



Annual Parochial Church Meeting 2022

Sunday May 22nd 11.15 am

At St Alban's Church,

AGENDA

2022 Annual Parish Meeting – Election of Church Wardens

Caroline Edwards has been nominated as Church Warden

APCM (Annual Parochial Church Meeting) agenda

- 1. Opening prayer and welcome**
- 2. Apologies:**
- 3. Approval of 2021 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
 - (vii) PCC Proceeding
- 6. The elections and appointments**
 - (i) Election of 2 representative to Deanery Synod – for three years
 - (iii) Election of PCC members – 5 vacancies

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

7. Date of next APCM (Sunday 21st May 2023)

8. Closing prayers

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Meeting of the new PCC to elect officers



PARISH OF GOSSOPS GREEN AND BEWBUSH, ST. ALBAN'S

MINUTES FOR APCM Held on ZOOM

Sunday 16 May 2021

11.15 A.M

OPENING PRAYER

PRESENT

Revd. Ann Alexander, Cathy Bryant, John Bryant, Brian Eastman, Mary Eastman, Caroline Edwards, Roger Gibson, Revd. Lizzi Green, Rob Higson, Andy Hoare, Emma Humphrey, Bev Killick, Alan Magrath, Sarah Magrath, Meg Miller, John Richardson, Sue Richardson, Ann Routledge, Jane Sharpe, Madeleine Taylor, Barbara Zanleoni (21)

	Action
1. ELECTION OF CHURCH WARDENS	
Caroline Edwards and Roger Gibson were proposed and elected as church wardens. Rev Ann thanked Roger and Caroline for their continuing service to the church.	
2. APOLOGIES	
Merle Martin, Helen Ford, Keith Ford, Tsitsi Chikukwa	
3. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS APCM	

<p>The minutes of the previous APCM held Sunday 25 October 2020 were approved.</p>	
<p>4. MATTERS ARISING</p>	
<p>None</p>	
<p>5. REPORTS</p>	
<p>The Annual Report and the Trustees Report and Annual Accounts were circulated prior to the meeting. Additional comments were made as follows:</p> <p>I. Vicars Report</p> <p>Revd Ann noted that despite the pandemic so much was going on in the church it never sleeps. She is so proud of everyone, amazing people. Her heart is bursting with pride. Everyone is the body of the church and the pastoral care of one another has been outstanding. She thanked everyone for their continuing efforts.</p>	
<p>II. Electoral Roll. The revised Roll (closed May 1st, 2021 shows 80 people registered on the Electoral Roll this year. This shows no nett change since 2020 although an increase of 8 people from 2019.</p> <p>III. Finances: The accounts have been duly signed by the auditors. Thanks was given to Sue Richardson for her ongoing work as finance officer and to all those who have supported her managing and counting the money and paying into the bank.</p> <p>IV. Annual Fabric Report The inventory for St Albans has been checked and is correct. There are few church items left at the Barn; just a small box of miscellaneous items and a</p>	

<p>Chalice and Ciborium in the safe. All items have been checked against the logbook. There are a few additional items. A new inventory will be drawn up. The wardens have arranged access the shed at the back of the building to identify any additional items which may be stored there.</p> <p>V. Communication</p> <p>Rob Higson noted that the number of followers on the Facebook page has increased from 108 in April of 2019 to 149 at the last APCM in October last year. There are now 175 followers. This is a significant increase.</p> <p>Revd. Ann thanked Rob and Chris Cooke and others who have developed our capabilities to live-stream and noted that our on-line church has been so important in the last year. A new door has been opened in our mission and outreach and we will take this into the future.</p>	
<p>6. ELECTIONS</p>	
<p>Deanery Synod: One vacancy remains for a representative of the Deanery Synod (2 were elected October 2020). No nominations were received.</p>	
<p>PCC Members</p> <p>Nine members of the PCC are required under Church Representation Rules There being no new candidates who came forward Jane Sharpe, and Andy Hoare (retiring 2021) were re-elected to serve on the PCC for a further three years (until 2024)</p>	

<p>(Refer to the APCM resolution of October 2020 enabling retiring members to be immediately re-elected if there are available vacancies)</p>	
<p>Independent Examiner Richard Place Dobson of 1-7 Station Road, Crawley, West Sussex RH10 1HT was proposed and appointed</p>	
<p>7. Additional Comments</p>	
<p>Sue Richardson on behalf of the church thanked Revd Ann and Revd Lizzi for their hard work during the past year. It was noted that they have worked long hours and on occasions encroached on their days off. Revd Lizzi had risen to the challenge and flourished in her first curacy year.</p> <p>Revd Ann thanked everyone who had submitted a report for their thoughts and time taken to record what we have been able to do this year. It is so important to the church and means so much to the whole church.</p> <p>It was noted that so much had been done to keep the church operating as normally as was possible.</p> <p>The Mothers Union had achieved a great deal in spite of Lockdown and had managed to increase their membership in the period.</p> <p>It was noted that the Computer Group, which had not met in the pandemic had enabled many of the congregation, through earlier training, to stay in touch throughout the pandemic.</p> <p>It was applauded that the church through Revd Lizzi had been in touch with Crawley Pride who hope to work closer with the church in the future (refer to the Trustees Annual Report).</p>	

<p>It was hoped that if Lockdown continues to ease, as planned by the government, the church will be able to gradually move towards more community gathering again. This will be reviewed against Government and Diocesan guidelines.</p> <p>Revd Ann thanked Keith Ford and the Building Development Group for pushing forward in the last year and noted that they will be meeting the architect and contractors next Friday, following which the church can move on with fund raising. It was asked that anyone who can assist with writing proposal for grant applications (or who has knowledge of organisations who can provide grants for which the church would be eligible) to please offer their services to the group. Thanks was given to Emma Humphrey who has achieved a remarkable amount to date.</p> <p>Revd Lizzi noted that St Alban's will be bringing the biggest cohort of candidates to the Deanery Confirmation Service on July 5th (5 young people). The service will be held at St Mary's Horsham and the meeting were asked to hold the candidates in their prayers. It was hoped that this group would be a springboard to a future youth group at St Alban's.</p>	
<p>8.DATE OF THE NEXT APCM</p>	
<p>The next APCM will be held on Sunday 22nd May 2022 Following the Eucharist at 11.15 am</p>	
<p>The meeting closed with prayer at 11.45 am</p>	



Vicar's report for APCM 2021

Please refer to Annual Trustees Report provided with this report:

The Reverend Ann Alexander will provide additional verbal comments at the meeting

THE ELECTORAL ROLL

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

1 person was added since 2021, and 1 person was removed (sadly Roy Scarborough a stalwart of our Parish died during the year)

The summary total shows an increase of 8 on the Roll initiated in 2019 and no increase since 2021.

Alan Magrath (Electoral Roll Officer)

PARISH ANNUAL REPORT AND ACCOUNTS

FINANCIAL REPORT

Year Ending December 31st 2021

At the bank 31.12 2021 - £31,868.96 as opposed to £35,344 - 31.12. 2020

It's no surprise as Covid 19 continued to affect our income during the year.

Parish budget for 2021 for income was set at £64,270 actual £63,490

For expenditure. Budget was £63,466 actual £66,966 expenditure

Reserve account reduced to £(3,475) compared to 2020 it was £(10,807)

We should be encouraged that in past year we continued to meet all our commitments and gradually, we are seeing income increase.

Our expenditure remains higher than budget due to the ongoing cost of repairs.

- We agreed to maintain Our Parish Share to £26,000 this was agreed with the Diocese
- We have seen an increase in people joining PGS (Parish Giving Scheme) or Standing orders. This really helps in future planning.
- Bewbush Barn income has increased by just under £5,000
- The pre-school has managed to remain open all year.
- The dance school has returned on much regular basis.
- Elim Church has returned

Moving forward

Parish Share for 2022 has been increased to £27,000

We should bear in mind this in no way reflects the amount requested.

Our income budget for 2022 has been set at £61,900

Our expenditure budget for 2022 has been set at £64,256

With increase prices for utilities, we will need to be prudent in other areas of our expenditure to try and maintain our budget

This year we are pushing forward with plans for our buildings. Most of our fundraising will be added to restricted account which currently stands at £8000.00

Soon we will introduce a monthly Building Fund, so those that wish to give on a regular basis can by paying straight into our bank.

We each need to look prayerfully at our giving as we can move forward as a Parish and to the great challenges we have over our buildings.

Thanks, Jane Sharpe, for her work at banking, and to Cathy Bryant for dealing with the envelope scheme.

Sue Richardson (Finance Officer)

WARDEN'S FABRIC REPORT AND INVENTORY ST ALBAN'S

The inventory was carried out with some difficulty due to Covid 19 as items were moved around in the Church. The chairs were not counted as they were scattered.

The gutters and drains were cleaned.

Because of the need for a one-way system in the hall, an emergency light was fitted outside the fire exit door.

Some emergency maintenance was carried out in the ladies and gents toilets.

Pest Control had to be called in to deal with pests in the hall kitchen. So far there has been no reoccurrence.

Fire extinguishers in the church and hall were checked.

A Rose bush was planted in the memorial garden in memory of all those who died of Covid 19 during the year.

A sample was taken from hall kitchen's ceiling to be tested for asbestos. The sample proved to be negative.

BEWBUSH

The gutters and drains were cleaned.

A faculty was granted for the installation of broadband. All the works were carried out with the cost of the line and connection for broadband being met by The Elim Church.

The Fire Extinguishers were checked. Twenty lamps were replaced in the hall.

Caroline Edwards and Roger Gibson. (Church Wardens)

DEANERY SYNOD REPORT

September 2021: We had speakers from the Diocesan Board of Finance.

There was a Finance Presentation, touching on how our pledges contributed 80% of their income and how the effect of Covid 19 had impacted income.

They noted that many Parishes income was hit by lack of collections & rentals during this time.

The Dioceses had to make short term changes to expenditure covering a wide range of areas.

They also acknowledged that there were areas of deprivation within the Deanery and the increased usage of food banks.

It was acknowledged the Crawley had been hit hard during Covid 19 as many people worked for Gatwick or were on zero hours.

Deanery Treasurers report.

As of end of August there was a £9,249 shortfall.

We were asked to do our best but that where Parishes are using reserves, they should remember that the Charity commission recommends 3 months operating costs be held.

People should be encouraged to use PGS or bank transfer.

March 2022

Presentations on Generous Giving:

- How Generosity can really work in different church contexts.
- People more likely give 3.5% than 5% of net income to the church.
- Asset Rich / Cash Poor for a large number of people / organisations.

- Teaching on Giving and Thanking people is important
The congregation needs to understand the impact and where the money is going to

There are Three Keys to Generous Giving

o Discipleship o Information o Prayer

2 Cor: 8: 9 – “For you know the generous act of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, so that by his poverty you might become rich”

How churches are using the latest technology as we move forward:

Card Readers, Website Giving Portals, QR codes, one off giving, PGS, DD and S/O.

No fancy mechanism will work unless people are invited and inspired.

Printed material – it has to be available / eye catching / Campaigns Giving Station and Gift Aid information

Lots of very useful information for all Parishes

Sue Richardson (Deanery Synod Representative)

PCC PROCEEDINGS

The PCC met 5 times in 2021. Because of Covid 19 all meetings were held on ZOOM. Meetings were held in February May, July, September and November. Minutes for all meetings have been published and approved. Use was also made of the ability to use email resolutions between meetings; 11 were used in 2021 (these were formally, minuted at later PCC's).

The Standing Committee met 5 times in January, April, June, August and October (Remote - ZOOM Meetings). To be most effective the

standing committee meets midway between PCC meetings to address urgent business. The members are the Clergy, two churchwardens, the Finance Officer and two additional PCC members Jane Sharp and Bev Killick . Any significant decisions were referred to the following PCC meeting for approval.

The PCC uses a rolling agenda to ensure all necessary reviews are addressed through the year and a standard meeting agenda to ensure all current business is appropriately addressed.

The last AGM was held in May 2021. Church Wardens were appointed at the Parish Meeting preceding the APCM. PCC Officers were appointed at a PCC meeting following the meeting. The PCC appointed Paul Duck as Health and Safety Officer in July 2021

Alan Magrath (PCC Secretary)

SAFEGUARDING REPORT

There is not a lot to report here. There have been no safeguarding issues raised, which is very pleasing.

All volunteers in positions that require a DBS, are holding valid ones and all required training is up to date.

I have regular safeguarding updates from both the Diocese and the Church of England as well as 31:8 the DBS agency that we use. The major difference that has occurred this year is that DBS validity is reduced from 5 years to 3 years. This brings the church in line with the standard which is applied across the charity sector. These people holding a current DBS still have the 5-year validity, it is only new applications which will be valid for 3 years.

As always, I would like to promote the C0 safeguarding course, 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

Andy Hoare (Safeguarding Officer)

HEALTH & SAFETY REPORT

Paul Duck was appointed by the PCC in July 2021 to be our HSE officer.

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. First Aid kits at St Albans have recently been replaced.

With the exception of the Covid 19 virus, there have been no significant H&S concerns during the year.

In 2021 due to the easing Covid 19 Pandemic the church was reopened for worship. Risk assessments were completed to ensure safeguarding of the clergy and congregation. Measures were taken to ensure that the Parish complied with all relevant Government and Diocesan regulation and guidance. As a result, the number of worshippers was controlled to allow adequate social distancing, communion in only one kind was administered, and appropriate hygiene safeguards were maintained (e.g the use of Antiviral hand gel on entering and leaving the church).

The church returned to its format in-the-round at Easter 2022. Communion is now administered by tincture. The congregation are still encouraged to wear face masks as a precaution.

Due to storm damage in 2022 the Barn was inspected by a structural engineer to ensure the building's continued integrity. Minor damage to a beam was identified and will be repaired.

Paul Duck (Health and Safety Officer)

BUILDING DEVELOPMENT GROUP (BDG)

The Building Development Group (BDG) has had to reassess its plans due to the deteriorating state of the church tower. This is as a result of a significant amount of water collecting at the bottom of the tower due to the recent storms. Because the electrical distribution board is located in the tower, this is potentially a serious health & safety issue, which could result in the church being closed. It has also put on hold the plan for installing a new heating system.

The BDG is therefore considering all options for resolving the problem including the original idea of rendering the brickwork to stop water ingress or demolishing the tower. Although the cost of demolishing the tower is less than half that for repairing the tower, it requires approval of both the Diocesan Advisory Committee (DAC) and Crawley Borough Council. The plan would be to take the tower down to leave a small room for housing the electrical distribution board. The advantage of this option is that it would enable the church to rapidly proceed with installing a new heating system. Given that the cost of running the existing system was about £75/night (pre the recent price rises), this would save us a significant amount of money and be more environmentally friendly. There is also more chance of obtaining a grant for a new heating system as it would facilitate the church being more usable by the community. In order to rapidly move forward with this plan, it will be necessary to take out an Archbishop loan, which would require the church to make a commitment to pay it back over the next 7 years. Although demolishing the tower is a drastic solution, there is nothing to stop it being rebuilt once the other essential building work is complete.

Little progress has been made with building a new accessible entrance and toilets due to the lack of grants currently available for obtaining at least £25,000 for performing the preliminary work, which involves producing detailed drawings and costings. We have had a little success with a £2000 grant from the Allchurches Trust but

still leaves us a long way to go. There are more options for grants to perform the actual building work, but we are in a catch-22 in that some grant providers expect the church to match their grants.

Please continue to pray for guidance for the important decisions that the church and other stakeholders must make and where the funding could come from.

Keith Ford (Chair Building Development Group)

MISSION OUTREACH AND WORSHIP

CHOIR & MUSIC REPORT

At the time of last year's report, choristers were still recording hymns to bolster the singing for the online streaming of services, and for services in church with limited numbers attending. From July the organ was back for every Sunday Eucharist, restrictions on numbers of people attending services were lifted, and we were back singing in church, albeit with masks on.

As Christmas approached there was a lot of uncertainty as to whether there could be a Carol Service in church. With the Omicron variant proving to be highly transmissible and therefore numbers of people with the coronavirus increasing all the time, we were poised for the news that restrictions would apply to church congregations again. However, this never happened and we did manage a magnificent Carol Service, despite having to restrict the size of the congregation and keep both front and back doors open.

There were 13 adult choristers and 3 children in the choir that evening.

Since then there has been no specific choral activity until Easter when a choir was able to sing at services on Maundy Thursday, Easter Saturday and Easter Sunday, celebrating the resumption of worshipping 'in the round'.

We are hoping to have more music events in church as the year progresses, starting with an organ recital by John Sharples, who kindly stepped in to play for us when Keith Ford was away. Our thanks go to Keith for his unstinting contribution on the organ throughout another challenging year. Playing with cold feet (due to the doors having to be open during the winter months) I gather is very difficult!

If anyone is new to St Albans or has been hiding their light under a bushel and would now like to join us, please let Sarah Magrath or me know. We would welcome anyone who would like to sing in the choir or can play a musical instrument, as at some point we would like to resurrect the music group for certain services.

Meg Miller

COMMUNITY MORNING

We resumed meeting on Thursday mornings on 29th July in 2021 as Covid restrictions allowed.

Ron McRae has continued to be faithful in setting out the tables and chairs for us. Sarah Magrath has been up early in the morning to provide freshly baked scones to accompany the tea and coffee.

Numbers attending started at 8, as some people were very wary of mixing, but have now increased to 16-18.

On 24 February this year Lucy Denby, our local Police Community Support Officer, came and spoke to the group about how to avoid current scams (on line etc) on this occasion 24 people attended

Age UK have shown interest in sending people to our Community Morning in the future as their premises in West Green have closed. So far one person has come through them, and they are delighted with the result and will recommend us to other people.

We are still working towards relaunching as a Place of Welcome Café during the summer of 2022.

Madeleine Taylor

JUNIOR CHURCH

We started the last year continuing, as we had done the previous year, by pasting onto our Facebook page, weekly, a link to Sunday School material with reference to the liturgical readings. This has been provided by the “Together at Home – Church Resources” Facebook group.

Very happily we finished this reporting period, by reintroducing face-to-face Junior Church. This has been very well received and the younger congregation have enjoyed the time together. We have around 12 regular attendees and the sessions are both informative and fun.

The Junior Church recently undertook all the roles during a Sunday Eucharist, this was very well received and something that will hopefully happen more regularly.

There are three leaders and three helpers on the rota and all DBS’s and training is complete and up to date.

The five candidates, who continued their confirmation course in 2021, were confirmed at St Marys, Horsham on 5th July 2021, in a Covid safe service presided over by Bishop Ruth. This was both wonderful to witness and a joy to share in such a special day.

Other activities, during the pandemic, have included the weekly “Paws for Thought” stories posted to Facebook, which were enjoyed by both the aimed for target group (Junior Church) but also the congregation as a whole. Many encouraging comments were posted to the videos, which made it more than a worthwhile exercise.

In August, we hosted a largely outdoor event “Blessing of the Backpacks” which was aimed at those children who were shortly to be returning to school. This was a fun event with games and side-show activities that ended with a short act of Worship, held on the church green and carpark. This was well attended and was a great way to promote the church and witness to the local community.

We finished the reporting period, with the exciting news that the Good Friday workshop was to be reintroduced.

Andy Hoare (Junior Church co-ordinator)

safeguarding@stalbansgossopsgreen.co.uk

MOTHERS UNION

Every time I think that there won't be much to report, (especially as we still haven't been able to resume regular monthly meetings except for one...), I look back over the year and think about all we have done as a branch and wonder when we actually had time to sleep!

Mothers' union has a worldwide theme for each year which we try as members to support through our prayer, worship and as we go about our daily lives. The 2021 theme was “*Rebuilding Hope and Confidence*”, and the 2022 is “*Transformation -Now!*” Mothers' Union has always been an organisation that seeks to support and transform life for the better for families and individuals.

Specific events this past 12 months have been 2 Diocesan members meeting – one on zoom, one face to face. Several of us managed to get to both. We have been invited twice to the St Barnabas Pound Hill branch: once for Greta Sawyers admission to the Mothers' Union, and once for a Shriving Service and pancakes. In November we had the honour to host one of the 5 diocesan wide services and 3-minute silence as part of the global annual “*No More 1-in-3*”- sixteen days of activism against gender abuse in all its forms. We again got making stars and angels for Shine a Light and gave away 200 to pre-schools,

at the Christmas tree festival, to branch members and congregation. Alan Magrath led a wonderful Advent meditation with a craft element. We packed socks again for Gatwick detainees. We had our Triennial elections and elected to keep our same branch committee for another three years. A big thank you to Rev. Ann for putting together a lovely Lady Day service in March which had a good turnout of members and non-members. We met to make Mothering Sunday posies, followed by lunch.

In general terms Branch members have continued to support FSW (Family Support Work) with food donations. Members (Namely Madeleine Taylor and Jane Sharpe's mum Margaret Oldham) have been knitting prayer squares to make into prayer pockets, some of which will be given to the African Bishop's wives at the Lambeth Conference in June. Branch members of course can be found working throughout the church at the Community Morning, Tiny Toes, PCC etc as part of their commitment to rebuild hope and confidence and be transformational, or in Chaplaincy work with YMCA, or in countless other areas. At St Alban's Branch currently has 25 enrolled members. Finally, during the last few weeks we managed to welcome our newest members Annitta and Tsitsi during a morning service.

Looking forward we are planning an outing to see the Downton Abbey film, followed a month or so later by a talk from Jane Sharpe's sister Anne who worked on the Downton films and series. We also plan to celebrate the Queen's platinum anniversary in some way. Also watch out for the delayed introduction of some Wild Wednesdays, when we'll invite people to join us at a local pub for an evening drink on Wednesdays during the summer. All these will be open to members and non-members, the more the merrier; in fact, all our activities are open to non-members as well.

We are always open to new members.....anyone can join....you don't have to be a mother, or married or even a women. Membership is

open to absolutely anyone. New would-be members who would like to be part of this great global and yet local organisation please let me know.

Sarah Magrath (Branch Leader- Gossops Green and Bewbush)

SATURDAY PRAYER

We completed 9 years of Saturday prayer in 2021, 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.

The year continued to be interesting, because of the virus restrictions. However, we were gradually able to meet back in the church and to resume our Prayer Breakfast. At the start of 2022 we also met at Monkshood because the church hall was planning to be used as a drop in vaccine centre.

Our Fellowship continues strong. Currently ~10 of us, gather for prayer on each second Saturday of the month at 9.30 am and two or three join us in prayer from home. We would love more of you be with us to strengthen our prayer life together. Please do come. The breakfast is good as well!

Thanks to everyone who has joined us in prayer this year and to Cathy who has led the prayer on alternate months. New prayer leaders are always welcome; please let me know.

Alan Magrath

TINY TOES TODDLER GROUP

After a delay of nearly 18 months from the planned launch date, Tiny Toes finally started in September 2021! Rev Lizzi got it up and running and the team have carried on since she moved to St Margaret's. So big thanks to Lizzi for the vision and dream of getting it going.

Since September we have had over 60 preschool children through the doors, which means we have been in contact with over 45

families! Fortunately, they don't all come at once! Some families come every week; others monthly; others more sporadically. We have an attendance of up to 20 children and their carer on a week-by-week basis. We currently have a team of 5 of leaders who attend on a rota basis to run crafts, stories songs and refreshments, and to sit and chat to the carers who bring their children. It has been wonderful to meet all the lovely families, and some of them have come to services and other events at St Alban's.

As well as the team of 5 who work with the children (Dawn Cook, Madeleine Taylor, Helen Ford, Jane Sharpe and Sarah Magrath), We have the services of Welcomers who have offered to some on a regular or occasional basis (Jeanne Adams, Rose Harrison, Elsie Sanmogan and Margaret Stratton). We also have the support of Paul Duck who helps us set the church out ready on Sunda and then comes back on Monday afternoon to put it all away. Big thank you to them all. We couldn't do it without any of these wonderful people, but as with all work with little children it takes a lot of work behind the scenes as well as during the sessions. So, if you would like to help in any way then please come forward.... Can you help Paul with the set up? Would you like to be a welcomer? Are you a cake maker? Are you a tea maker? Are you good with toddler craft? Are you good at leading toddler singing and story time? Are you good with admin/excel to keep the records up to date and communicate with families, and follow up new enquiries?

And finally, we need a new leader. I have taken over from Lizzi temporarily, but Matilda starts school in September, so after the end of this term I will no longer be available to lead the group.

The outreach and mission that has been possible through this group has been the single most successful project we have had at the church for a long time, just by the numbers of families we have reached. Can you remember the group in your prayers and consider

if there is any way you could be part of this important work for growing God's Kingdom here in Gossops Green and Bewbush.

Sarah Magrath

YMCA CHAPLAINCY

We welcomed Samantha, the lead chaplain, to our service in December and she kindly spoke and also drew the grand draw for us. The YMCA directly benefited from the draw as 2 winners generously donated their prizes to the Foyer in Crawley.

It is a joy that we can once again cook for the residents in situ and eat and chat with them. We have had a few blips when the building has had to close to us due to Covid but most weeks since last summer we have been able to be in attendance. Of course, the clientele often changes but we are slowly getting another core group who regularly attend the meal and seem to really enjoy the chance to sit and eat and relax together which is wonderful.

Anyone who thinks they might like to volunteer to join our group and help cook a simple meal on a rota (usually once every 2/3 weeks) do speak to Helen Ford. Or contact Samantha via her email:

Samantha.Burton@ymcadlg.org

Helen Ford (YMCA Chaplaincy Team)

Caring4CarersInCovid

Our large group of crafters across Sussex have continued after the lockdowns to knit, crochet and sew lots more items for all sorts of charitable causes, including lap blankets, dignity bibs, fidget cuffs for care homes, drain bags for in-patients, blankets and clothes for special care baby units, tote bags for food banks and for refugee charities. The group also made over 1,000 woollen forget-me-nots to join in the yarn bomb display to be set up in East Grinstead High Street in May as part of Dementia Awareness week.

Over 100,000 items have now been donated with love. If you are a knitter, or if you sew, or crochet, and would like to get involved, do speak to Helen or Madeleine Taylor.

Helen Ford

WEBSITE, SOCIAL MEDIA & COMMUNICATIONS

St. Alban's Website, Facebook Page/Group and e-bulletins continued to play a key role as the pandemic continued through 2021 and into 2022. These are all tools to help keep people connected in a variety of ways and have been so important over the last couple of years, during some truly challenging times and will continue to be important in the future.

They have continued to be a portal for our livestreamed Sunday and other special services, throughout 2021 and into 2022. The livestreams have enabled those unable to attend Church itself for one reason or another, to participate in our worship. They have also proved to be an important link for new members of our Church family. As of Palm Sunday 2022, we have moved back to Church in the round, which unfortunately means that we have had to put the livestream on hold for the time being, due to the technical challenges this change has presented. We understand how important the livestreams have been, so we will continue to look at options to bring it back.

Stats

Website

Below are the monthly website hit figures from launch of the new site in April 2017, through to March 2022.

As always, I would encourage input of appropriate content from others for the website (whilst adhering to policies). This helps keep it fresh, interesting and informative and increase return visits.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
2017				1,045	400	419	317	314	526	771	449	638	4,879
2018	377	400	739	514	544	431	629	350	615	453	467	713	6,232
2019	472	382	590	579	336	461	296	280	327	405	446	436	5,010
2020	344	343	439	362	847	739	640	549	554	500	549	788	6,654
2021	629	547	531	912	472	329	315	337	324	500	481	512	5,889
2022	423	379	646										1,528

Social Media

Our Facebook Page and Group continue to be a key resource for communication, in our sharing of news, events and other resources and in reaching out to connect with people. Our likes, followers and members continue to grow year on year which is great to see as we welcome more people to our Church family. Stats are below.

Facebook Page

April 2019 55 Likes (56 Followers)
 April 2020 100 Likes (108 Followers)
 April 2021 148 Likes (175 Followers)
 April 2022 167 Likes (194 Followers)
 (Followers being key, as you can like a page, without following its content).

Facebook Group

Feb 2019 = 113 members.
 April 2020 = 134 members.
 April 2021 – 157 Members
 March 2022 – 178 Members

e-bulletin

With the introduction of the e-bulletin at the end of March 2020, the website and Facebook, has also been key in allowing us to increase subscription to our weekly newsletter. The e-bulletin itself is another important channel of information, especially for those who do not have access to our website and/or social media.

As of April 2022, we have 62 subscribed to the weekly e-bulletin.

CHARITY SUPPORT AND FUND RAISING

THE CHILDREN'S SOCIETY

The children's Society provide specialist support to young people, their families and their communities, to help them make positive changes and to rediscover their hope. Their aim is to create a society built for

all children. The society works with teenagers who need support and , refugees and migrant children who land in this country.

We continue to raise money for the Children's Society by individuals taking Children's Society Boxes which are collected and emptied once per year. Currently 17 families in the congregation have a box and we are able to forward a total of some £300 to the society. Any other family who would like to support this work please contact me.

Merle Martin

FAMILY SUPPORT WORK REPORT

Becky Long our Worker for Crawley has been with us for well over 4 years. she was the newest worker then but now she is the most senior worker! She continues to work with families who are finding life difficult. This could be because of a mental state eg fear of going out, where a single child will suffer as they grow older. Sometimes it is because a family have just arrived from another country and do not speak English so cannot claim any help. Becky does have one lady who speaks English and Arabic so can be of great help.

To help with fundraising Some people mainly in East Sussex open their gardens and charge a small amount for this and provide teas etc. If anyone feels they could do something like this, please let me know and I will pass your name and address over. There was the usual Easter Monday walk around the Arundel area through lovely countryside. There were stops at various churches for coffee and cakes etc.

The Mothers Union works alongside Family Support Work by providing food for families. Many thanks to our own members who regularly help in this way by providing monthly gifts of food to Becky.

The congregation supported FSW with food donations at our Harvest Festival. The church donations were augmented with generous giving from the Barn Preschool, and Giggle and Grow preschools in Bewbush and Gossops Green. The overall giving and display was amazing to see.

At Christmas once again the congregation gave generously at our Toy Service this was augmented by generous giving from St Margaret's Warnham. The sum of the gifts for FSW was absolutely amazing

Martin the chief executive will come to churches to talk about their work. He is always interesting to listen to. If anyone would like to hear more, the next committee mtg is in mid-May at 5pm in St Peter's Church, West Green. Just let me know.

Merle Martin

FUN & FUNDRAISING

As reported to the PCC regularly we are trying to return to some kind of normal for fundraising as with all things post-pandemic. We have had a difficult 2 years but are beginning to be able to arrange events with more certainty that they will occur.

The small committee still need lots of support from others to get these events off the ground and would like to thank those who have stepped up to help, and to encourage others to do so. Rest assured you will not be lumbered with taking on more than you can manage but in order for events to be successful and especially in the light of the need to raise even more funds to facilitate the building work in addition to the general running of the church your help and support is really needed!

Since the last APCM the following events have taken place:

Cream Tea in August

Get Active for August

Harvest Supper & Favourite Hymns

Christmas Tree Festival – this was our main fund raiser and mission outreach for the year. It was a new venture and tricky to organise

within the restrictions of the pandemic, but in spite of fairly low visitor numbers we deemed it a success as we raised over £1300 and reached out to local community and groups which was so important after the lockdowns had taken their toll. We have decided to repeat the event this coming December as we have the trees and the organisation already worked out, and in order to build on its success. In future years we may do a bi-annual event alternating with our traditional Christmas Fair.

February Launch for St Alban's 60th Anniversary Celebrations – we had a lovely start to our celebrations with our coffee and pop up stall following the dedication service. In the following months we have been having coffee and pop-up stalls on the 1st Sunday of the month. We would like to encourage others to contribute cakes, plants, books or whatever they can to help us raise more funds.

On 30th April we looked forward to organist John Sharples giving a concert in church in aid of the buildings appeal. Entrance is by donation so we hope lots of people will come along and support us and enjoy the wonderful music.

Looking ahead to the summer months:

Car Treasure Hunt tba

St Alban's Patronal Festival bring and share picnic on the green after the Patronal service. Sun 19th June

Joint music festival on the church green with CCYS date tbc in June/July

Cream Tea in August

Do please support all these events and if you have other suggestions do pass them on to the committee.

Helen Ford, Meg Miller, Jane Sharpe, Kerry Lavington & Jenny Graham

LINK TO HOPE SHOEBOXES

Last Autumn I delivered over 30 boxes to the charity in their lovely new premises.

I try to regularly share the news from Link to Hope on our church Facebook page. Since the War in Ukraine the charity has been supporting their local workers who live in Ukraine, and will gratefully receive any monetary donations you can make. Sadly there has been loss of life and destruction of buildings and equipment. Projects we have supported with our shoeboxes have been in the midst of much of the devastation and we need to continue to pray for them.

A couple of their latest tweets:

“Our project leader A.G, is constantly moving back and forth from Zaporozhye delivering food and medicines to the Angel of Light and households within the village of Zhelannoe. We have been able to finance A.G so he can continue to supply all this food and aid to the many refugees.”

“It was inevitable we suppose but one of our project managers houses was destroyed in Kharkiv, Ukraine. The building was destroyed by shelling in Lyubotyn on 29 of March, 1 person was killed, 7 people were injured, 7 houses were destroyed #Ukrainewar #linktohope #Ukraine”

If you want to follow the charity and read its updates you can on:

<https://linktohope.co.uk> and on Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/LinktoHope>

We will continue to support them, I wait to hear whether shoeboxes will be sent this year, and I hope to hold a charity lunch in aid of Link to Hope in the coming months.

Helen Ford

OPEN DOORS

As a church we continue to pray regularly for the persecuted church as part of a continuing wave of worldwide prayer. We are a Connected Church with Open Doors which means that we will:

- Hold at least one church service for persecuted Christians each year (On the 3rd Sunday in October)
- Pray regularly as a whole church for persecuted Christians.
- Engage with emergency appeals as and when they are launched (this would be on an individual basis)
- Share petitions that call on our political leaders to support persecuted Christians

For our October service in 2021, we were able to invite Mike Cooper, from Open Doors, to address us at to our morning Eucharist. Mike said how warm our welcome was to him and thanked us for the opportunity to come and address us. I was very moved when he told us about the North Korean woman who has been imprisoned in a labour camp and had been miraculously released – she said she could actually hear the prayers of people praying for her in prison.

Many of the congregation continue to make regular contributions to Open Doors Worldwide Mission (thankyou). When we became a Connected Church Open Doors gave us 40 crosses for people to wear with the words “Pray for North Korea” branded on them. When I distributed the crosses, I was moved to hear feedback from many of the congregation who are active supporters of Open Doors (there are still a few crosses left if you would like one)

Open Doors World Watch report was again; launched in Parliament in January. This was attended by over 100 MPs. Our own MP Henry Smith, an Open Doors supporter was unable to be there because he was with a Parliamentary Foreign Affairs Committee visit to the Ukraine. It is sad to note that this year Afghanistan has become the worst country in the world for persecution of Christians.

Please continue to pray for and support our Christian Brothers and Sisters who continue to be persecuted. For further information please visit: www.opendoorsuk.org

Alan and Sarah Magrath

OPEN HOUSE

Open House continues to support and give shelter to homeless people as it has done throughout the pandemic. We have continued to support them where we can; food and monetary donations were able to be passed on at Christmas and we were able to hold a Lent Lunch to raise monies for them this past Lent. Please refer to their website for further information.

<https://www.crawleyopenhouse.co.uk/>

Merle Martin

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

Trustees 2021 -2022

Ex Officio:

Incumbent: Revd. Ann Alexander (Chair)

Curate: Revd. Lizzie Green (Until November 2022)

Wardens:

Caroline Edwards

Roger Gibson

Secretary: Alan Magrath

Safeguarding officer: Andy Hoare

Elected members:

Beverly Killick

Andy Hoare

Jane Sharpe

Tsitsi Chikukwa

Barbara Zanleoni

Emma Humphrey

Madeleine Taylor

Sarah Magrath

Robert Higson

Deanery Synod:

Sue Richardson

Bev Killick

Treasurer: 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

Richard Place Dobson Services Limited

1-7 Station Road Crawley West Sussex RH10 1HT