



Annual Parochial Church Meeting 2020

Sunday October 25th 11.15 am

ZOOM Meeting,

AGENDA

2020 Annual Parish Meeting – Election of Church Wardens

Caroline Edwards has been nominated as Church Warden

Roger Gibson has been nominated as Church Warden

APCM (Annual Parochial Church Meeting) agenda

- 1. Opening prayer and welcome**
- 2. Apologies:**
- 3. Approval of 2019 APCM Minutes**
- 4. Matters arising**
- 5. The reports**

(i) The Vicar's Report

(ii) The electoral roll – revision

(iii) Annual report and Accounts

(iv) Financial report

(v) Annual fabric report –presented by churchwardens

(vi) Deanery Synod report

6. The elections and appointments

(i) Election of 3 representatives to Deanery Synod – for three years
(From Nov 2010 Diocesan)

ii) A resolution to enable retiring PCC representatives to stand immediately for the next PCC - in accordance with Church Representation Rules 2020 Rule M16 paragraphs 1&7

Paragraph 1 states that a PCC representative term of office is for 3 years

Paragraph 7 states that APCM may decide the number of years after a PCC member has finished their term of office, that they may hold office again

Resolution: This APCM meeting agrees that where there are available vacancies for the next PCC, a retiring member (if they desire to do so) may immediately be proposed as a member to serve on the PCC for a period of up to three years (in accordance with para iii below)

This rule may be reviewed each year, but in any case, no later than the APCM 2026

(iii) Election of PCC members – 6 vacancies

(This is 2/3 of the PCC. – Note: Church Representation Rules 2020

“At an annual meeting at which more than 1/3 of members are elected, lots are drawn to decide which 1/3 will retire after 1/2/3 years.

Lots will be drawn at the first PCC following this meeting)

(iv) Appoint independent examiner: Richard Place Dobson, 1-7 Station Road, Crawley, West Sussex, RH10 1HT

7. Date of next APCM (Sunday 30th May 2021)

8. Closing prayers

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Meeting of the new PCC to elect officers

Minutes of
Annual Parochial Church Meeting
for St Albans Church, Bewbush and Gossops Green
Sunday 7th April 2019 11:00am at St Albans Church, Gossops Green

Present

Mary Eastman, Brian Eastman, Ken Graham, Jenny Graham, Andy Hoare, Cathy Bryant, Ruth Glasse, Chris Cook, Bev Killick, Caroline Edwards, Pat Newall, Rose Harrison, Madeleine Taylor, May Jobe, Betty Atkinson, Joyce Ludbrook, Merle Martin, Jane Sharpe

Apologies

Rob Higson, Sarah-Jane Higson, Sarah Magrath, Alan Magrath, Elsie Sanmogan, Don Monk, Keith Ford, Helen Ford, Kerry Lavington, Liz Taylor, Pat Young, Sue Richardson, John Richardson

Approval 2018 minutes

Revd Ann asked the meeting to approve these minutes. No objections. Revd Ann will sign these after the meeting.

Matters Arising

Nothing raised

Elections

Churchwardens: Ken Graham and Caroline Edwards have agreed to stand. No objections. All approved.

No Deanery Synod reps have come forward.

4 vacancies for PCC. Bev Killick had completed her term and offered to stand again. Agreed.

BE asked whether all previous members were still standing for the PCC. These continue: Jane Sharpe, Andy Hoare, Caroline Edwards,

Bev Killick, Sarah-Jane Higson, Rob Higson, Ken Graham, Sue Richardson.

Sidespersons: Discussion about who was on the rota. List read to the APCM. The current approved list is as follows:

Mary Eastman,
Brian Eastman, (not on rota)
Roger Gibson,
Helen Ford,
Keith Ford, (not on rota)
Andy Hoare,
Alan Magrath, (not on rota)
Elsie Sanmogan,
May Jobe,
John Bryant, (not on rota)
Cathy Bryant, (not on rota)
John Richardson,
Sue Richardson, (not on rota)
Margaret Stratton, (not on rota)
Val Wilson, (not on rota)
Ruth Glasse, (not on rota)
Bev Killick, (not on rota)
Madeleine Taylor,
Janet Cheal,
Elizabeth Taylor,
Meg Miller
Rob Higson

Reports

These had been circulated beforehand. Revd Ann encouraged people to read the reports. Next Mission Action Plan (MAP) to be agreed and discussed at the away day on 22nd June.

Pat has produced a Tower and Building Report. The DAC has almost approved the architects report. Now waiting for quote to know what we need to raise.

We will be opening a restricted fund for the building work.

Revd Ann read the motion: "The Parish of Gossops Green and Bewbush is launching an appeal for funds to help us repair, develop, and maintain our buildings".

There are several projects ahead of us. In the first instance we need to repair the St Albans church tower. After this we hope to create a new step free access into the church building. Further projects will entail installing a disabled toilet in the church and building a new church and community hall. Any funds left over after these developments will go into general church funds to help us to maintain our buildings.

We will need to raise funds from funding bodies and in a variety of ways.

Revd Ann said thank you to everyone who contributes. Every helper is just as valuable to our mission.

Ann mentioned that at the PCC Away Day we will be looking at ways to engage our community.

Electoral Roll

With the new roll 72 people had completed the electoral roll form. 2 additional people will be added after the APCM.

Accounts

Revd Ann presented the accounts on behalf of Sue Richardson who was absent. CB asked whether we were in the black. We were. BE asked whether we were going to reduce the gap between our shortfall and diocesan contribution. We currently receive a grant

from the Diocese. BE observed we need to close the gap. Revd Ann confirmed we are taking action to do so. Accounts approved.

Inventory Report

This had been completed. CB asked when the new material for the curtains to the lady chapel would be coming. This will probably take place in May or early June.

Synod Reports

Revd Ann drew attention to booklets about vocation (Setting God's People Free) issued by the Diocese.

Date of next APCM

26th April 2020



Vicar's report for APCM 2020

Review of the year:

This is a brief overview of 2019 because the church reports will give a fuller picture of the many ways in which we have enhanced our church life through our worship, mission, strategic planning, and engagement with the wider community. The Trustee's Report contained in the full Trustees Annual Report and Accounts show the wide breath of activity going on at St Albans.

Our church life is enhanced by so many people who give their time and talents to the many aspects of church life - **far too many people to mention individuals by name.** Every single one of you have blessed the parish by your participation in the growth of God's kingdom here at St Alban's and we give great thanks for all of you.

Our curate, Rev'd Lizzi Green, joined us at the end of June 2019 and has been a wonderful blessing to the parish since she arrived. Among

many other things Lizzi has taken on the lead role with Dave Brades in developing the Out of the Box family worship services which have been steadily growing and reaching out to families. Due to Covid 19 her priesting will be pushed forward to Michaelmas. Also due to Covid 19 this will take place here at St Alban's. It is anticipated that the service will be broadcast live on Facebook. Lizzi's first mass will be an opportunity for us all to celebrate (from a distance of course). This will be on the day after her ordination.

Greta Sawyer, our Ordinand in training, completed her final year of training at St Alban's and we have had the great joy and honour of being a part of her ministerial formation. Due to the Covid 19 pandemic her ordination has been pushed forward to September, however Greta will be licensed by Bishop Martin at the end of June as an Authorised Lay Worker to her new parish – Worth Parish, Crawley. Therefore, at the time of this APCM Greta will have already moved on to her title post. However, I am sure that many of us will look forward to the time when we can call her back to give her a proper goodbye celebration.

Sarah Magrath finished her training as an Authorised Lay Minister in the specialism of Mission. In January this year she was officially Commissioned at a special service in Chichester Cathedral by Bishop Martin, alongside other ALM's in the Diocese of Chichester. The parish was delighted to welcome Sarah in her new role at the Sunday service the day after her Commissioning and we all look forward to working with Sarah on new mission opportunities.

Strategic planning:

- Our latest Visioning Away Day took place on 2.3.19. The ideas proposed at that meeting were discussed and ratified by the PCC to produce a new Mission Action Plan for the next three years. This has been printed for everyone in the congregation

to have a copy. We have moved quickly by putting several of these plans into place already!

- At a PCC meeting with the Diocesan Fundraising Advisor in July 2019 it became clear that the best way to move forward with our plans for repair and renovation would be to combine all aspects of the church work together and treat it all as one project. The project includes repair of the tower; creating an accessible step free entrance into the church; installing accessible toilets, installing an efficient heating system and installing a refreshment station. Work on these plans is moving slowly but steadily. The plan is to make the church accessible to everyone so that it will enhance our mission goals to encourage church and community groups into the church. Step two will be focussed on building a new hall. A public consultation on the aspirations for the new hall was held in the summer.
- Fundraising – The amazing parish fundraising team have worked extremely hard and are commended for all the work they have done organising yet another successful year of social and fundraising events. More information on their work can be found in the Fundraising Report.

Worship:

- The average weekly attendance in the parish (not including Easter or Christmas) was 60 adults and 12 children, but this number increased significantly at festivals (over Christmas Eve and Christmas Day, Easter etc).
- The new monthly Sunday family worship service – Out of the Box – is proving to be very successful. Particularly moving was the service for Remembrance Sunday in which the 6th Crawley scout group and their parents took part.
- Children's work continues to thrive: Many thanks go to the dedicated teams of leaders and helpers at Junior Church and the Good Friday Workshop. The fruitful blessings of their work

with the children remind us of Psalm 145.4 *'Let each generation tell its children of your mighty acts; let them proclaim your power'*.

- This Christmas was the first in which several of our children took a lead role in the Crib Service by reading and leading the prayers.

Mission and outreach/community

- Our mission activities and engagement with the wider community continues to flourish. As the annual reports show, we have supported and raised funds for many different charities throughout the year.
- We successfully ran our first ALPHA course in October. In addition, we have enjoyed our annual Lent Course, and First Holy Communion courses.
- Computer lessons, Community Morning (including weekly Health Walks) and the Christmas Carol Singing event as well as fundraising events continue to help build relationships in the community.
- Clergy continued to provide assemblies to local primary schools (Gossops Green, Waterfield, and Bewbush Academy) as well as being invited to special school events.
- We welcomed Holy Trinity School to St Alban's for their school Carol Service. It was a wonderful event and it is planned that this will take place annually at St Alban's.
- We continue to visit three local pre-schools to give sessions on festivals such as Harvest, Easter and Christmas.
- We welcome regular community users in St Alban's hall – Slimming World, AA, Age Concern and a new Women Only learning group run by Rivers Learning Project as well as other ad hoc bookings.

- We welcomed Rivers Learning Project when they held the wonderful International Women's Day event in the church. We also collaborated with RLP on 'Get Online Week'.
- Regular bookings at The Barn include the Barn Pre-School, Desire2Dance (who support us by performing at the Summer Fair) and the Elim Church.
- The Mother's Union branch continues to thrive and has welcomed non-members to all of their events and fundraisers.
- Rob Higson is still doing wonders with the website and our online presence. New members of our Facebook page and group are joining all the time and we are reaching more people every year.
- Future plans for new mission activities include the new Tiny Toes Toddler Group, a 'Hear, Here' project (maintenance of hearing aids in a friendly social environment), a Summer Project working with children from local schools and re-launching the Community Morning as a new church project Community Café, and joining the 'Place of Welcome' network offering unconditional hospitality in order to combat the loneliness and isolation that affects so many in our neighbourhoods.

** UPDATE: Bless you all for being such a wonderful community in the household of God. As you read this today, we are several months into the Covid 19 pandemic and although the national lockdown is gradually lifting it will be some time before we get back to any semblance of life as it was before March 2020. Let us pray that God will continue to bless all our endeavours and guide us as we serve the neighbourhoods of Gossops Green and Bewbush.

THE ELECTORAL ROLL

The revised roll shows 80 people listed on the electoral roll.

13 people were added since 2019, and 5 people were removed (One through ordination, one moved away from the parish, one ceased to worship at St Alban's and 2 of our stalwart members sadly died)

The summary total shows an increase of 8 on the Roll initiated in 2019

Alan Magrath (Electoral Roll Officer)

PARISH ANNUAL REPORT AND ACCOUNTS

FINANCIAL REPORT

At the bank 31.12 2019 - £46,172

- Income does include gifts received for the building fund (restricted)
- Reserve Account
- Money from Ifield Parish for our Parish Office

We have also closed the St Mary Magdalene (St MM) account, and this was transferred to St Albans account which is now the Parish Account.

Our Parish budget for 2019 for income was set at £69,050. Our actual income was £74281 + £4391 miscellaneous income that was mostly for other charities e.g. Children society, Big Brew (Traidcraft) , Open House, and was paid to them.

The increase in the St MM lettings has helped to increase our income. We have now a Pre-school meeting 5 days a week, Desire to dance increasing their usage, Elim Church meeting each Sunday and an evening in the week, and a Healthy Eating group.

We had increased our Parish Share to £21,000 however, we should bear in mind this in no way reflects the amount requested by the Diocese. We aim to work on this year on year.

We used the Ifield Parish office until beginning of September when we setup our own Parish Office spending just over £3,000 setting this up with necessary equipment.

We purchased a new laptop and finance software package which we will use from 2020. This is a stand-alone laptop solely for our Accounts.

A new Finance group had been set up looking into ways to reduce our expenditure and smarter ways of working. There has been some progress looking into alternative heating for the Church to help reduce our Church electricity bill and produce a better way of heating the church.

Moving forward

Our Parish Share has been increased to £26,000 for 2020

Our income budget has been set at £69,710 for 2020

Our expenditure budget has been set at £67,830 for 2020

However, with the present, COVID 19, crisis which has resulted in our income being greatly reduced we are actively looking for ways of reducing expenditure and we may well not meet budgets this year.

Monies raised for given causes at various times during the year, and in future, will be sent directly to the cause/charity it was raised for and will not go through the Church Accounts.

We need to look prayerfully at our giving / income over the coming months as we move forward as a Parish and to the great challenges we have over our buildings.

I would like to thank Jane Sharpe for her work at banking each week, and to Cathy Bryant for dealing with the envelope scheme. Thanks also to Sunday collection counters as all the afore mentioned people help to make my job easier.

Sue Richardson (*Finance Officer*)

WARDEN'S FABRIC REPORT AND INVENTORY 2020

ST ALBAN'S

After a few failed attempts to repair the leak in the flat roof connecting the hall to the storeroom, the problem has finally been solved.

The curtains in the Lady Chapel have been replaced.

The Fire extinguishers were renewed in May.

The shelf was removed from the office and placed opposite the kitchen, as a fold down work surface.

The office was then setup as The Parish Office.

The noticeboard was updated to show the email address and telephone number of the office.

The electrician visited several times. He installed new plugs in the hall and office and replaced the meter. He put up a new security light outside the hall and replaced the one outside the church main door. All electrical items in the Church and the hall have been PAT tested and a certificate has been awarded.

Thieves broke into the hall and stole a few items. The door was severely damaged. The break in was reported to the Police and the Insurance Company (Ecclesiastical). After a long drawn out procedure, the doors were replaced, and a modern security lock fitted.

The inventory has been checked and is up to date.

The grass cutting has been successfully completed.

The gutters of the church and hall have been cleaned.

Food 4 Crawley now no longer use the hall.

Looking to the future the kitchen and toilets need to be decorated.

BEWBUSH BARN

The fire extinguishers were checked in May.

The floor of the small hall was treated with a non-slip agent.

Security lights were fitted to the outside of the building.

The gutters were cleaned, and the drains unblocked.

The trees and shrubs on the perimeter of the site which had begun to cause a nuisance to neighbouring residents were pruned or removed.

Fences were renewed after the high winds

The lawns continued to be mowed regularly and the building is cleaned weekly.

The following groups continue to use the building.

The Pre School, Desire 2 Dance, Elim Church, Healthy Eating, and St John's Church who uses it fortnightly

Caroline Edwards (Church Warden)

DEANERY AND DIOCESAN SYNOD REPORT

Our Deanery Synod representative for the last 3 years were Merle Martin and Sarah-Jane Higson (Sarah-Jane stood down in December 2019) Merle's Term of Office would normally have ended in May 2020 but has been extended to November 2020 as a consequence of the pandemic)

The Deanery Synod met 3 times in 2019

The April meeting reviewed the 5-year Mission Action Plan 2005-2020 and reviewed achievements. Bishop Martin was in attendance. St Alban's reported its achievements in the 5 years as Outreach projects for families and community. Health Walks, School work, Computer lessons for the elderly. A Social media presence.

The MAP planning for 2020-2025 was to be focused on “More 4”:
More Open, More Converted, More Generous, More Engaged.

The June Meeting focussed on Diocesan Strategy when the meeting was addressed by Rob Gillingham who enlarged upon the focus of MAP planning giving context and encouragement to where churches should focus our attention as we plan for the future. He encouraged churches : to fall in love with Jesus and share this with the people we meet; to share (training , resources etc) with other local churches and not be so parochial; to be less concerned about money; to focus on the needs of our community and to aim to serve them. He commented that some of most generous parishes in the Diocese are the poorest. Growth comes first and money will follow.

Deanery finances and Parish share and credit for mission were reviewed.

The September meeting focussed on fundraising and shared experience of what has been successful and what has not worked so well across the deanery.

Catherine Dawkins (Board of Finance), Lesley Lynn (Vice Chair of Finance Committee) and Archdeacon Fiona Windsor gave a presentation on Diocesan finances and the background to Parish Share and the best way to seek grants for church projects.

In March 2020, the death of formal Rural Dean Canon Roger Brown was reported. He was well known and will be missed by many of our congregation. The funeral was held in March 2020

Alan Magrath (PCC Secretary)

SAFEGUARDING REPORT

We got our SQP certificate! This was received some months after myself and Rev Ann, worked hard on completing the Simple Quality Protects project.

As advised last year, the C1 course (which is a requirement for anyone working with children or vulnerable adults) continues to be available on-line. All our volunteers who are still outstanding have been sent several requests for this to be completed. There is also a C0 course which is a basic introduction, and this is also to be completed by all who will be registering for the C1.

It is regrettable that I am still chasing people to complete these courses.

This C0 course can be completed by anyone who is interested in what the church is doing about safeguarding and I can send anyone a link if they contact me via email:

safeguarding@stalbangossopsgreen.co.uk

I have one outstanding DBS requiring renewal, despite repeated requests to complete the on-line application form. This person is NOT carrying out any roles, which would put us in a compromised position. Neither would they be allowed to without a successful application.

Andy Hoare (Safeguarding Officer)

HEALTH & SAFETY REPORT

H&S Notices and H&S Policy for both St Albans and the Barn Church were reviewed and are currently up to date. Risk Assessments have been completed, as necessary. Fire Extinguishers (for both St Alban's and the Barn Church) have been inspected and Fire Notices have been reviewed. Accident books have been completed, as necessary. There have been no significant H&S concerns during the year.

Andy Hoare as our H&S representative, along with the Church Wardens oversaw any situations that could cause a safety concern for the Parish and ensured that preventative action was taken.

Our thanks are due to Andy who has been our effective H&S officer for several years but who resigned in April 2020.

Currently our Church Wardens take responsibility for all H&S matters.

Alan Magrath (PCC Secretary)

Building Development Group (BDG)

It has been well known for a long time that our church and church hall are beginning to show their age. The buildings are also discriminative as they are not accessible by all, which cannot be right in 2020. As a result, the Building Development Group (BDG) was set-up in 2018 to address the issues and plan an upgrade to our buildings.

The intention is to enable the church to be the centre of the community by providing buildings that can be used by different groups, 7 days a week. In the long-term, this will not only bring more people onto church property, which will help them feel comfortable being in a church, it will also provide some much-needed funds.

An early decision was to conduct the upgrade in two phases: the first phase focussing on the church, and the second phase the church hall. The plan for the church includes:

- building a new accessible entrance in the north-east corner of the church near the bell tower
- rendering the church tower to prevent further ingress of water
- providing an accessible toilet in the area of the current entrance
- installing a 'hide-away' kitchenette at the back of the Lady Chapel
- installing a new heating system

In parallel to working with the architect to produce the design for the building work, we are also looking at fund raising projects and applying for grants. The BDG has received a lot of good advice from the diocese and other churches that have performed similar building projects. However, the magnitude of the task and the budget required to complete it cannot be underestimated. We therefore request your prayers for guiding the vision for this initiative, so it fully supports our long-term needs, and for how we are to obtain the necessary funds.

Keith Ford (Chair Building Development Group)

MISSION OUTREACH AND WORSHIP

CHOIR & MUSIC REPORT

By popular consent amongst choristers, the choir has continued to muster for special occasions, ably led by Sarah Magrath, with admin support from Meg Miller. These comprised Easter services: Maundy Thursday, the Easter Vigil and Easter Day service; the Patronal Festival and to mark the arrival of our new curate Lizzie Green. The choir rounded off the year with a rousing Christmas Carol service and Midnight Mass. Jo Browse kindly offered to accompany us for the carol service, for which the choir numbered 26. We were fortunate to have a group of younger members of the congregation, who sang *Away in a Manger* impressively, unaccompanied by adult voices. We hope they will all be encouraged by that to sing with the choir at other events. Other music events included a concert performed by Hannah Ford and Hannah Mitchell in August, generously offered as an event to contribute to the church's fundraising for the building fund. Their renditions of music hall numbers, along with other favourite songs from different eras, proved a great success. They have offered to stage another concert this summer, which will be keenly anticipated. Our thanks are extended to Keith Ford who continues to lead the congregation and the choir on the organ, with Gina Eason, Gerry Ryalls and Peter Leach providing welcome support.

Our thanks also to the music group, which included some young people, for accompanying the all-age services during the year. Mothering Sunday was the first occasion that the choir assembled in 2020, assisted by the music group. We look forward to another year of glorious music and thank everyone who has been involved for their contribution. Please do make yourself known to Sarah, or Meg, if you would like to sing in the choir or can play a musical instrument. St Alban's needs you!

Meg Miller

COMMUNITY MORNING

Each Thursday we still have a lively morning with between 16-20 people attending each week. Ron McRae is very faithful lifting heavy tables and notice boards for us and is available to lead health walks, weather permitting. May Jobe bakes very popular scones for us. We are always available for new people to drop in and make friends. Some weeks we have had a special event such as the Traidcraft Big Brew or speakers.

Plans for the future include a relaunch with a rebranding as **The Community Café** with an expansion of activities available and also, hopefully, a Hearing Aid drop-in clinic.

Madeleine Taylor / Merle Martin

COMPUTER GROUP REPORT

Since the last report we have three new regular members, one on Tuesdays and two on Wednesdays. There are four 'regulars' on Tuesdays and six on Wednesdays.

The format has remained the same. We attempt to help each one to achieve their particular goal e.g. Emails, shopping online etc. Some are more advanced than others and covering the same ground over and over again is never a problem. The group fulfils the purpose for which it was set up i.e. to be a group where anyone can socialise and

learn the basics of using a computer, smartphone and tablet rather than a place of more formal learning.

Al Edwards

GOOD FRIDAY CHILDREN'S WORKSHOP REPORT

Last year we once more held the annual workshop for children on Good Friday. This has been a long running and popular calendar event, and last year was again a fun filled success. It followed the tried and tested formula of: - Registration - drop off by the parent/carer; ice breaker games; welcome; introduction; split in to four groups and then rotate around four activities (each lasting around 20 minutes); break for hot cross buns and juice or coffee; returning to the church for a short act of worship incorporating items made during the workshop activities.

We attracted similar numbers of children (from reception to year 6) to the workshops and with additional adults (mainly parents/carers) to the worship.

All the volunteer team leaders, activity leaders and other key helpers are cleared through the parish safeguarding procedure / DBS clearing.

The activities were: - Banner making, Foot print cut-outs, Easter Gardens and drama.

The parents/carers are invited to return for the hot cross buns prior to joining in with the worship.

Andy Hoare (One of the activity leaders)

JUNIOR CHURCH REPORT

2019/20 has seen a healthy number of children attend Junior Church. On occasions over 20 children being present at a session. The good core of attendees noted last year has continued to attend regularly this past year. This makes the planning somewhat easier.

The leaders and helpers work well together, and using suggestions from the Rocks/Pebbles and Roots on the Web material, alongside other sources, have continued to provide a fun and informative session for the Children to learn about God's love and teaching.

Following the results collected from the survey last year and the discussion at the away-day, the restructure was made with the most important change being that the children and leaders leave for Junior Church straight after the notices and their prayer, before the service starts. This ensures that we have longer time in the hall, and I believe that this has worked well.

We are always looking for extra helpers to assist in the running of junior church, if you are interested drop me an email.

safeguarding@stalbansgossopsgreen.co.uk

Andy Hoare (One of the Junior Church Leaders)

MOTHER'S UNION

Membership-We currently have 19 members having had an admission for new members on Mothering Sunday 2019

Committee-2019 was the start of a new triennial for MU officers. The new committee elected and commissioned for this branch are Sarah Magrath (Branch Leader) Jane Sharpe (Treasurer) Ann Routledge (Secretary)

Programme -We have a had a varied and interesting programme which included a book club evening, a craft evening, a marriage week lunch, a talk from the curate Rev Lizzi Green, an advent meditation with Alan Magrath and an outing to see Rev Gerry Burgess in her parish in Amberley, plus many other enjoyable events in the parish, district and diocese.

- All our meetings have been well attended, and at each we have had several non-members as guests. Members continue to be encouraged to come to the third Thursday Eucharist in the

month so that we worship together as a group. The money raised in Group goes towards the various Diocesan projects - Away from it All caravans giving free holidays to families in need; the support of detainees at Brook and Tinsley House; support for the Eastbourne Contact centre , which gives a warm and friendly setting in which estranged families can meet.

- Individual Branch Members carry out their own ministries within the parish and beyond, including continued support for the Community Morning. Thank you all for all you do to uphold the Aims and Objectives of the Mothers Union, in giving Christian support to Family life and marriage.
- New members are always welcome. Ask for a current programme, so you can try us out before joining

Sarah Magrath (Branch Leader- Gossops Green and Bewbush)

OUT OF THE BOX FAMILY WORSHIP

Out of the Box is our fantastic, interactive family worship which takes place on the second Sunday of each month. The vision is that it would be church – “but not as you know it!”. It is interactive, and involves many elements such as creative prayer, storytelling, messy games, and excellent cake. It has been a particular joy this year to see the service, after a slightly rocky period, begin to grow and develop, and a part of this development has been enabling some of the young people who attend to help shape and develop the service. We remain, as ever, grateful to all the hard work of the team who work towards ensuring this service can happen, and give our heartfelt thanks to Dave Brades, who generously gives his time to coordinate this.

Revd, Lizzi Green (Curate)

SATURDAY PRAYER

We completed 7 years of Saturday prayer in 2019, continuing to pray (as part of the wider daily prayer of the church) for our Mission, Growth and Renewal of St Alban's Parish and communities. There have been many positive developments in the Parish this year (as we can see from this APCM report) and it is good for us to take time once a month to listen and ask for God's guidance on our way forwards together. Our time of fellowship and breakfast following our prayer time strengthens our resolve.

About 10 -12 of us, currently, continue to gather for prayer on each second Saturday of the month at 9am and there are often a few additional friends who join us for coffee, croissants, and fellowship afterwards. We would love some more of you be with us to strengthen our prayer life together. Please do come.

Thanks to our prayer leaders those who provide the breakfast and to all of you who have prayed with us on Saturday Mornings over the past year. If others would like to lead prayer for us, please let me know.

Alan Magrath

YMCA CHAPLAINCY

In January 2019, following training, myself and a group of other volunteers started as a Chaplaincy at the Crawley Foyer, for YMCA. We are from a variety of churches across the town, and a mixture of ages and we take it in turns on a rota to go into the Foyer and cook a meal for the young residents, who have been homeless previously. The idea of our visit is they join us as we cook, so they can chat to us, maybe learn about healthy cooking, and enjoy an evening of companionship, fellowship, and food.

We are not there to preach to them, pray or any other openly religious activity, but if the young people ask us about our beliefs or the discussion gets onto such areas, we can chat to them and give our personal opinions including responses that reflect our faith.

Discussions really vary, mostly of course about topics that relate to

their daily lives. There can be lively discussions and sometimes rather choice language is used, but we can call on the staff if we feel we need back up, although this has not happened when I have been there.

The food varies week by week as different chaplains do the cooking, we often get requests and try to fulfil these, although there are some limitations in what we can do, budget, equipment or time might make it too difficult.

I find this voluntary role so rewarding, I love cooking and sharing my recipes with the young people, and it was lovely chatting and getting to know them, but of course this was all stopped by the arrival of the pandemic. Sadly, there has been no chaplaincy since March, and I have only recently heard that we will soon (hopefully) be able to return and offer a much reduced 'drop in and takeaway' chaplaincy. Fortunately, the Baptist and Community churches were able to send in food parcels and meals during the period we as a team could not, so there was some support for the young residents.

Please pray for all the residents of Crawley YMCA Foyer and also the moving on houses where the youngsters go next to become more independent.

Helen Ford

WEBSITE, SOCIAL MEDIA & COMMUNICATIONS

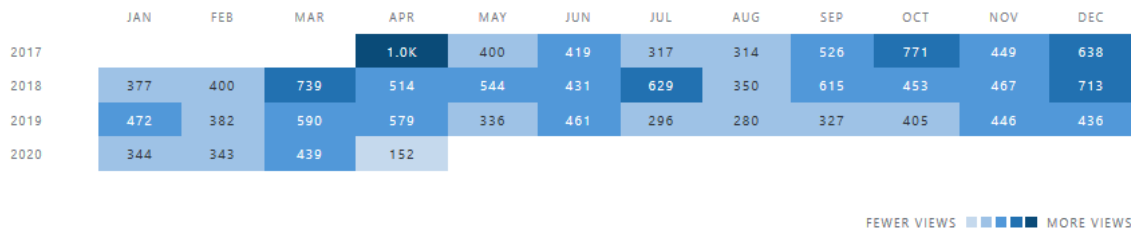
The St. Alban's website and Facebook in particular, are an important portal to our Church, with up to date information, including services, worship times, news, events and so much more. In addition to this, the Church has recently launched a new e-bulletin to improve our communication with the parish and anyone else who may wish to receive it – This has been and will continue to be an important communications line, particularly during this devastating COVID-19 pandemic.

Statistics

Website

Below are website hit figures from 2017-2020.

As I say every year, we need to do more to encourage input/content from others, for the website, or else the site becomes bland and visitors/hits fall with interest lost.



Facebook Page

As at 12th April 2020 (Easter Sunday), we hit 100 Likes (108 people followers). Compared to Feb 2019's 54 likes (54 followers) That's a 100% increase in followers. (Followers being key, as you can like a page, without following its content).

Facebook Group

Currently has 134 members. Compared to Feb 2019's 113 member. That's an increase of 20%. It's a very active group, both sharing and taking content from other people and local organisations/groups. Very popular.

The website and Facebook remain important tools, both for official Church communications and for wider group member input and discussions.

e-bulletin

With the introduction of the new e-bulletin at the end of March, the Website and Facebook, has also been key in allowing us to increase subscription, something which it has done well.

As per the figures to the right, you can see that a large number of contacts were added manually from existing paper subscription for communications, but outside of that, in just a couple of weeks, 15% of total subscribers have signed up via the website embedded form and 2% from a button on our Facebook page. As at 13th April 2020, we have 46 contacts subscribed.

Rob Higson

46

New Contacts

From Mar 14, 2020 to Apr 13, 2020

46

Subscribed

0

Non-Subscribed

Where your contacts came from:



74% Mar 29th Import Copy/Pasted File

15% Embed Form

9% Admin Add

2% Facebook Signup Form

CHARITY SUPPORT AND FUND RAISING

THE CHILDREN'S SOCIETY

St Alban's has been supporting the Children's Society for many years through fundraising boxes and this money is sent on to them once a year. Thank you to everyone who has such a box which they have taken on for many years. I have had mine from 1986 up to the present. If anyone would like such a box, please let me know.

Another way of fundraising for the Children's Society is through the annual Christingle Service which does bring many families together. Thank you.

Merle Martin

FAMILY SUPPORT WORK REPORT

Family Support Work relies on donations and fund raising. Over the past year we have donated our Harvest offerings to FSW, we have also donated good quality toys at our annual Toy Service at the beginning of Advent along with items of toiletries etc. for the children to give to their parents. Another opportunity to donate was by buying new books for children. These were given to the children during the national 'Book Week'. We continue to donate food items as these are always needed. Thank you again for your kind donations.

Merle Martin

FUN & FUNDRAISING

This report covers the year April 2019 to March 2020, but I will also refer to this year so far too.

We held several **Art Workshops** during the year and these drew in people from within and from outside our church community. We did not raise a lot of money as we have to pay the tutor and reimburse her for the materials, but we were able to make small donations for the use of the church hall. We were able to display some of the results of our labours at the Summer Fair, along with work supplied by Dorman's & Bewbush Youth Centres which sparked lots of discussion and complements. If possible, I think a daytime class might prove a popular addition at some time in the future.

The **Summer Fair** in June was busy as usual, we had lots of entertainment from local talent – including Songbirds, Borrowed Time, Youth group youngsters, our own Hannah Ford and Desire2dance. Sadly again because of the weather (rain & electrics don't go together well), much of the entertainment had to be inside, which always detracts from the feeling of community, with those outside left out of the fun. Although takings were down on previous years there was a good sense of community with all the different

groups involved, as well as those entertaining us, Dormans Pre-school ran a children's craft stall, and 6th Crawley Scouts provided their Splat-a-Rat and other fun games. Our ever-dwindling team of fundraisers were helped on the day by many willing helpers, but we have come to the realisation that large events like this will need more 'strong able bodied' helpers in future, so we may need to combine with another group for an event if we cannot find people to do this.

We held our popular **Cream Tea** again in August, and catered for approx. 27 people, down on previous years. This is another lovely fellowship event which does also raise small amounts of funds.

The **2 Hannah's** (Hannah Ford & Hannah-Marie Mitchell) put on a superb **concert** in August and raised much needed funds towards our Buildings Appeal. The church was packed and all who came were treated to a great evening of **Music for a Summer's Evening**. I hope that at some point this event can be repeated, it proved very popular, and was a good fundraiser too, raising a fantastic £700+!

Our sponsored **Get Active for August** activity was quite a 'last minute' idea for the end of the school holidays, but the enthusiastic few who took on the challenge really enjoyed their increased activity and raised much needed funds.

We ran a refreshment stall again at **Gossops Rocks**, more of an outreach than a fundraiser, in support of the Youth Centre which has supported our events this year.

The Christmas Crafts afternoon in November was a new activity for us, we attracted some families and adults along and all had a fun and creative afternoon.

St Albans Christmas Fair is a local institution and draws in people from the community as well as our church family, it is very hard work. Like the Summer Fair a lot of work is shared by a few (luckily

supplemented by some extra helpers on the day). We had another great fair with a good profit but are beginning to feel that large events like this and the Summer Fair are too much for our small band of organisers.

With much prayer and thought we had begun to plan for some new activities for 2020, that may have found ways to raise funds without the need for so much 'man'-power. We had hoped to combine the Summer Fair with a VE Day Celebration, have another Summer Concert and combine the Christmas Fair with a Christmas Tree Festival.

Unfortunately, as we all know events overtook us and with the onset of the Pandemic and lockdown in March most of these ideas have had to be mothballed for now.

March 2020 onwards

Lockdown meant it became very difficult to raise funds, however we have held 2 virtual Cream Teas, which combined with the sale of facemasks have brought in some much-needed funds for the church.

We have organised a similar virtual Harvest Ploughman's lunch, but these events are as much about supporting our church family, and cementing our Fellowship as about raising funds, so do not fill the coffers very much really.

Sadly, the long-awaited Auction of Promises has been deferred again, although if someone feels able to take this on in a virtual form please do step forward!

We do not think at the moment that a Christmas Fair in any form will be possible, but are putting forward a proposal for another event that might be easier to do with social distancing, and following guidelines...so watch this space!

If there are any members of the congregation who would like to join our happy band of fundraisers in any way, please let us know. Also, if

you have any ideas of new events that we could try...in these challenging times... or for the future please do share them with us!
Helen Ford (*Meg Miller, Jane Sharpe, Kerry Lavington, Jenny & Ken Graham*)

LINK TO HOPE SHOEBOXES

Link to Hope's aim is to combat poverty and give humanitarian aid to deserving families in Eastern Europe. Every Christmas shoeboxes filled with appropriate gifts for a family are filled by volunteers and delivered by Link to Hope.

I took over 30 boxes down to Worthing last October. This was less than previous years, but they were still gratefully received by the team down there.

The system they have in place is awe-inspiring. Over the years the whole project has really grown, from a couple of ladies in a back room to a big team, sorting and packing with donated items, repacking damaged or light boxes; an office with staff dealing with online donations; a warehouse with teams packing the boxes into cardboard crates, and onto pallets ready for the huge lorries which will take them on their long journey to Eastern Europe.

The Facebook page keeps us up to date with all the projects, and during the year before we pack our boxes, they encourage us to find a good selection of items to fill them with. I would encourage those of you on Facebook to follow the page.

Helen Ford

OPEN DOORS

As a church we continue to pray for the persecuted church as part of a continuing wave of worldwide prayer. Many of the congregation also make regular contributions to Open Doors Worldwide Mission (thankyou). It is good to note that parliament are also strong supporters of Open Doors with around one-sixth of all MPs having attended the launch of the World Watch List every year for the last

three years. In December last year, the then Foreign Secretary, Jeremy Hunt, launched a review into the worldwide persecution of Christians.

Sadly, the number of Christians persecuted for their faith increased to 260 **million** Christians last year. As the prime Ministers special envoy for Freedom of Belief said – “we must not sit idly by. The United Kingdom will not sit idly by”.

Open Doors continue to support all those who are suffering, with prayer and action by amongst other things: delivering bibles, providing food, supporting those who have been traumatised, helping to rebuild houses and churches where they have been destroyed and giving survival training to those who face daily persecution. Thank you to those of you who continue to pray daily for our persecuted sisters and brothers and their families.

Sarah and I were able to be part of the Open Doors Standing Strong event in Birmingham in November last year where we heard speakers from Northern Nigeria, North Korea and Syria. These are people who know the trauma of persecution and yet their faith is inspiring.

Following the conference, we recommended that St Alban’s become a partner church with Open Doors. To do so we need to do 4 things:

- Carry on praying for our persecuted sisters and brothers,
- Be aware and, as individuals, support where we can special appeals
- Hold an annual service for persecuted Christians
- Support Open Doors advocacy for the persecuted church

Other churches who have done this say “*that there is no doubt that*

partner churches grow in faith and their sense of vision and understanding of God's work in the world and that they are really blessed" May you also be blessed for your support.

Alan and Sarah Magrath (Parish Representatives) (for further information go to: www.opendoorsuk.org)

OPEN HOUSE

Open house is still there to support and give shelter to homeless people. However, we do once again see homeless people sleeping in doorways in town although not so many as previously.

We haven't had a lot of food to take to Open House. Thank you to those who have given some. I realise we have the 2 boxes one for Open House and the other for Family Support Work. Tony has taken me with the food to Open House.

Open House are in need of serious money because the council have cut back their funding so Open House has to rely on funds from other sources. In 2019 we raised some £50-60 through our Lent lunches which they found very helpful. They do need our support still. Thank you.

Merle Martin

The Parochial Church Council of the Ecclesiastical Parish of Gossops Green and Bewbush, St Alban's

Trustees 2019-20:

Ex Officio:

Incumbent: Revd. Ann Alexander (Chair)

Curate: Revd. Lizzie Green (from June 2019)

Wardens:

Mrs Caroline Edwards

Mr Ken Graham (to July 2019)

Mr Roger Gibson (from October 2019)

Secretary: Alan Magrath

Safeguarding officer: Mr Andy Hoare

Elected members:

Robert Higson

Jenny Graham

Sue Richardson

Beverly Killick

Pat Newall (until April 2019)

Sarah Jane Higson

Andy Hoare (Elected April 2019)

Jane Sharpe

Deanery Synod:

Merle Martin

Sarah-Jane Higson (until December 2019)

Treasurer: Mr James May

Registered office: Ifield Parish Office 1 Lychgate Cottage Ifield Street Ifield
Crawley West Sussex RH11 0NN

Independent Examiners: Darren Harding ACA FCCA DChA

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