,515.95	59,705.54
Total Cash at bank and in hand	164,038.49	104,440.27	59,598.22
Mutual Fund Investments	-	43,536.98	(43,536.98)
Total Current Assets	164,038.49	147,977.25	16,061.24
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year			
Rounding	(0.04)	-	(0.04)
Fees Payable [2]	621.00	865.00	(244.00)
Total Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	620.96	865.00	(244.04)
Net Current Assets (Liabilities)	163,417.53	147,112.25	16,305.28
Total Assets less Current Liabilities	163,417.53	147,112.25	16,305.28
Net Assets	163,417.53	147,112.25	16,305.28
Capital and Reserves			
General Fund - Unrestricted	32,810.77	26,094.91	6,715.86
Building Project Fund [3] - Designated	95,173.35	83,631.87	11,541.48
School House Fund [4] - Restricted	35,433.41	37,385.47	(1,952.06)
Total Capital and Reserves	163,417.53	147,112.25	16,305.28
Current Year			
Current Year Earnings	16,305.28	(40,828.60)	57,133.88
Earnings Allocated to Funds	(16,305.28)	40,828.60	(57,133.88)
Total Current Year	-	-	-

1. Accounting Policies.

The financial statements of the PCC have been prepared in accordance with the Church Accounting Regulations of 2006 using the receipts and payments basis.

2. Fees Payable

The PCC collects statutory fees for services such as weddings, funerals, and baptisms on behalf of the diocese of St Albans which are remitted quarterly.

Independent Examiner's Report

To be inserted

Fabric Report

During 2021 maintenance work on the church's historic fabric was minimal, continuing the pattern of sustaining the building's current condition to permit the focus of dedicated attention on the community hall project.

However, in one innovation, a children's chapel has been established at the East end of the South aisle, necessitating some minor temporary reordering.

Shared Access carried out maintenance work to the tower phone mast installation; and Roy Ensom quoted for roof works, including the installation of soakers to the nave-chancel abutment where there is a long-term leak. If grant applications against the costs of this work are successful, it will be scheduled for Spring 2022.

Also at high altitude, the Rector fitted new flag halyards and equipment, and this allowed the church to fly its flag at half-mast, following the death of the Duke of Edinburgh.

Annual maintenance, inspections, and checks were conducted on the following areas: the Lightning Conductor; Fire Safety Equipment; the Organ Blower and Humidifier; Portable Appliances; Boilers and Gas Appliances. All these works were carried out according to current regulations and British Standards, and all items inspected are currently in good condition. The PCC is grateful to Roy Mears for organising these inspections, and many other tasks which he has completed to care for our historic building. The Organ was also tuned. The PCC is grateful to Alan Danson for his continuing care of the organ.

In the churchyard, the Rector held a number of meetings with representatives of the London Borough of Barnet Council, which is statutorily responsible for the maintenance of the churchyard in good order and safety, as it is a closed churchyard. As a result of these meetings, a number of monuments were fenced off to prevent them from injuring people if they should collapse. The Council is currently processing quotations for their repair. The Council will also be repairing fencing. The Rector also assisted the Council in establishing a document outlining their procedures for the care of closed churchyards.

Related to the community hall building project, gravestones in the area of the new hall's construction and its site access have been moved by Memorial Masters. These are to be relocated within the churchyard, respectfully.

The rectory and its garage have been burgled several times during 2021, and it continues to degrade in condition because of subsidence and the effect of temporary flooding after the theft of pipes and sanitaryware. The Rector has been involved in a series of meetings of the Diocesan property subcommittee, which aims to move toward appointment of a building contractor early in 2022. The rectory will then be demolished and a new rectory built on the same site.

It has been determined that trustee responsibility for the St Mary's School schoolhouse lies with the Diocese of St Albans, but in order to best serve the interests of the current tenant the PCC has managed substantial renovation works there over 2020 and 2021. Once these are completed, the PCC will transfer regular management of the house to a professional agent nominated by the Diocese. In 2021, new carpeting was installed in the schoolhouse hall; ground floor works outside improved the appearance of the brickwork of the

schoolhouse and its front wall; the derelict shed was removed; and new gates and fencing were installed to enhance the tenant's privacy and safety. The PCC is grateful to John Savage for organising these works, his constant enthusiasm for the repairs necessary, and his care of the tenant.

Alec Corio

Community Hall Building Project Report

During 2021 the progress of this project – to provide a new community use facility at the church site – has suffered a number of unexpected delays and setbacks that threatened its very existence. However, by the close of the year, contracts for its construction and associated works had been signed; gravestones covering the area of the new hall's construction and site access had been cleared by Memorial Masters; and Ash Construction Ltd had scheduled a projected start date for their works to construct the hall of 1 February 2022. We can therefore look forward to the completion of the new hall in Autumn 2022.

In January, Stanley and Ingram demolished the dilapidated old church hall in East Barnet village, in order to begin construction of houses on its site. The proposed contract with Stanley and Ingram was for the construction of 1 detached house and 3 terraced houses on the site of the old church hall; of which the Church would retain ownership only of the detached house, to accommodate an assistant minister, or be rented and its income applied to the PCC's charitable purposes. The purchase sum for the remainder of the site was to cover the cost of constructing a new hall at St Mary's.

In beginning demolition and construction work on the site in January, Stanley and Ingram complicated the PCC and Diocesan Board of Finance's legal processes involved in this project, as the PCC had not issued building licences permitting this work, or yet exchanged contracts for sale of the land.

As the Diocese required the PCC to show that we had completed all planning for the construction of the new hall before any contracts could be exchanged, a great deal of pressure was applied to complete all the preliminaries for the sale of old hall land and the construction of the new hall as quickly as possible.

Stanley and Ingram's actions in demolishing the old church hall also triggered the London Borough of Barnet Council's section 106 agreement on the sites of both the old and new hall, setting deadlines for construction progress to be achieved at both sites; and a demand from the Council that Community Infrastructure Levy be paid by the PCC on works on the old hall site. The level and terms of the Council's CIL demand were unexpected, and they led the Rector to find and consult a specialist CIL advisor, to limit the PCC and Diocese's liability in the event that the level and terms had been incorrectly assessed. This process was extremely time consuming.

A long period of negotiation between the Rector, the Diocese, and Stanley and Ingram as to the precise terms of their contract and its projected exchange date followed. After many false starts and several threats from Stanley and Ingram to pull out of the deal as agreed because of delays caused by preliminaries, a contract between the PCC and Stanley and Ingram on agreed terms was exchanged on 29 October.

Further to the value engineering conducted on Ash Construction Ltd's original tender for the construction of the new hall in 2020, another value engineering process was being conducted in parallel to these negotiations with Stanley and Ingram. This was because the effects of BREXIT and Covid-19 led to a huge increase in projected material and labour costs, and a consequent increase in the tender that was far above the PCC's capacity to meet them.

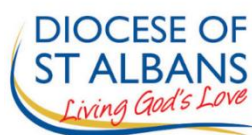
This second process led to the decision not to include the construction of a meeting room above the existing vestries (as in the original design for the new hall) at this stage, and to the omission of a number of other minor features from the original design of the new hall. These ranged from limiting the depth of the oak cladding to its corner posts, to the removal of hand driers from the WCs, and JBKS were very creative in their suggestions of possible value engineering options such as these. The progress toward completion of these plans, upon which the Diocese would allow an exchange of contract also included the consultation on and production of redesigned drainage plans, heating plans, mechanical and electrical engineering plans, and a new framing structure plan.

The feasibility of entering into a contract for the construction of the new hall was eventually guaranteed through this value engineering, and an increase in the PCC's building fund. This already comprised historic congregational fundraising; the contents of the St Martin's and St Mary's Hall trusts; and the (projected) net proceeds from the sale of the old hall site of £686 646.

In addition, the PCC transferred some operational funds to the project, and we received grants from the Diocese of St Albans, the City Churches Fund, and the Garfield Weston Foundation, which realised a further of £113 000 to the building fund. As well as the applications he made to these, the Rector has applied for other grants, and we are currently awaiting the results of two more of these applications.

The PCC was therefore able to exchange contracts with Ash Construction Ltd for the construction of the new hall on 10 November, on the basis of a contract sum of £738 241 within a total budget of c£900 000 and a real term project size of considerably over £1 million.

We are grateful for financial assistance from the following organisations who have made grants to support this project:



Following the exchange of contracts, plans then proceeded for works on the new hall to be scheduled and to prepare the ground for construction. JBKS submitted pre-commencement paperwork to the Council, and Ash Construction Ltd put in place their site access and safety arrangements. The preparation of the ground has already involved our separate

contractor Memorial Masters relocating 54 gravestones, monuments and tombs – some of which are very substantial in weight. These will be respectfully relocated within the churchyard, when the hall is complete.

The PCC thanks Roger Melling, John Savage and Chris Yates for their assistance to the Rector in progressing this project. We are also very grateful for the expert advice we have received from the Diocesan Advisory Committee, Alastair Woodgate, JKBS Architects, Ridge and Partners LLP, Ash Construction Ltd, and other advisors and contractors.

Alec Corio

Partnership Enabling Group Report

As a result of the Covid-19 pandemic the East Barnet Anglican–Methodist Partnership Enabling Group did not meet in 2021. Partnership issues have been dealt with at the weekly team meetings, normally held on zoom.

Having been chair of the Partnership Enabling Group for the last 7 years, I wish to stand down as chair. The chair rotates between the two Churches, so our next chair will be nominated from Barnet Brookside Methodist Church. The Partnership Enabling Group will meet again as soon as conditions permit.

Roger Melling

Deanery Synod Report

The Barnet Deanery Synod met on three occasions in 2021.

In February, Diocesan Lay Ministry Officer, the Revd Phil Bryson spoke about changes in the licensed and authorised lay ministry training programmes. The Diocese offers training to encourage a more diverse range of ministries, and is now promoting the following courses:

- A Foundation Course covering the Bible, Christian belief and exploring issues in modern society that the hope of Christ can shine a light on.
- A Church Mission Society course for pioneer ministers. This course is for people who want to take a leading role in projects to reach new people with the gospel.
- Lay Leader of Worship training
- Reader training, which requires two further years of study in addition to the Foundation course. Readers are lay people who are trained to preach and lead a range of services.

In June, the Revd Will Gibbs, Diocesan Advocate for Living in Love and Faith explained that this is a national exploration of the changing pattern of relationships in modern society, and what this process means for the Church. Will highlighted how issues of identity, sexuality, relationships and marriage affect everyone, and that opinions on these issues are deeply held.

In October, Christian Cole, Diocesan Youth Missioner, spoke about the research that has been commissioned by the Diocese to establish ‘the scale and scope of youth work in the Diocese and to identify the challenges and opportunities facing Churches’. The findings are too detailed to set out in detail in this report, but they reflect our experiences at St Mary’s:

- a decline in youth work, exacerbated by the Covid-19 pandemic
- a focus on children rather than young people
- few paid Church youth workers
- that there are opportunities for every person in every Church to engage with youth ministry

Please don't hesitate to ask me if you would like any more information about these subjects.

Roger Melling

Safeguarding Report

2021 has been a strange year, due to the continuance of the Covid-19 pandemic. St Mary's has continued to take all necessary steps to maintain a safe environment for all who attend. We have followed the Church of England's safeguarding guidelines for face to face and online activities throughout the year.

The PCC also adopted Safeguarding and Domestic Abuse Policies, which are in keeping with the relevant Church of England Policies.

Safeguarding training is ongoing for all people involved in leadership and ministry activities at St Mary's. In November 2021 the Diocese issued details of new courses which come into effect from January 2022. Training may, in some cases, come under a slightly different heading. The courses previously completed by individuals and for which a certificate has been received are still valid.

There were two safeguarding reports logged during 2021. Neither concerned an immediate risk; nor did they meet the threshold for action or reporting set by the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor.

As I always say, it is the responsibility of everyone to continue to be vigilant and report anything suspicious. Let us ensure we keep our community as safe as possible.

Chris Mears

Minutes of 2020 Annual Meeting of Parishioners 23 May 2021 (on zoom)

1. The meeting opened with prayers and a welcome to all attending.
2. Alison Blunt was elected as clerk to the APM and APCM (proposed by Alec Corio and unanimously approved).
3. Apologies for absence had been received from Alan Danson, Lesley Danson, Anne Foley, Chris Mears, Roy Mears and Ann Savage.
4. The minutes of the last APM (5 October 2020) were unanimously accepted as a true record.

5. Election of Churchwardens: Roger Melling had been nominated as Churchwarden (nominated by Chris Yates, seconded by Alison Blunt) and was declared elected. AC expressed his thanks to RM for his willingness to continue to serve as Churchwarden and, particularly, as the only Churchwarden at the present time. AC also said that we collectively need to support RM in this role and try to seek other candidates to stand as the other Churchwarden. John Savage, John Hawkins and Chris Mears will continue as Assistant Churchwardens. JS suggested occasional meetings between AC, RM and the Assistant Churchwardens with the view to providing further support.

Minutes of 2020 Annual Parochial Church Meeting
23 May 2021 (on zoom)

1. Apologies for absence were received from Alan Danson, Lesley Danson, Anne Foley, Chris Mears, Roy Mears, and Ann Savage.

2. The minutes of the last APCM (5 October 2021) were unanimously accepted as a true record, subject to one spelling correction (changing 'Caulfield' to 'Cranfield').

3. Annual report:

Questions were invited on the 2020 statutory reports.

- On the financial statements on p.15: Heather Melling asked about the figures reported for the Parish Giving Scheme and the different headings used in the 2019 and 2020 financial reports. Chris Yates explained that this year he has updated the presentation of the accounts. The heading 'Parish Giving Scheme' refers solely to this scheme. The meeting was asked to note that there has been a change between the accounting lines used in the 2019 and 2020 financial reports.

- P.13 – change 'Victorian' to 'Victoria.'

- CY was thanked for preparing such a clear and full financial report.

Questions were invited on the 2020 non-statutory reports.

- John Savage asked about the plans for different organizations to resume. The Guides have been active online and have started meeting in person again. Plans are in place for the Brownies to meet in person again. AC hopes that Sunday Club will resume but plans for returning to in-person Sunday Club is a heavy load for parents of young children, particularly in the context of the challenges of the last year. AC can be involved in planning Sunday Club sessions, but would need others to lead it.

4. AC noted that, whilst the meeting was about 2020, he invited questions on how we are doing as a Church and a community in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic since the start of 2021. There were no questions.

5. AC would welcome the involvement of parishioners in discussing Church engagement with the planned redevelopment of the North London Business Park.

6. Building projects: AC reported that we are still waiting for contracts with Stanley & Ingram to be finalized. The community infrastructure levy (CIL) should have been paid in January. We are unable to pay it until Stanley & Ingram sign the contract and we have access to funds. RM asked whether we will be charged for communications sent by the Diocesan

solicitor to Stanley & Ingram. We have a guarantee of the costs from the Diocesan solicitor, which are less than their standard charges.

7. Conduct of elections to Deanery Synod:

- There was a vacancy for one Deanery Synod member for the remaining two years of the three year term. Our current representatives are Roger Melling and Matthew Eade. No nominations had been received.

8. Conduct of elections to the PCC:

- There were vacancies for six PCC members for the term of three years. Nominations had been received for:

James Baker (proposed by John Savage, seconded by Stephen Edwards);
Alison Blunt (proposed by Roger Melling, seconded by Chris Yates);
John Hawkins (proposed by John Savage, seconded by Heather Melling);
Chris Watson (proposed by Roger Melling, seconded by Alison Blunt)

all for three-year terms. The criteria for serving as a member on the PCC legally include being on the electoral roll for at least the previous six months. As James Baker is not on the 2020 electoral roll, he will therefore be admitted to the PCC as an observer, able to contribute but not able to vote. James will put in an electoral roll application and once he has been on it for six months he can be formally elected to join the PCC as a full member. James agreed with this way forward.

Alison Blunt, John Hawkins and Chris Watson were duly elected and James Baker will be co-opted onto the PCC.

9. Appointment of the Independent Examiner.

Ron and Victoria Neil acted as independent examiners for the 2020 Annual Report. The meeting agreed to approach them for the 2021 Annual Report (proposed by Alec Corio; seconded by Gail Phillips; passed, with one abstention (CY – Treasurer)).

10. The meeting ended with a prayer at 6pm, followed by the loyal toast to Her Majesty the Queen.

2nd East Barnet Brownies

We were not able to meet as a Brownie unit before Easter, and instead provided a couple of spring and Easter crafts for the girls to do at home. After careful thought, we resumed indoor meetings in mid-May and our group of 15 girls eased back into a familiar routine with some Promise activities. All of them made a flag window poster to support our Euro 2020 team. We also learnt new songs for our socially distanced singalong led by Leaders from 4th East Barnet unit.

With the prospect of being able to go out more we did a Country Code awareness session, finding out how to keep our families and local green spaces safe. For our end of term meeting the girls made purses and we had time to chat to Alec when he came to visit us.

In Autumn 2021 we had fewer girls with us than in the summer (13) so made a fresh start by voting for new 'sixes'. A few older girls joined the 4th on their week end away days; and we welcomed three more enthusiastic new girls, to add to our two summer joiners. For our end of term meeting the girls decorated Advent calendars, played Christmas themed games, and joined in the Church carol singing outside Brookside Methodist Church.

We are grateful there is still lots of flexibility in the Girlguiding programme for working on badges. The Unit decided to continue with 'Skills for my future', 'Skills builder', and 'Live Smart – Stage 2'. Challenges completed included 'Indicator navigator' (road safety), 'Shop 'til you drop' (money/coinage), and 'Girls can do anything!' (job opportunities).

Our group has the good fortune to have three volunteer adults most weeks now as Stephanie (Puffin) has graduated from Young Leader to adult status, with her milestone birthday in the autumn. We thank her and sister Rachel (Robin) for their staunch support and enthusiasm within the Unit alongside myself and Anne Malloy (Brown Owl).

Elaine Eyles (Tawny Owl)

2nd East Barnet Guides

In 2021 we had a number of Brownies transfer up to us, but sadly at the same time lost a number of our older Guides. It was good to get back to face to face meetings and we did a couple of hikes round the local area, including one that culminated in a taste test to decide on the best chips from all the takeaways in East Barnet, and another taste test with pizza.

During the summer we were able to get out even more, and played crazy golf in Trent Park and went kayaking at the Welsh Harp reservoir. We even held a promise ceremony out on the water!

We did a lots of crafts, including painting candle holders, mandala paintings of Xmas tree ornaments, fireworks in a jar, pumpkin cupcakes, and carving carrots. We were given a number of old LPs and made them into clocks and earring hangers. At one session we made bird feeders from oranges, which turned out to be much harder than the activity card made it sound, but everyone managed to take a finished feeder home.

The girls tried their hand at Crime Scene Investigation which included acidity testing, ink testing and then questioning a number of suspects. 3 out of the 4 teams were able to identify the guilt party. We took part in the East Barnet Remembrance Parade and laid a wreath.

We finished the year with a Christmas party which included old style games like penny in the bottle, musical chairs and flip a fish. We also had the pleasure of presenting our first Silver awards and Gold award, which is the top award the Guides can gain through programme work.

We are looking forward to 2022 and hopefully have the opportunity to go away on a residential.

Karen Binns

Chipping Barnet Foodbank

The Covid-19 pandemic has continued to present the Foodbank with significant challenges, which have been met by the generosity of local Churches, synagogues, schools, businesses, community groups, and many individuals, who have offered donations of food and financial support. Thanks to the dedicated work of the Foodbank team (all volunteers) a total of 5,500 people have been supported during 2021, a 40% increase on figures for 2019.

Regrettably, it is envisaged that the demand for emergency food will remain high, due to the end of the furlough scheme, the removal of the universal credit uplift, the increase in National Insurance contributions, and the predicted rise in food prices.

Last year foodbanks across the country started working to develop a roadmap for the future. This means tackling the causes of food insecurity, rather than functioning solely to combat its symptoms. It is no longer the case that foodbanks provide emergency food parcels only. They are now diversifying the range of support on offer to meet the challenges clients face in their day-to-day lives. At Chipping Barnet Foodbank they supply emergency food, fresh fruit and vegetables, toiletries and household cleaning items, Aldi vouchers and Pay-Point/Post Office fuel vouchers. These items are in place to allow clients greater freedom to spend money where it matters. The fuel voucher scheme provided nearly £4000 to foodbank clients in 2021.

The Foodbank continued to support other organisations in the borough with food, including Gratitude Borehamwood, Solace Women's Aid, Oak Lodge School, Leaving Care Team, Giuseppe Conlon House, and Hens Medics Food Hub.

Looking towards the future, the Foodbank will attempt to develop systems allowing clients better access to technology, as well as funding for energy efficient product installation. They aim to continue working with local and national partners to broaden their services to meet client needs and respond to calls from the Trussell Trust for 'a more dignified, compassionate, and just society where foodbanks are no longer needed'.

Chipping Barnet Foodbank
Charity Number: 1163042
Address: St Peter's Roman Catholic Church Centre
63 Somerset Road
New Barnet
EN5 1RF

The charity's object is 'the prevention or relief of poverty in Chipping Barnet and surrounding areas, in particular by providing food supplies to individuals in need'. We aim to ensure that all clients presenting with official vouchers during foodbank opening hours receive appropriate food parcels in line with Trussell Trust and local policies.

Chris Watson

Christian Aid

On Sunday 9 May, Christian Aid week was launched at St Mary's by Kathy Childress who works at Christian Aid's central office, giving an enthusiastic address to the congregation about the work of the charity and its specific goals for the year. Christian Aid donations were collected at this service.

Kathy also wrote a follow-up article for the next edition of The East Barnet Herald, which provided us with a way to reach more people with her message. That edition of the Herald included an advert and QR code which linked to a specially set up 'Just Giving' page. Similarly, the 'Just Giving' page was promoted through Alec's weekly e-mail, to allow local residents to make donations easily.

A plant sale was held in the churchyard at the end of Christian Aid week, on Saturday 15 May. Thanks to the help of several strategically placed posters, it was so well attended that we completely sold out of plants within two hours.

During Christian Aid week the money raised was £1 161.85, including Gift Aid.

Just before Christmas, and at very short notice, Christian Aid advised us of their launch of their Disaster Emergency Committee Afghanistan Appeal. To respond to this, Alec decided that the retiring collections at our Christmas services would all be donated to this appeal. In this way, St. Mary's was able to contribute a further £600 to Christian Aid.

Gail Phillips

Fundraising Events at St Mary's

For another year, Covid-19 restrictions have limited our activities.

Heather Melling has produced a constant supply of jams and preserves, mainly from fruit grown in her own garden, for which we are extremely grateful. These have been sold and, together with sales of handmade cotton masks and packets of donated coffee, raised £663.67 for Church funds.

A plant sale was held on Saturday 2 October in the churchyard. Despite this being a very wet day proceeds totalled £362.07.

The following Saturday, 9 October, we held our Harvest Supper. This was a 'sold out' event, which was thoroughly enjoyed by all participants: for most of us this was the first social gathering in a rather long time! It was lovely to see several family groups amongst the guests. £410 was contributed to the Church coffers from this event.

Gail Phillips

Green Christians Barnet

Last Lent, St Mary's organised an ecumenical Lent course on creation-care with Brookside Methodist Church, St John's United Reformed Church and the Green Christian group, culminating in a creation themed service in April.

Throughout the year members of St Mary's have continued to play a role in Green Christians Barnet, and our group has held several meetings. These included 'Food – it is not just about diet' which noted that though our food system is a major factor in causing climate change, each of us can take action to make it better. We heard about COP26 and had time to discuss opportunities and dangers. We had a session on 'Our Money and Sustaining the Planet'. We also received regular updates from the Good Samaritan School for Deaf Children in Uganda, and their water challenge.

Green Christians Barnet is starting to plan for new events in 2022, including outdoor activities such as litter-picking in our local area.

Sarah Edwards

Music at St Mary's

At the close of 2020 and the beginning of 2021, strict restrictions were put in place nationally. Music for Advent and Christmas services was provided through online services for St Mary's, and our choir members recorded their individual parts via mobile phones and tablets. These were then mixed to provide a finished product.

As the national vaccination programme progressed, providing greater protection from the virus, we began to see ways of reintroducing live music to our services. Nevertheless, it was not until 12 September that the choir was able to contribute an anthem, 'Come Ye Servants of the Lord', at a Parish Eucharist. Congregational singing then started a little later.

From the close of the school summer term, we began to advertise the formation of a children's choir, called Young Voices. The first rehearsal took place on Wednesday 6 October, and although the number of children attending has varied, they have made great progress and their confidence enabled them to participate in Advent and Christmas carol services. We are hoping to recruit enough members to continue Young Voices into the future.

Holding Advent and Christmas carol services, with instrumental accompaniment, brought a welcome sense of normality. I am extremely grateful for the faithfulness of the choir, and for their continued service and commitment throughout this challenging time.

At the time of writing, weekly choir rehearsals and a full programme of anthems have been reinstated, and we are hopeful that the coming year will be less disruptive than 2021.

Alan Danson

Pioneer Ministry on the North London Business Park development

The North London Business Park lies across the southern edge of the parish of East Barnet. In April 2021 it became known that the site's owners, Comer Homes Ltd, would be seeking planning permission for a substantial development there, beyond that which they currently have planning permission for.

Since 2020 Comer Homes has held planning permission to provide 1 350 residential units on the site, in the form of a small number of houses and 9 storey blocks of flats; they are currently in the process of applying for permission to extend this scheme to 2 428 residential units in 9–13 storey blocks of flats on the site. If completed, this larger scheme will lead to an estimated total site population of 7–10 000, about half of whom will be resident in this parish. The site plans also include the extension of St Andrew the Apostle Greek Orthodox High School; retail and childcare space; community facilities; and landscaped park areas.

After viewing planning documents and attending online consultations at which community facilities were hardly mentioned, the Rector contacted Comer Homes to set up meetings advocating for the provision of locally engaged community facilities on the site. A number of positive meetings have followed with representatives of Comer Homes. Through these, the Rector has been able to bring other civic, local political and Church leaders into dialogue with Comer Homes, and Comer Homes is now very eager to work with these stakeholders in the design and provision of some indoor community space at the heart of the site.

The Rector also contacted their colleagues in other local Churches to discuss how best to collaborate in creating a community–building pioneer ministry to the North London Business Park. Monthly prayer walks have been held on the site since May, and these have brought together civic and local political leaders and congregation members to pray for the health of the future site community, and for reconciliation between the needs of existing residents of the Brunswick Park ward and those residents who will move in to the future development. They have deepened relationships between Church leaders, and allowed discussions of future shared projects to develop.

This is innovatory in two important respects: it is based on the prayerful belief that this form of community–centred pioneer work can draw Churches into closer ecumenical relationships; and that pioneer ministry can effectively serve both as a focus for a distinctive Christian presence in an area of new housing, and provide an inclusive hospitality that underpins the common good of a new community.

The Rector is now working with their colleagues from St Paul’s Church, New Southgate; Barnet Brookside Methodist Church; and St John’s United Reformed Church, New Barnet to form proposals for the use and governance of a community centre, and the support and oversight of a pioneer minister on the site. The clergy from all our Churches have also met with consultants from the Church of England’s national Fresh Expressions team; the Diocese of London; the Diocese of St Alban’s Reaching New People team; Churches Together in Britain and Ireland; The Methodist Connexion’s Pioneer Ministry officer; and HeartEdge, to support this planning effort.

Alec Corio

St Mary’s Church of England Voluntary Aided School

The past year has been another eventful one for the community at St Mary’s School. At just this time last year, we were looking forward to welcoming all of the children back into school, following the lockdown in January 2021 during which the children and the staff worked incredibly hard to maintain their learning from home. Through the wonders of

technology, the children were all able to engage with their learning and enjoy collective worship each day, which included a weekly contribution from Alec.

This academic year has also seen a formal change in headship at the school with Mel Adams retiring in December 2021 after 26 years as a headteacher at St. Mary's School. I have had the privilege of working very closely with Mel over many years, and her legacy in the school will continue to live on for many more years to come. Mel's commitment to the school and in particular her Church school leadership has led the school through consecutive successful SIAMS (Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools) and OFSTED (Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills) inspections, and over time Mel has built highly effective relationships with our local Churches to create a rich tapestry of worship experiences for our children.

We look forward to celebrating Mel's significant contribution to the school towards the end of the summer term 2022.

We have been eagerly looking forward to the day when we could wend our way up the hill on a Thursday to hold collective worship services at St Mary's Church once again, which were sadly suspended due to various Covid-19 control measures. We have been delighted to reintroduce weekly church services very recently. We are very grateful to the Rector, the Churchwarden Roger Melling and congregation members for making church-based collective worship possible each week.

I am immensely proud to say that the children and staff at St. Mary's are the living embodiment of our school vision:

At St. Mary's, inspired by Christian values, we are excited by our learning, proud of our achievements, determined to be the best we can be and caring for all of God's creation.

Our faith foundation is undoubtedly our strength. From this comes our aspiration to live life in all its fullness; to care for one another, all people everywhere, all God's creatures and this wonderful planet. And in times of great adversity, such as those we have experienced over the last two years, we have learned that even in the most challenging of times, our St. Mary's School family is united and strong, bound together by the greatness of God's love.

We continue to pray for each other, our school families, our community and our Church. God Bless them all.

Maria Constantinou

Together in Barnet

It has not been possible to continue to provide local night shelters organised by different faith groups during the Covid-19 pandemic. Together in Barnet, the charity previously coordinating night shelters in the Borough, have therefore rented a hotel in Golders Green where clients can be accommodated safely. Faith groups have been asked to provide a main evening meal and packed breakfasts to be delivered to the hotel, and St Mary's has continued to work with East Barnet Baptist Church to provide these meals for the homeless.

Many thanks to all those have been able to provide meals.

Roger Melling