

The Parish of St John the Evangelist Great Stanmore



**Annual Report and Accounts
for the year ended
31st December 2020**

**Front Cover photo of The Revd Jonny Rapson and his wife Jenna
taken on 27th September 2020 after the first service at which he presided
at the Eucharist following his ordination to the priesthood.
(used with permission)**

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**The Annual Meeting of Parishioners
for the election of churchwardens**
Sunday 25th April 2021, 10.15am in the Church

AGENDA

1. Opening prayer
2. Apologies for absence
3. To receive the minutes of the previous Annual Meeting of Parishioners (4th October 2020)
4. Election of tellers (if required)
5. Election of two churchwardens to serve 2021/2022
6. Date of next meeting (24th April 2022)
7. Closing prayer

ST JOHN THE EVANGELIST, GREAT STANMORE

Minutes of the Annual Meeting of Parishioners held on Sunday 4th October 2020 at 10.15am in the Church

Chair: The Revd Matthew Stone	Minutes: Matthew Stone
Attendance: 52 parishioners (of which 45 on the Electoral Roll)	

Introduction

- 1. Opening prayer**

The Rector, the Revd Matthew Stone, welcomed parishioners and prayed for the meeting, the purpose of which is to elect two churchwardens to serve 2020/2021.

In the opening remarks, the Rector explained that traditionally, annual meetings needed to take place between 1st January – 30th April each year. The Church Representation Rules have been redrafted and one of the many changes is to allow these meetings to take place up to 31st May 2020 (Rule M1).

It is customary at St John's for the annual meetings to take place on the last Sunday of April each year and the intention is for this pattern to continue going forwards. Indeed the 2020 meetings were scheduled to take place on 26th April 2020 but had to be postponed owing to the Covid-19 lockdown.

The Bishop of London, in exercise of the powers conferred by Section 10(1)(c) of the Churchwardens Measure 2001 and Rule 78(5)(a) of the Church Representation Rules, has issued an Instrument dated 20th March 2020 granting an extension to the time for holding this meeting until 31st October 2020. During this time the existing Churchwardens, Mark Lynch and Jane Prentice have remained in office.
- 2. Apologies for absence**

Apologies were received and accepted from: June Bertie, Lisa Bertie, Belinda Burnand, Graham Denman, Sheila Enaboifo Louise Gregory, Pat Hodgson Carolyne Johnson, Daphne Johnson, Susan Jones, Eric Kershaw, Valerie Kershaw, Ian Mackie MBE, Keith McKenzie, John Mair, Julia Mair, Nancy Newton, Andrea Nicholson, Grace Nicholson, John Pay, Doreen Pay, Henry Prentice, Darina Scott, Peter Scott, Carole White, Barbara Whitten, Marianne Wright, Bill Wyon and Lorna Wyon.

Administration

- 3. Minutes of the previous Annual Meeting of Parishioners held on 28th April 2019: to agree the minutes as a true record.**

The minutes were signed by the Rector as a true and accurate record of the meeting.
- 4. Election of tellers**

It was not necessary to appoint tellers.

Election of two churchwardens to serve 2020/2021

- 5.**

The Rector reported that two nominations had been received as follows:

 - Mark Lynch proposed by Fiona Hussey, seconded by Sarah Skyrme.
 - Jane Prentice proposed by Barbara Robbens, seconded by Sylvia Daniels.

	<p>Mark Lynch and Jane Prentice were, therefore, duly elected unopposed to serve as churchwardens for 2020/2021. The Rector thanked both churchwardens for their work across 2019/2020 which was their fourth year in office.</p> <p>Owing to ongoing situation with Covid-19, the Archdeacon's Visitation (at which the Churchwardens are admitted to office) had been cancelled. The Archdeacon of Northolt had given incumbents the authority to admit their churchwarden's to office. The Rector then admitted Mark and Jane to office.</p>
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Miscellaneous

6.	<p>Date of next meeting The next Annual Meeting of Parishioners will (hopefully) take place on Sunday 25th April 2021. It is hoped the prevailing situation with Covid-19 will have eased by then.</p>
7.	<p>Closing prayer The Rector closed the meeting in prayer.</p>

Annual Parochial Church Meeting
Sunday 25th April 2021, 10.20am in the Church

AGENDA

1. Apologies for absence
2. To receive the minutes of the previous Annual Parochial Church Meeting (4th October 2020)
3. Matters arising
4. Reports
 - 4.1 Electoral Roll Officer's report
 - 4.2 PCC Secretary's review
 - 4.3 Presentation of accounts and Treasurer's financial review
 - 4.4 Fabric report
5. Election of tellers (if required)
6. Elections and appointments
 - 6.1 Election of 4 PCC Members to serve 2021/2024
 - 6.2 Appointment of Sidespersons – DEFERRED TO PCC
 - 6.3 Appointment of Independent Examiner for 2021/2022
7. Group Reports
8. Assistant Curate's Review
9. Rector's Review
10. Mission: Listening to London, Listening to God
11. Any other business
12. Date of next meeting (24th April 2022)
13. Closing prayer

Advance Notice of PCC Meeting – Sunday 25th April 2021 at 11am

Immediately after the close of the Annual Parochial Church Meeting, there will be a very short meeting of the newly elected Parochial Church Council (on Zoom) to appoint the Church Officers: Vice-Chairman, Deputy Wardens (if appropriate), Secretary, Treasurer and Electoral Roll Officer. Also, to appoint members to the Standing Committee.

ST JOHN THE EVANGELIST, GREAT STANMORE

Minutes of the Annual Parochial Church Meeting held on Sunday 4th October 2020 at 10.20am in the Church

Chair: The Revd Matthew Stone	Minutes: Matthew Stone
Attendance: 52 parishioners (of which 45 on the Electoral Roll)	

Introduction

1.	Apologies for absence June Bertie, Lisa Bertie, Belinda Burnand, Graham Denman, Sheila Enaboifo Louise Gregory, Pat Hodgson Carolyne Johnson, Daphne Johnson, Susan Jones, Eric Kershaw, Valerie Kershaw, Ian Mackie MBE, Keith McKenzie, John Mair, Julia Mair, Nancy Newton, Andrea Nicholson, Grace Nicholson, John Pay, Doreen Pay, Henry Prentice, Darina Scott, Peter Scott, Carole White, Barbara Whitten, Marianne Wright, Bill Wyon and Lorna Wyon.
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Administration

2.	Minutes of the previous Annual Parochial Church Meeting held on 28th April 2019: to agree the minutes as a true record. The minutes were signed by the Rector as a true and accurate record of the previous meeting.
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3.	Matters arising – none.
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4. Reports

- **4.1 Electoral Roll Officer**
As the Electoral Roll Officer, Andrea Nicholson, was unable to attend the meeting, the Rector presented the 2020 report based on the revision which took place between 30th August 2020 and 18th September 2020. The revised roll stands at **184** which is made up of 68 residents (who live within the parish boundary) and 116 non-residents (who do not live within the parish boundary). 15 new people were added this time, 22 had been removed (8 moved away, 10 no longer attend, 4 had died - Pat Stevens in 2019 and Pamela Enright, William Kearns and Elizabeth Bowen in 2020) who were on the Electoral Roll. It was sad to report these deaths as well as the deaths of Alan Davter and the Revd Canon Ken Peters – also in 2020).
- **4.2 PCC Secretary's review**
Parish Administrator Karen Stirrup (in her capacity as PCC Secretary) had prepared a report based on the work of the PCC in 2019. See pages A8-A12 of the 2019 Accounts Booklet. There were no questions. Karen was thanked for her continued hard work in the Parish Office.
- **4.3 Presentation of accounts and PCC Treasurer's financial review**
Treasurer Jennifer Neve had also prepared a detailed report which is on pages A13-A16 of the 2019 Accounts Booklet.

The Rector gave an overview of the income and expenditure during the year and highlighted the surplus of £14,452. This was the highest surplus recorded for many years and most encouraging.

	<p>In the absence of any questions, Pam Curran proposed the 2019 Accounts be adopted. Jean Orpwood seconded the proposal. The 2019 Accounts were unanimously adopted by the meeting.</p> <p>The Rector thanked Jenny for her work as Treasurer.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4.4 Fabric report The Fabric report was prepared by Churchwardens, Mark Lynch and Jane Prentice, and showed that a significant amount of work had again been undertaken during the year. <p>Mark addressed the meeting and mentioned that it takes a lot of time to keep the maintenance side of the various buildings/properties up to date. A number of the quinquennial actions have been completed but there are more to do. The desire to undertake the costly repairs to the organ, install a new heating system and introduce disabled facilities remain out of reach at the moment, but are kept under review by the PCC.</p>
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Elections and appointments

5.	<p>Elections of tellers It was not necessary to appoint tellers.</p>
6.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6.1 Election of 4 Deanery Synod Members to serve 2020/2023 The Rector explained that the numbers to be elected to the Deanery Synod by parishes are calculated on the basis of electoral roll numbers (and other factors) agreed by the Diocesan Synod. <p>St John's had previously elected three representatives, but this year, the Diocesan Synod has revised the levels to one representative for every 57 people (or part thereof) on the Electoral Roll. We are now able to appoint four new representatives to serve a three-year term.</p> <p>Four nominations had been received:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <u>Sylvia Daniels</u> proposed by Jane Prentice, seconded by Beverley McKeon - <u>Susan Jones</u> proposed by Jenny Neve, seconded by Valerie Banger - <u>Beverley McKeon</u> proposed by Sylvia Daniels, seconded by Jenny Neve - <u>Daniel McKeon</u> proposed by Jean Orpwood, seconded by Jane Prentice <p>Sylvia, Beverley and Daniel were thanked for their participation across 2017/2020 and for standing again.</p> <p>The redrafted Church Representation Rules 2020 limit a person who is elected in 2020 (or subsequently) to serve as a lay member of a Deanery Synod is limited to two successive terms of office. Having served two successive terms, the person is ineligible for election for the next three-year term before becoming eligible again. But the annual meeting may pass a resolution disapplying the limit on the number of terms which may be served by lay members elected by the parish to the Deanery Synod. The term limit does not apply to any term of office which began before 2020 and will therefore not restrict anyone continuing until the Deanery Synod elections in 2026. See Rule M8(5) to (7).</p>

	<p>6.2 Election of 4 PCC Members to serve 2020/2023 The Rector reported that four nominations had been received as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Maureen Davter</u> proposed by Sylvia Daniels, seconded by Margaret Deucher • <u>Frederick Oshunniyi</u> proposed by Tayo Oshunniyi, seconded by Graham Nicholson • <u>Jack Prentice</u> proposed by Sylvia Daniels, seconded by Becky Stone • <u>Marianne Wright</u> proposed by Beverley McKeon, seconded by Pam Curran <p>In the absence of any further nominations, Maureen, Frederick, Jack and Marianne were duly elected to serve on the PCC for a period of three years until 2022.</p> <p>The Rector thanked the retiring PCC Members: Paul Angell, Susan Jones, Henry Prentice and Beverley Singleton who had served 2017/2020</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6.3 Appointment of Sidespersons for 2020/2021 The Rector explained that another change in the Church Representation Rules is that the annual meeting no longer appoints sidesmen; they are now appointed by the PCC (see Rule M6(6)). • 6.4 Appointment of Independent Examiner for 2020/2021 Derek Taylor-Mew was re-appointed for a further twelve months.
<p>7. Group reports</p>	
	<p>The 2019 Annual Report and Accounts were published on 3rd September 2020. Rather than comment on each report, the Rector invited questions. In the absence of any questions, he thanked the various group leaders and members for all they do in the name of St John’s Church.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 7.18 Safeguarding (pages 24-26) The Rector gave an overview of the safeguarding report and stated that the welfare of all children, young people and vulnerable adults who are part of our community remains a top priority. In his capacity as Church Safeguarding Officer, Mark Lynch commented that the Diocesan Safeguarding Team and Archdeacon of Northolt had commended the work we do in this important area.
<p>8. Assistant Curate’s review</p>	
	<p>The Assistant Curate, Jonny Rapson, had written a report (pages 28-29) reflecting on his first six months in post (July – December 2020). Jonny said that it is a joy and privilege for him and Jenna to be part of the St John’s Church community and they thanked the members of the church for their ongoing love and encouragement.</p>
<p>9. Rector’s review</p>	
	<p>The Rector had written a report ahead of the meeting (pages 29-30). He thanked the members of the church for their support and assistance, reminding those present of the importance of growing as disciples and using their gifts in the mission and ministry of the church and beyond.</p>

10. Mission

- **10.1 Capital Vision 2020**

The Rector explained that the current Diocesan Mission Action Plan, Capital Vision 2020 has ended. Across 2014-2020 the following new initiatives had been completed or introduced:

Confident

Establish a new Home Group
Combined Lent Course
Introduce Ecumenical Walk of Witness
Attend New Wine
Establish a new Home Group
Introduce lay preachers

Completed/Introduced

January 2016
April 2017
April 2017
August 2017
January 2018
March 2018

Compassionate

Open the Church
Praying for 7 people
Participate in 'Thy Kingdom Come'
Develop relationship with local churches
Engage with Firm Foundation
Explore mental health involvement

Completed/Introduced

July 2015
May 2016
May 2016
November 2016
December 2017
July 2018

Creative

Set up a Youth Group
Introduce external Christmas Tree
Set up a Junior Festival Choir
Junior Church Review
Reinstate Holiday Club
Introduce Compline and Engage
Introduce a Posada

Completed/Introduced

January 2015
December 2015
December 2015
September 2016
October 2016
October 2017
December 2017

In addition, 42 people have been confirmed in 2015, 2017 and 2019 of which 14 were adults. During these services 20 children were admitted to communion before confirmation.

The following items were explored by the PCC but had not come to fruition: setting up Youth Group Bible Study, opening a Church of England High School, Old Church reinstatement and development of Old Rectory.

- **10.2 Listening to God, Listening to London**

The Rector reported that the London Diocesan Staff have just met to consider the new 2030 vision. They spent two days together to consider the ambitions for the Kingdom of God that came out of our consultations with 6,000 Londoners - How can we be a Church for every Londoner? The Rector had asked the congregation for responses as part of our contribution to the consultation. A number were received and submitted.

The Rector said it was important for the PCC (and congregation) to plan for the future and to begin thinking about the missional priorities we will have.

11. Any other business

The following questions were asked:

- **11.1 Fallen Oak Tree**

Jean Orpwood asked for an update on the removal of the fallen oak tree.

	<p>The Rector replied that the LB of Harrow were responsible for removing the tree which would involve the closure of the Uxbridge Road to enable a large crane to be positioned outside the churchyard. He hoped the tree would be removed in the coming weeks. The lych gate path should be cleared first.</p> <p>Lydia McLean asked whether the wood from this tree could be used. The Rector responded that enquiries have been made (eg using some of the wood to make handheld crosses or a bench, selling the wood) but it was not proving easy to arrange. Mark Lynch confirmed that the remaining tree trunk would be left in place with the remaining branches pollarded to enable the tree to continue growing and for the birds and other creatures to use the top.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <p>11.2 Online Services</p> <p>Rosemary Mackenzie-Corby thanked Pam Curran, Don McLean, Lydia McLean, Jean Orpwood, Philip Rees, Jonny Rapson, Becky Stone, Frances Westcott and the Rector for putting together the weekly online service.</p> <p>The Rector thanked Rosemary for her kind words and informed church members that it takes several hours each week to prepare the online service. The online service will continue and it was important that church members who are shielding had contact with St John's and were able to participate in a weekly act of worship from home.</p> <p>Lydia McLean thanked the Rector and Assistant Curate for all their loving pastoral care of the congregation.</p> <p>11.3 Closing remarks from the Churchwardens</p> <p>Both Mark Lynch and Jane Prentice echoed the thanks expressed by Lydia McLean for the work the Rector and Jonny Rapson do to lead the church so competently and with such a sense of fun.</p> <p>Jane spoke about the work that is undertaken by so many people in the church which is hugely appreciated. There is always a joyful atmosphere with church members willing to cooperate and play their part.</p> <p>Mark thanked Jenna Rapson and Becky, James and Emma Stone for their support and accommodation of the many and varied demands placed on Jonny and the Rector.</p> <p>Jane concluded by thanking the members of the church for being such a blessing.</p>
<p>12.</p>	<p>Date of next meeting</p> <p>The next Annual Meeting of Parishioners will (hopefully) take place on Sunday 25th April 2021. It is hoped the prevailing situation with Covid-19 will have eased by then.</p>
<p>13.</p>	<p>Closing prayer</p> <p>The Rector closed the meeting in prayer.</p>

4. Reports

4.1 Electoral Roll Officer's report

A verbal report will be given at the meeting.

4.2 Parish Administrator's Report

See pages A8-A11 of 2020 Accounts Booklet.

4.3 Treasurer's Financial Review and Accounts

See pages A12-A14 of 2020 Accounts Booklet.

4.4 Fabric Report

During 2020, the following work has been undertaken:

Church

1. The organ blower and humidifier were serviced in January and July. The cost of the service was £198 each time. In addition, various parts were replaced during the June visit including: the motor, flinger/impeller, top shelf assembly, spacers & fittings as required, AV Mounts as required, lid gasket as required, electrical connections as required, grease inside top shelf assembly, overflow tray and pipework as required. Cost £1,110.
2. A timer was fitted to the external spotlight which shines on the north-west corner of the church. Cost £78.60.
3. The tower clock was serviced. Cost £321.60.
4. The annual asbestos monitoring was undertaken and the register updated. Cost Nil.
5. The five-yearly Electrical Installation Condition Report (EICR) was undertaken to establish the overall condition and safety of all the electrics. No follow-up action was required. The five chapel heaters were PAT Tested. Cost £456.
6. The oil-fired boiler was serviced and safety tested. Cost £150.
7. The lighting protection system was serviced. Cost £168.
8. The fire extinguishers were serviced. The carbon dioxide extinguisher next to the organ was replaced for free. Cost £57.
9. The insurance policy was renewed (covers the Church, the Old Church, Church House and Church House Cottage). Premium £10,800.29. Excess £250.
10. A new programmable thermostat was fitted. Cost £97.65.
11. The gutters, downpipes and drain gullies on the Church, Church House and Hollond Lodge were cleared of leaves and the roof was inspected. Cost £284.40.

Churchyard

1. The churchyard was regularly maintained throughout the year by the London Borough of Harrow. Cost Nil.
2. A branch from a semi mature Sequoia sempervirens near Rectory Lane snapped off. The London Borough of Harrow's Arboricultural Asset Officer inspected the tree and reported that it was in good vigour and vitality. The tree has no evidence of structural weaknesses or of pathogenic infection. The stub from the broken branch had no signs of structural deficiency, and it most likely mechanically failed under wind loading during the recent storms. The branch was removed. Cost Nil.
3. The large oak tree fell in August, probably as result of the tree suffering from 'sudden branch drop'. The London Borough of Harrow arranged for the tree to be removed at

their expense. The Archdeacon of Hampstead (in the absence of an Archdeacon of Northolt) issued a List B Faculty giving permission for this work to take place. The damage to some of the graves, footpath, yew trees and grass will be repaired in 2021.

4. The London Borough of Harrow's AAO inspected all other churchyard trees and confirmed that none were causing concern at the time of the inspection.

Old Church

1. The insurance policy was renewed (see '9' under The Church above).

Church House

1. Replacement lights were fitted above the main entrance and in the cupboard where the Café St Jean tables are stored. A damaged light was repaired in the Deaconess Mabel Room. Cost £114.
2. A surge arrester (which protects electrical equipment from over-voltage transients) was fitted in the Micklem Hall to prevent the heating system from failing when there are interruptions in the supply of electricity. Cost – NIL.
3. A minor repair was made to one of the electric heaters in the Micklem Hall which had stopped expelling hot air. The cause was a small eraser that had been posted through the vent by a child. Cost £54.
4. The annual asbestos monitoring was undertaken and the register updated. Cost Nil.
5. The Wolstenholme heaters were hoovered to remove the dust.
6. The gas-fired boiler and cooker were serviced and safety tested. Cost £90. The smoke and carbon monoxide detectors were also checked.
7. The fire extinguishers (and fire blankets) were serviced. A new foam extinguisher was needed for the Wolstenholme Hall. Cost £157.79.
8. A small section of the ceiling cement in the Wolstenholme Hall had fallen. The loose cement was removed and new cement added. Cost Nil.
9. A test for legionella was undertaken. Cost £52.50.
10. The insurance policy was renewed (see '9' under The Church above).
11. The gas boiler developed a 'C6 fault' (= the printer circuit board detected a problem with the fan). A new fan was fitted. Cost £316.91.
12. The gutters, downpipes and drain gullies on the Church, Church House and Hollond Lodge were cleared of leaves and the roof was inspected. Cost £284.40.
13. The doorbell switch-plate was replaced. Cost £27.61

Church Field

1. Church Field was maintained throughout the year. Cost £3,119.

Church House Cottage

1. The boiler was serviced under a British Gas plan.
2. The insurance policy was renewed (see '9' under The Church above).

Hollond Lodge

1. The boiler was serviced under a British Gas plan.
2. The buildings insurance policy was renewed. Premium £818.97. Excess £25.
3. The gutters, downpipes and drain gullies on the Church, Church House and Hollond Lodge were cleared of leaves and the roof was inspected. Cost £284.40.

The Chase

1. The buildings insurance policy was renewed. Premium £1,061.80. Excess £25.
2. The boiler was serviced under a British Gas plan.

3. A new tenancy was agreed for 12 months from 3rd March 2020 at a monthly rent of £1,700 pcm.
4. The property was refurbished including: a new kitchen, hob and oven, decorating throughout, laminate flooring, new carpets on the stairs and in one bedroom. Various other minor repairs were also undertaken. Cost £5,477.76.
5. The Rent Guarantee Insurance policy was renewed. Cost £522 (incl. a £180 surcharge because of Covid-19).

The PCC continue to place a high priority on undertaking the routine maintenance and repairs in an efficient and cost-effective fashion. The tenants in the two rented properties and Church House users are pleased with our diligence in this respect. Full reports of all fabric related works are made at each PCC Meeting. We also review the list of actions arising from the 2016 Quinquennial Inspection and tackle these as and when possible. The current larger projects include the organ, disabled access, tower stone and church heating.

- Organ - the organ is being maintained now by Bishop & Son who have advised taking forward the overhaul on a modular basis. No works were undertaken in 2020 because of Covid-19, but some are planned for early 2021. The monies generated by the Fundraising Committee are being held in a designated fund to contribute towards the cost of the overhaul. At the end of 2020 the balance of this fund was £20,113. Additional monies have been added to this fund across the past two/three years (eg smaller legacies).
- Disabled Access – the PCC commissioned Daniel Benson of Ablett Architects to prepare a Feasibility Study (RIBA 1) to introduce disabled access/facilities to the church. Mr. Benson visited in January 2020 to undertake the study and the PCC received his report several weeks later. Whilst PCC Members noted the four proposed options, it has not been possible yet owing to Covid-19 to share this information with the congregation. An Accessibility Audit took place in June 2020 by Lord Consultants Ltd and the report was received and circulated to PCC Members.

We applied successfully for two grants in 2019 as follows:

- a) The National Churches Trust Gateway Grant contributed £2,800 towards the cost of the Feasibility Study (£5,790.35 incl. VAT). The PCC agreed to set aside £3,000 in 2019 to cover our share of the cost. See: <https://www.nationalchurchestrust.org/gateway-grants-apply-0>
- b) The City Bridge Trust covered the cost of the Accessibility Audit (£966 incl. VAT). The grant was paid under the 'Connecting the Capital' funding programme. See: <https://www.citybridgetrust.org.uk/what-we-do/grant-making/what-we-fund/connecting-the-capital/>

Both grants were claimed in 2020.

We are extremely grateful to the National Churches Trust and The City Bridge Trust.

It was necessary to appoint a fundraiser to apply for both grants. The Diocese of London kindly agreed to cover 50% of the cost of the Fundraiser. We paid the Fundraiser and £420 to secure the Gateway Grant and £525 for her work to secure the Accessibility Audit grant. Both invoices were paid in 2019.

- Tower Stone – no further progress was made in 2020. The next Quinquennial Inspection is due in 2021. Action will be taken once this report is received, possibly as the top priority for the PCC going forwards.
- Church Heating – it is desirable to replace the heating system to move away from oil and install a replacement that is both energy and environmentally efficient. The new PCC Mission Action Groups will be considering possible options including fitting solar panels to the church roof. The existing heating system does work to a reasonably satisfactory level (enhanced if people close the south door when they enter/exit the church).

The General and the Fire Risk Assessments for the Church and Church House were reviewed and updated. The Risk Assessment for the Old Church was also reviewed and updated. Actions arising from the review will be undertaken during the course of 2020. The Health & Safety policy was updated and is now on display in the porch.

We remain very grateful to those who help look after our various buildings, especially Gary Banger, David Gosden and Cristian Tomoiaga who have given their time for free.

Mark Lynch and Jane Prentice, Churchwardens

The following elections/appointments will now take place:

5. Election of tellers *(if required)*

6. Elections and Appointments

6.1 Election of 4 PCC Members to serve 2021/2024

6.2 Appointment of Independent Examiner for 2021/2022

7. Group Reports

7.1 Bereavement Visiting Team

Our Bereavement Visitors have visited 11 newly bereaved people this year mostly from those requesting assistance from the Bereavement Care Office (BC). Following an assessment by an experienced visitor the client is allocated to a team in their locality. Visiting continues in confidence, for as long as they require us and sometimes quite frequently at the beginning. Since the beginning of lockdown in March, all visiting takes place by telephone. Not seeing clients face to face has its problems, in that important signals may be missed. Also, listening to some softly spoken clients on the phone is more difficult. Clients have also suffered the indignity of not being with their loved ones as they were dying, or the comforting presence of friends and families at the funeral and afterwards. The extent of these varied losses can enhance the need to talk to someone.

Our visitors meet every few weeks via Zoom, to share our experiences and offer support to each other. Supervision remains essential for the safety of the work, not only for clients but particularly the visitor. We can also access additional support from other group leaders and the BC Honorary Consultant Supervisor. We submit statistics to Bereavement Care each year that helps BC to monitor the amount of work we all do from year to year.

St John's maintains corporate membership with Bereavement Care (BC) and also pays for the visitors to attend training sessions and Conference, for which we are all very grateful. As this year's conference was online, all were able to attend. However, as for so many charities, fundraising events were impossible, resulting in a much reduced income for BC. They would therefore welcome donations from individuals.

The All Souls-tide service is planned for those specifically bereaved within a couple of years and was recorded online. It is always much appreciated and allows bereaved families to reflect on their loss and begin looking towards the future. Our Trees of Light at Christmas, both inside and outside the Church also prove to be a helpful addition to remembering our loved ones at a time of the year that can be so difficult.

While we always look out for potential visitors, our present team also help other groups nearby when there is more work available. If any would care to know more and consider sharing in this most rewarding work, they are welcome to speak either to me or the Rector. We also invite those who would like to speak to us about their bereavement, however long ago, to do so in confidence.

**Jean Orpwood
Group Leader**

7.2 Café St Jean and Welcome Team

During the first three months of 2020, before Covid-19 began to have its impact and the first lockdown began in March, both Café St Jean and the Welcome Team continued to operate as smoothly as they had done in the previous year.

All of those who helped staff the rotas discharged their duties with smiles on their faces and with hands willing to undertake the tasks allotted to them by their roles and for which we, as members of the congregation, were always appreciative.

However, the impact of the virus has meant that - for the time being - we cannot enjoy the lovely welcome we always receive at the church door, nor the warmth of each other's company which we shared so happily in our café. We pray for healthier days when we can share these special times once again.

Rosemary Mackenzie-Corby
Co-ordinator

7.3 Churchyard Gardeners

I was so pleased to have given the roses their first feed at the beginning of March because the next week the whole country was in lockdown. It was two months before we could return in May and clear the forget-me-knots.

Working two mornings a week Rosemary Mackenzie-Corby and I weeded the long borders and tidied the graves nearby before planting the borders with geraniums, Cosmos 'Sensation' and Amaranthus 'Velvet Curtains' (Bleeding Heart). We were grateful to the volunteers from Wolstenholme who kept our plants watered at an extremely hot and dry time. Rosemary and John kindly bought a very long hosepipe for St John's to help with such watering.

In June, we sowed Nigella seed ('Love-in-a-Mist') which we hope will self-seed in future years. The Cosmos produced attractive foliage but waited until well into the Autumn to flower only to be cut down by the frost!

At various times throughout the year Jonny Rapson came to hammer several new rose stakes into the ground to replace those that had rotted. Rosemary and I continued to weed, deadhead, tidy and cut back throughout the season finishing with farm manure on the roses.

By September, Fuchsia Gall Mite again attacked the fuchsia plants which were later cut to the ground for the winter.

Linda Roke adopted one of the graves to keep it tidy. **Anyone who could offer such help, please let me know.**

Rob and Steve from Harrow Council continued to help keep the grass and hedges cut on a regular basis and kindly disposed of our Christmas trees.

In the middle of August, our huge oak tree fell, damaging many of the yew trees along the lych gate path on the north side. The fallen wood has been removed (at Harrow Council's expense). We wait for the spring to see whether the remaining limb is still alive on the oak. The yew trees will be cut back by Harrow Council in the hope they recover after a period of time. The damaged footpath and graves will be repaired.

Carole White

7.4 Engage

Our monthly contemporary service, which began in 2017, continued for the first three months of 2020 with three excellent speakers helping us to think in a different way about ourselves, how to pray for others, and how God welcomes all. Sadly, the COVID-19 restrictions then resulted in this service being cancelled for most of the year.

We did re-start for October, with a wonderful message about God's world, and using images along-side music played by the band to 'substitute' for not being allowed to participate in the singing part of the worship.

We had also hoped to be open for the now-traditional United Advent Service with Stanmore Baptist Church, St William of York Roman Catholic Church, and Stanmore Chapel. Sadly, the second lockdown meant this service had to move online, but we still managed to enjoy contributions from all four churches and some great music facilitated by Jonny and Glyn Burns (from Stanmore Baptist Church). We were also able to invite The Revd Howard Gilbert to be our speaker: a friend of Matthew's who lives too far away to have been able to come in person, so this was a bonus in some ways.

We continue to be very grateful to all members of the band for their unstinting commitment to sharing their musical talent and leading great worship.

Here is the list of speakers and their chosen themes from the last year:

MONTH	SPEAKER	THEME
January	The Revd Jonny Rapson Curate, St John's Stanmore	Made in the Image of God: Identity in an Anxious Age
February	Helen Burns Treasurer, Stanmore Baptist Church	Mind the Gap: Standing in the Gap
March	The Revd Jody Stowell Vicar, St Michael and All Angels, Harrow Weald	The Wide Welcome of God
October	The Revd Tina Rapson	Caring for God's World
November (online)	The Revd Howard Gilbert Vicar, Minchinhampton, Glos	The Real Meaning of Advent United Advent Service

We hope to re-start Engage services after Easter of 2021. If you haven't yet tried an Engage service, do come along and see what it's like!

Becky Stone

7.5 Flowers

On 5th March 2020 we held the annual flower meeting when we set up the usual rotas and plans for the next 12 months. We were pleased to welcome Linda Roke and Maggie Thomson who were joining the team for the first time. Little did we know what was to happen very shortly!

By the time the first lockdown started we were already in Lent, so there were no altar flowers in church and, due to the unfolding pandemic restrictions, there were to be no more

for the rest of the year. The only exception was one special altar flower arrangement in celebration of Jonny's ordination to the priesthood in September.

It is worth noting that the church was closed at Easter and there were no floral decorations at Harvest Festival. The church was open at Christmas and we prepared some limited decorations. There was an outside Christmas tree as usual and we are grateful to Gary & Valerie Banger for organising this. The artificial Church House tree was used inside the church.

People who had made donations to the flower fund were offered a refund and we are grateful for the generosity of those who wanted the church to keep the donations.

Sheila Oliver

7.6a Great Stanmore Bell Ringers

For the first time in many years the New Year was not greeted with bells (too few ringers available), and it proved to be a portent of times to come.

In February, the ringers held a dinner at The Hare pub, Harrow Weald, to wish Paul and Jill farewell as they were departing for Devonshire and ventures new. Thus, the Medcalf family's long association with St John's has ended. Paul was Deputy Master and Deputy Steeple Keeper at Great Stanmore, and no sooner had he arrived in Sidbury, Devon, than he was promoted to Tower Captain at Ss. Peter & Giles (8 bells, tenor 16 cwt.). He had good training at St John's!

And then in March everything came to a standstill owing to the Chinese flu pandemic. The Steeple Keeper rang all the bells down on 19th March and that was that for the rest of the year. The Rector has kindly maintained the winding and regulation of the tower clock.

As if things could not get any worse, our stalwart Tower Secretary, Elizabeth Bowen, died on 25th July. Her long and brave fight against cancer was over and she was at rest. At various times she had been Hon. Secretary of the Hertford County Association of Change-Ringers and Hon. Secretary of the Watford District of the HCACR. It is needless to say that she will be sorely missed.

For the first time in 30 years the Great Stanmore Ringers' annual weekend outing was cancelled, owing to the pandemic.

Peter Scott
Master and Steeple Keeper

7.6b Great Stanmore Bell Ringers Financial Accounts

HSBC current account statement, 2020:

Brought forward from 2019	£364-24
Deduct excess expenditure	(£57-00)
	<u>£307-24</u>

HSBC savings account statement, 2020:	
Brought forward from 2019	£63-71
Add excess income	£0-05
	<u>£63-76</u>

Peter Scott
Treasurer

7.7 Home Groups

At the beginning of 2020 we had three home groups meeting regularly, but from the first lockdown only one continued to meet albeit on Zoom.

Tuesday Groups

For Lent in 2020, we decided to suspend our study of the Acts of the Apostles and look at Julian of Norwich's 'Revelations of Divine Love'. Unfortunately, we were only able to have two sessions before the first lockdown and have not been able to meet since. We very much hope to re-convene in September. and continue our studies of both texts. We were fortunate, before the lockdown, to be able to go as a group to Watersmeet Theatre in Rickmansworth to see 'The Screwtape Letters' which we had studied the year before. Our grateful thanks to Pat for hosting our meetings. The group was very sorry to hear of the death of Elizabeth Bowen, one of our recent members, who added a great deal of knowledge to our meetings with her contributions.

Frances Westcott

We began the year our Home Group using some chapters from a book called 'We Make The Road By Walking', which explores a wide variety of passages and themes following the church year. We have used this book intermittently for the last two years now. Our Lent course was called 'From Now On' by Rachel Mann and was based on the film 'The Greatest Showman'. We were only able to meet for the first two weeks of Lent before COVID-19 restrictions came in to force, so we hope to revisit this interesting Lent course in the future. After Easter, we began having Home Group catch-ups by zoom, with chat, a thought-for-the-day, and some opportunity to pray for one another. Just at the end of the summer term, we were able to meet in two groups in people's gardens for some face to face chat and prayer, which was really encouraging. In September we began a series of studies on Esther, and were able to meet socially-distanced in the chapel until the second lockdown began in November. We were able to complete these studies by zoom, finishing just before Christmas. We are always open to new members, and enjoy a lively fellowship on WhatsApp which maintains our connection with those who find it hard to attend the actual meetings.

Jane Prentice

Wednesday Group

The Wolstenholme Study Group met successfully in January and February, however, the March session was cancelled owing to the developing Covid-19 situation. We remain grateful to the residents of Wolstenholme and look forward to returning.

Jonny Rapson and Matthew Stone

7.8 Junior Church and Youth Group

Junior Church met regularly in Church House until the first lockdown and then on an occasional basis using Zoom until the summer holidays. Plans were put in place to begin meeting in Church House from November, but regrettably Covid-19 thwarted these! Weekly Zoom sessions were then introduced every Sunday afternoon and we have been thrilled that six new children have joined. With an average of 18 primary age children attending each time, the single session was split as follows:

Session 1 = Reception, Year 1 & Year 2

Session 2 = Years 3-6

Jonny, Matthew and I have been taking it in turns to lead the weekly session which are based on the appointed lectionary readings. We have been pleasantly surprised how well the online sessions run and remain impressed with the children's flexibility.

At the end of the year, it was not possible for a Nativity to be arranged in church with different children and young people taking part. Instead, we made use of the online technology and produced 'God Is Always With Us' by Fay Rowland. This rhyming Nativity play was written for live or virtual performances and features, as well as the traditional story, Beyoncé, mobile phones and wise women! Over 25 children and young people took part with the recording being done in their own homes. Becky Stone carefully wove the pieces of the story together and we were able to show the premiere in church on Christmas Eve. It was very well received.

Our small youth group met only once in person during the year. In March we went to LaserTag in Watford and then out for something to eat. Three online sessions were arranged towards the end of the summer term and members enjoyed the quizzes. We have not met since.

Beverley McKeon
Commissioned Children's Minister

7.9 New Wine

New Wine this year had to be cancelled, like so many things, but the organisers did a wonderful job of creating online content for us to enjoy instead. Some of us were able to meet in the Micklem Hall together for one of the evening sessions, enjoying (silent) sharing in the music and hearing from an excellent speaker. Many of us also tuned in at home to other sessions, and the children's work was much enjoyed as well. We did very much miss the full experience of being together (even if we didn't miss camping in the rain!).

Most of us have now booked onto the reduced version of New Wine which is planned for summer 2021: do speak to me or Becky if you think you might be interested in joining us. They do plan to provide online material again as well, though I believe this will come with a modest cost this year.

Jane Prentice

7.10a Old Church Working Group

The Old Church Working Group did not meet in 2020 and the Old Church was closed to visitors because of the pandemic. An enquiry has been sent to English Heritage in the hope of seeing whether they might be able to provide some support with the ongoing maintenance responsibilities. Donations of £60 were received during the year. There was no expenditure (see 7.10b below).

Matthew Stone

7.10b Great Stanmore Old Church Consolidation Fund

Income and Expenditure for the Year ended 31st December 2020

	£
<u>Income</u>	
Donations, Sales and Interest	60.00
<u>Expenditure</u>	
	0.00
	£60.00

Balance Sheet

Bank Balance Total 31st December 2020

Barclays Bank	<u>£4,821.78</u>
<u>Fund Balance 31st December 2019</u>	4,643.48
Plus surplus for year	60.00
Fund Balance 31 st December 2020	<u>£4,821.78</u>

Ian Mackie MBE
Hon. Treasurer

7.11 Peace, Justice, Environment and Energy

Members of St John's Church attended the London Borough of Harrow's Holocaust Memorial event in person in January.

St John's has continued to monitor its energy consumption each quarter during 2020 and is regularly recycling its waste.

The Unlock London Walk took place in April and was held in Tower Hamlets. It did not take its normal form, but members of St John's were able to conduct the walk and 'visit' the churches involved virtually. Similarly, we were able to 'attend' the Bishop of Dover, the Rt. Revd Rose Hudson-Wilkins' address at the Oasis of Peace annual event. We also attended events in Harrow Inter Faith Week in November.

Mick Oliver

7.12 St John's Church of England School

The PCC has the responsibility of electing two governors to serve on the Governing Board, each for a term of four years. Our current PCC appointed governors are Tracey James (appointed in 2020) and Karen Omisore (appointed in 2017). Graham Nicholson is also a governor having been appointed by the Deanery Synod. The Rector is automatically a governor by virtue of office.

Governing Boards are the key strategic decision makers and vision setters in every school and play a major part in the school's accountability. They have a vital role to play in driving up school and pupil performance and, ensuring that resources are used well to ensure every child has the best possible education.

In accordance with the Government's requirements, the Governing Board at St John's School provides strategic leadership and accountability in the school. It has three key functions:

- Overseeing the financial performance of the school and making sure its money is well spent.
- Holding the headteacher to account for the educational performance of the school and its pupils.
- Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction.

During the 2019/2020 school year, the Governing Board met during the evening on five occasions, whilst the Admissions Committee, Staffing Committee and Standards & Achievement Committees met once each term. The Finance & Premises Committee met four times. The Governing Board and all committees have clear terms of reference which are reviewed annually.

The Headteacher's Performance Management Committee met twice, and the Pay Committee met once. All committees meet during the school day. The Headteacher's Performance Management Committee is supported by an external advisor. Additionally, there is a facility to bring together small panel/committees although this was not needed in 2019/2020. Governors met parents when necessary in line with the Complaints' Policy. The Rector, as Chair of Governors, met the Headteacher regularly.

The Governing Board takes part in the annual cycle of school improvement by its interpretation and analysis of school data including, SATS results, Local Authority data, government data, Phonics Screening Check, Baseline Assessment, Ofsted Data Dashboard and regular internal school assessment data. Through data analysis, pupil progress and attainment is scrutinised and vulnerable groups including pupil premium children are closely monitored. Data monitoring together with external reports such as Ofsted mean that the Governors play an active role in the development of the annual School Improvement Plan.

Governors are also expected to undertake training to fulfil their role and enhance their contribution. During the 2019/2020 school year, various courses were offered to governors including induction training run by the Local Authority.

Governors each sit on a minimum of one committee; many have a link with a specific area within the school. In 2019/2020, the links were: Child Protection, Equality, Health & Safety, Literacy, Maths, Music, Pupil Premium, RE & Collective Worship, Safeguarding and SEN. Formal monitoring visits allow governors the opportunity to observe and communicate with staff and pupils. After the visit a report is prepared and presented at the next Governing

Board meeting. From this the progression of priorities are clearly identified over the course of the visits and the impact can be identified by the end of the year.

The Governing Board regularly monitored the following areas that were highlighted in the School Improvement Plan:

- Implement the recommendations of the last Ofsted inspection (further embed the maths curriculum to ensure mastery opportunities and accelerated progress for Pupil Premium children)
- Continue to further develop the curriculum in light of the latest Ofsted framework.
- Develop Writing skills across the school to ensure outcomes are in line with reading and maths.
- Continue to develop Reading across the school with particular emphasis on improving reading for those pupils with SEN.
- Further develop RE provision in line with the new SIAMS framework in preparation for the next inspection which is due.

The Governing Board annually approves a 3-year school budget and the Finance & Premises Committee regularly monitors the in-year budget. It works closely with the School Business Manager and the Local Authority Schools' Financial Services. Close scrutiny of the budget during the financial year 2019/2020 meant that the year-end outturn resulted in a positive balance which is a significant achievement given the pressures on school budgets.

It would be remiss not to mention the work the school has done during the Covid-19 pandemic (especially in lockdown) to remain open for the children of key workers and vulnerable children. In addition, to provide learning for the children to access at home whether online or in hardcopy format. The Governors recognise the exceptional leadership of the school during these times and the sheer commitment of the staff for which grateful thanks.

Tracey James, Graham Nicholson, Karen Omisore and Matthew Stone
Members of the School's Governing Board

7.13 Safeguarding

The PCC continues to place the highest regard on safeguarding to ensure the children, young people and any vulnerable adults who attend services, participate in our activities, attend our groups or use church premises are kept safe. We take our responsibilities seriously and follow the recommended practice contained within the [Church of England's Parish Safeguarding Handbook](#). During the course of the year, 'safeguarding' remained a substantive item on every PCC meeting agenda. This enabled the PCC to monitor the implementation of the recommended practice.

Owing to the Covid-19 pandemic our church activities came to abrupt halt in March 2020 when the first lockdown was introduced. In the months that followed Junior Church met on Zoom (weekly from November) and the Youth Group met a few times before the end of the summer term. Zoom logins were always sent to parents and no texting or emailing took place with anyone under the age of 18.

During the course of the year, the PCC monitored/approved the following:

1. Participated in the Past Cases Review 2 which required parishes to report any known historical cases of abuse involving church officers. Church officers include anyone appointed/elected by or on behalf of the church to an office, post or role, whether they be ordained or lay, paid or unpaid. We submitted a nil return to the Diocese of London.
2. All new PCC Members undertook the Church of England's C0 online safeguarding training course. Mark Lynch undertook a safeguarding course on 7th September 2020 organised by Bishop Ramsey High School.
3. Reviewed the safeguarding information contained on the church website.
4. An internal audit of our safeguarding procedures was undertaken by Mark Lynch using the Diocese of London's template and submitted to the Diocesan Safeguarding Team.
5. Reviewed the Diocese of London's Safeguarding Policy.
6. Reviewed the Church of England's Parish Safeguarding Handbook.
7. Re-adopted the Safeguarding Policy Statement (updated copies were displayed in the Church and Church House).
8. Re-appointed Mark Lynch and Louise Gregory as Parish Safeguarding Officers.
9. Re-appointed Sue Wright as Children's Champion.
10. Re-appointed Sheila Oliver as Vulnerable Adults Champion.
11. Re-appointed Karen Stirrup and Matthew Stone as DBS Evidence Checkers.
12. Re-appointed Matthew Stone as Lead Recruiter.

Role Descriptions were reviewed for 8-12.

13. Reviewed the Role Descriptions for the Bereavement Visiting Team, Commissioned Children's Minister, Director of Music, Junior Choir, Junior Church, Little Fishers and the Youth Group.
14. Up-to-date Declarations on Safeguarding and Volunteer Agreements were obtained for the Director of Music and those working with the Junior Choir, Junior Church, Little Fishers and the Youth Group.
15. Reviewed the Group Risk Assessments for Junior Church (incl. crossing Old Church Lane), Little Fishers, the Youth Group, Special Services (where more than 150 people attend) and St John's School Services.
16. Updated the General and Fire Risk Assessments for the Church and Church House.
17. Updated the Health & Safety Policy.
18. Reviewed the hiring agreements for Church House to ensure that the groups that work with children who hire the premises on a regular basis have their own safeguarding policies in place. Copies of these policies, together with their insurance, are obtained from each group annually and filed in the Parish Office. These groups are also sent a copy of our Safeguarding Policy.
When people hire the premises on a one-off basis, such as a child's birthday party, they are also sent a copy of our Safeguarding Policy and sign a clause on the Booking Form to say they have received a copy and undertake to follow the guidelines within it. The Terms and Conditions of Hire reflect the importance of our safeguarding procedures being followed and key messages are given to the hirer when Church House is handed over to them.

From March 2020, Church House was not used apart from Stanmore Montessori and Kandou. Kandou, an adult fitness group, returned in September for only three sessions before they were required to stop meeting when the Government introduced the local COVID Alert Levels and London was placed in Tier 2.

Safer Recruitment

We do not permit anyone to work with our children and young people unless they have an up-to-date DBS check in place, and for all new applicants two written references are always obtained as part of the safer recruitment process. A self-declaration form is also completed. During 2020 one new DBS check was obtained. In addition, seven rechecks were undertaken which is in line with the Diocese of London's policy to renew the check every five years.

Once a DBS check has been issued, applicants undertake the Diocese of London's online safeguarding training and the pass certificate is handed to Beverley McKeon. New applicants are then asked to sign a Declaration on Safeguarding and Volunteer Agreement. These documents are updated annually (see 14 above).

In conclusion, the PCC continues to demonstrate due regard to House of Bishops' guidance on safeguarding children (as is our duty under section 5 of the Safeguarding and Clergy Discipline Measure 2016). Safeguarding should be viewed as a shared responsibility and is always most effectively undertaken when an entire community works together to keep the children, young people and any vulnerable adults safe.

If you have any questions about our safeguarding procedures or a concern, please contact Mark Lynch or Louise Gregory.

Matthew Stone

7.14 Social Committee

In February we had, once again, our very successful Lent Lunch. This was, as usual, well attended. We had two choices of soup followed by pancakes and also a fruit salad. Once again everyone seemed to enjoy what was on offer.

Thank you once again to Social Committee members. Also, a big 'thank you' to all who helped clear up at the end.

Marianne Wright

7.15 Tea & Chat

The year started in the usual way for Tea & Chat. In January one of our regular speakers, Ian Jackson, visited to give an illustrated talk entitled 'African Tales'. In February the children from Aylward Primary School made their annual visit to sing and also show and talk about some of their work. In March we were due to be entertained by a Ukulele group, but this was the week that the first lockdown started so they could not come. Since then Tea & Chat has not met, but we have kept in contact with those who usually came to Church House on a Tuesday afternoon. It is pleasing to report that they all remained well and stoic throughout the year.

Sylvia Daniels & Sheila Oliver

8. Assistant Curate's Review

It is difficult to write a report on 2020 without immediately thinking about how much life has changed in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic that has made 2020 a year that will be remembered for years to come, and no doubt it will have changed the St John's community in many ways. Whilst this has not been the second year of my curacy that I had anticipated, I have learnt a great deal about faith, courage, and love in the face of adversity. With physical church services being suspended on two occasions throughout 2020, it has required us as a church to think differently about what it means to be a church in a quickly changing situation. The normal structures and comforts we often relied on were stripped away, forcing us to rely on God in such trying times.

In March of 2020, we found ourselves in the first national lockdown with little in the way of online provision for the church community in the absence of physical services. Through careful planning, we built an online ministry which I hope and pray has been a support and encouragement to the people of St John's during this year of isolation. It has been a team effort in producing these services which see us putting together up to forty minutes of online material each week. The St John's congregation (and others) watched almost nine hundred hours of online services since we set up our YouTube channel in April 2020. I want to thank the huge number of those who are committed to making these services the best they can be every week. These services would look very different without the commitment of those who read, preach and provide the wonderful music. Thank you to everyone who has been involved.

On top of our normal services, we have also produced one-off services such as the Memorial Service, Act of Remembrance, United Advent Service and the Nine Lessons and Carols. I am pleased with how far we have come since Holy Week last year in our online provision for the worshipping community at St John's.

When Lockdown began, we were deeply concerned about the support the congregation would have during such a long period of isolation. This led us to produce the pastoral support team which enabled the entire congregation to receive phone calls throughout the first lockdown which I know were much appreciated. The pastoral team consistently spent time each week calling you during the lockdown and was not something Matthew and myself would have been able to undertake on our own. Thank you to the team for making the phonecalls.

The highlight of the year for me was being ordained priest at St John's Southall on Friday 25th September (after being postponed from July in light of the pandemic). Although the numbers were greatly limited (each ordinand was able to invite four people), it was still an occasion to be remembered. I know many of you took the time to watch the live stream, and your support means so much to me during that time. Presiding at my first eucharist in the church a few days after my ordination was a huge privilege and it was a true joy to share it with everyone at St John's, whether in person or watching online. The family of St John's church has been so supportive of Jenna and myself since day one and it was an honour to preside for the first time amongst brothers and sisters in Christ. We were both blown away by your generosity in gifting Jenna and myself with £1,200, and words simply do not do justice to how humbled we are by your continued kindness and support for us both.

Despite churches being physically closed numerous times during the pandemic, the congregation of St John's has stood firm in commitment to Christ and I am grateful to be serving with people of Christ who are committed to the Good News of the Gospel which has

never been more relevant amid a pandemic. I am confident that we will learn a great deal from this period in the 'wilderness' of a pandemic and that St John's will continue to grow stronger as a community in the months and years to come.

The Revd Jonny Rapson

9. Rector's Review

What an extraordinary year 2020 turned out to be! None of us would have imagined experiencing panic-buying, two lockdowns, school closures, cancelled holidays, being separated from family and learning to live with "hands, face and space" as our new routine.

For St John's Church, the start of 2020 was perfectly normal, and we held our usual services and church activities. In spite of a growing awareness of the pandemic spreading to the UK, I could not quite believe that we ended up with the church being closed part of the way through Lent. I doubt whether 'our' church has ever missed a Holy Week and Easter before. It certainly seemed wrong to be closed during this most important time in the liturgical year.

From March onwards we had to learn how to be a church in a different way. The pew sheet became a printed service to ensure worship continued each week, albeit from the relative safety of our own homes. Salient news and information was shared in a weekly email that accompanied the pew sheet. Hardcopies of both were delivered each week to those without email. Jonny and I put together reflections for Holy Week and Easter and from Easter Day, online services were recorded from the Rectory dining room! As we gathered momentum and confidence, our online services were developed, with readings, prayers and even sermons being delivered by church members from their own homes. And then, thanks to the brilliance of our music department, we added hymns and voluntaries to the online services (with subtitles!). I cannot quite express my gratitude to those who have enabled us to provide online services. Your feedback about the quality and variety of these services has been excellent.

It was not enough to rely solely on the pew sheet, weekly email and online services, which is why pastoral 'shepherds' were appointed to keep in regular contact with the entire church family by telephone during the first lockdown when many people were feeling especially anxious. I know these personal conversations were hugely appreciated and I thank the team for their pastoral care.

The business of the church continued albeit without our excellent Parish Administrator being at work as she was furloughed in April. The management of Church House and the general administration of the church has fallen onto other shoulders. PCC Meetings, Bereavement Team Meetings, Junior Church and one Home Group moved very successfully onto Zoom. The church website was developed to include a 'virtual church' page which was updated regularly with information and our online services. Many thanks to Karen Stirrup who has undertaken this work in a voluntary capacity.

From 15th June, the Government said places of worship could open for individual prayer and we responded immediately (after preparing a lengthy risk assessment) to open the church doors once again. To ensure the careful management of the church, a team of volunteer stewards came together to work in pairs to make sure any visitors followed our new Covid-safe rules. Whilst we were open over 250 people visited the church to pray. The church

was opened for public worship from 5th July and our first physical service was on 6th July. We had to introduce a second risk assessment and were able to offer twice-weekly communion services. The PCC agreed to the Tuesday service moving to a Wednesday to ensure 72 hours passed after the Sunday service to reduce the possible risk of Covid-19 transmission. The online services have continued regardless of whether the church was open or closed.

Another lockdown began on 5th November and places of worship were instructed to close for a second time until 2nd December. In spite of being in a lockdown, the Government permitted small Acts of Remembrance to take place and we recorded ours on Remembrance Sunday, which included the usual wreaths being laid, with a gathering of 50 people present to represent the church and community. The service was uploaded onto our website in time for Remembrance Day. The Stanmore Society asked for permission to circulate the YouTube link to enable their members to view this important occasion. Owing to the change in weather almost nobody was coming into the church for individual prayer, so a decision was taken to stop opening the church each day, apart from when a service was taking place, until the spring of 2021.

Plans for Christmas were put in place and we produced three online services: Nine Lessons and Carol Service (which included our own choir singing the carols), a Nativity (with 27 children taking part) and a Christmas Day service. We held three physical services – a Christmas Eve Crib and two identical Christmas Day services – and set up online booking forms to ensure our permitted number of 75 was not exceeded.

We did manage four baptisms in the year, but the weddings were understandably postponed. Jonny and I conducted more funerals than usual, and it was especially sad for our church community that Pam Enright, Williams Kearns, the Revd Canon Ken Peters and Elizabeth Bowen died in 2020. I shall never forget the day of Ken's funeral driving from his house with Jackie and Michael along Old Church Lane. The road was lined with many members of St John's Church who turned out to pay their respects to Ken as the cortège passed by. There were even church members lining the streets in Harrow Weald and Hatch End. The Y Ddraig Goch (Welsh flag) was being flown from the church tower to honour Ken's heritage. It was most moving the way church members clapped to show their love and affection for Ken. Elizabeth made a variety of contributions to the life of St John's Church over many years, including editing the parish magazine, reading in services, stewarding at Evensong, a member of the Old Church Working Group and perhaps most notably as a bell ringer. It was also sad to report the death of Mark Johnson. He had moved to Kent earlier in the year to be closer to his family. We miss all those who have died and remain grateful for the way their faith illuminated our lives. May they rest in peace and rise in glory.

A very tragic event which took place in June 2020 was the murder on Fryent Country Park of Bibba Henry and Nicole Smallman, daughters of a former Assistant Curate (Mina Smallman) who served her title at St John's 2007-2010. Their funeral was held in church on 30th July 2020. The Bishop of Dover, the Rt. Revd Rose Hudson-Wilkin, officiated. A young man has been charged with the murder and is awaiting trial. We continue to pray for all who are bereaved.

It was also sad to say goodbye to Paul & Jill Medcalf who relocated to Devon and Margaret Ray who moved to Oundle, Northamptonshire.

Some of us had to find time to home school our children and I highlight the brilliance of St John's School for all their hard work, support and encouragement to both children and parents. My role as Chair of Governors to St John's School changed and it was necessary to find a new way to govern the school, as well as supporting the staff when required. Similarly, my role as Padre to 2236 Stanmore (ATC) Squadron has evolved during both lockdowns and I am discharging these responsibilities online.

We continue to enjoy and benefit from our partnerships with Stanmore Baptist Church, St William of York RC Church and Stanmore Chapel. We produced an online United Advent Service with contributions from each church. We look forward to working with them again when we are allowed to do so.

One of the highlights of this year was to witness Jonny being ordained priest in September and we are already receiving the benefit of his priestly ministry. Thanks to Jonny and Jenna for all they contribute to the life of St John's Church.

I was able to complete my MA in Christian Leadership and managed to write a 15,000-word dissertation during the first lockdown. I even managed to achieve a first in the dissertation and merit overall! I have also continued my work as a ministerial development review consultant for clergy, a member of the Stanmore Park Metropolitan Ward Panel, Chair of Stanmore Charities and Chair of Trustees to the Bernays Memorial Institute. All meetings are now held on Zoom!

What makes St John's very special is the way we are friendly and accepting of each other. This is what a church should be all about: a welcoming group of people who are happy to give others a home; accepting them and allowing them to journey with us as we seek out God's will for us all. It is a model of church as a community and as a family, rather than one of a club or clique.

A church should also be a place where individuals can feel valued and discover their own worth; where wounds can be healed, transgressions forgiven and new life can be nurtured. It may be costly, it might sound idealistic, but for me it is at the heart of the gospel. That we are all part of God's family, loved and valued by him as someone unique, and the imperative is that we should hold others in the same light, supporting, encouraging and accepting them. I believe we are good at this and the strength of our community was demonstrated during the year.

I am, as always, enormously grateful to the large number of people who work faithfully, tirelessly and often quietly in the background towards the mission, ministry and upkeep of our church. This includes the generous giving you have demonstrated. It was quite remarkable that we ended the year with a surplus after losing a significant amount of income, largely through Church House having to close. My personal thanks to all of you who support St John's Church financially.

I would not be able to manage without you, huge thanks to you all.

With my love and prayers

The Revd Matthew Stone



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