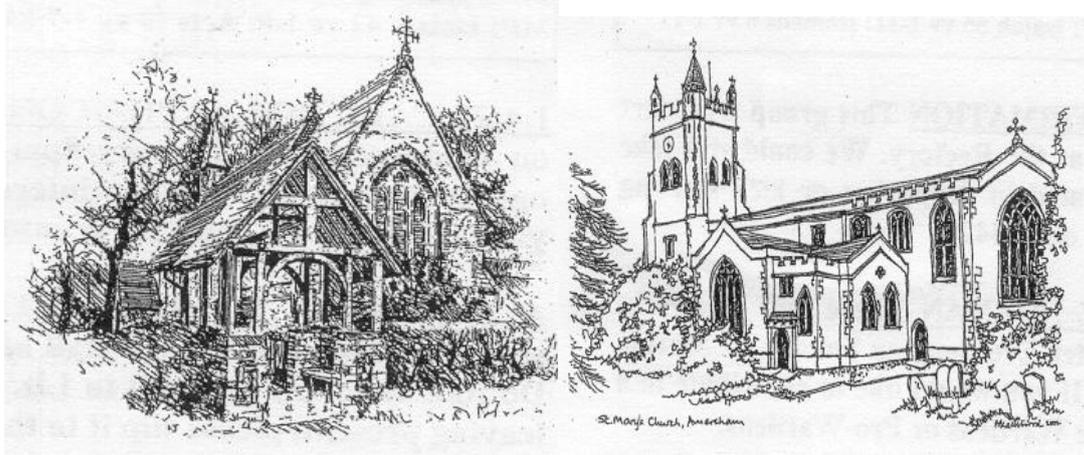


THE PARISH OF AMERSHAM WITH COLESHILL



Annual Report 2022

**Come to the Annual Parish Meeting
on Sunday 24th April 2022 at
11.50am in St Mary's Church**

**To discuss the past year and elect
Churchwardens and PCC members**

All welcome

MINISTRY TEAM REPORT, AMERSHAM WITH COLESHILL 2021-22

If Charles Dickens were writing the report for the last 12 months, he might well call it A Tale of Two Rectors, as it's been very neatly book-ended by the retirement of Tim Harper, after nearly 25 years in the parish, and the appointment of Jonny Rapson as the new rector, moving into the rectory at the time of writing and joining us officially on 24 May. This means that for the whole year we have had no rector. While this has been frustrating in some ways, and we appreciate that people felt like this, the Church of England takes a leisurely approach to the appointment process for all sorts of reasons. It's healthy to have a gap after such a long incumbency; it gives us a chance to realise how much talent we possess among us; and the discernment process cannot be rushed.

We are very grateful to everyone who helped to produce our parish profile (we still hear people outside the parish singing its praises!), with all the thinking and prayer and discussion involved. We're also grateful to all the people who helped with the day-to-day services, including Area Dean Peggy Ludlow, Canons Chris Bull, Alan Mustoe and Chris Samuels, and David Robinson returning. And one of Tim Harper's last services to us was to set up the paperwork for our three authorised preachers: Sarah Ainsworth-Coles, Edward Brown, and Mel Jackson. They have all enriched our learning and spiritual lives with their excellent sermons, and it has been a joy to see them growing into the role. Without them, and of course our LLM, Sheila Shield, we could not have maintained the number and variety of our services.

Of course, many other people have performed heroic acts to keep the parish going. We did not just have a vacancy, we still had the impact of the pandemic (and we still do!). Fortunately, there was no repeat of the full lockdown of 2020, but we had to be ever-vigilant and our churchwardens needed to keep on top of what the regulations said at any given point. They were also legally in charge of pretty much everything during the vacancy, no small responsibility.

Special thanks go to Loraine and Petrina for wearing the Health & Safety and risk assessment hats. We also had no idea that Val Simmonds was risking life and limb dealing with the flag in high winds! Thanks are also due to the team looking at how we can develop our pastoral care, another new initiative during the vacancy.

One of the few upsides of the pandemic was that we decided to invest in some proper cameras and IT for streaming services. Again, thank you to our generous donors for agreeing to fund this! We could have settled for going back to normal (whatever that means) once the pandemic was over, but our experiments with assorted mobiles, laptops and tablets proved that there was another congregation out there, who appreciated being able to connect with the physical church. Before Covid, we would have associated "accessibility" simply with whether we could handle wheelchair access....but now we're able to offer far more than ever before to people who can't come to church, Covid or no Covid. We were also able to include a wider congregation by streaming weddings, funerals and baptisms during the restrictions on numbers. The streaming team has performed wonderfully, and generally coped with the system's occasional hissy fits. More recently we were also able to stream performances of the Amersham Martyrs play from St Mary's, which was wonderful given that audiences had to be halved from previous productions. This was another event postponed from 2021, but carried off with

great success. It must surely be unique to have such a community performance remembering events in some of the very places where they happened.

The continuing impact of Covid has perhaps been most apparent in our work with children and young people. Although we have managed to re-start school assemblies at All Saints' Infants in Coleshill and St Mary's in Amersham, and "Open the Book", much of our activity pre-Covid has simply been paused. We're grateful to Simon Hollett for picking up the Sunday school, but that's as far as we've got. You may remember that we were about to advertise for a children and families minister just before the pandemic hit, but it seemed appropriate to call a halt in the circumstances.

We are keen to do more, as you all know, and also for Edward McCall to bring more youngsters into the choir (his plans also had to go on hold). Indeed, this is an area in which the new rector Jonny has a great deal of experience, and we look forward to exciting developments.

So once again, our profound thanks to absolutely everyone who has soldiered on faithfully over the last year: readers, intercessors, sidesmen, flower arrangers, sacristans, the streaming team. And to PCC and church committee members and officers, keeping the show on the road and ensuring we didn't retreat into navel-gazing. We've been lucky to have Dorothy, as our parish administrator – often the first point of contact people have with us – and our churchwardens, Sue Pounce, Val Simmonds, Petrina Clackett and Howard Pool.

And a special thank you to Ludo the church dog for setting such a good example to all the humans (and occasional others).

You have all been absolute stars. But please don't take a deep breath and assume you can now put your feet up....because as a parish we're really looking forward to the next stage with our shiny new rector.

"See, I am doing a new thing!" says the Lord.

Amen

Revs Tim and Sue

Parochial Church Council: Secretary's Report, July 2021 to February 2022

The priority for these past months for the PCC and for the parish has been the process of appointing a new rector. This meant that there have been two streams of PCC meetings, one dealing with the wider, more usual matters of concern in the parish, and the other following Sections 11 and 12 of the complicated system required to find and appoint the new rector; luckily, Sections 1 to 10 seemed not to require our input.

The appointment as Rector of Reverend Jonny Rapson came after 29 weeks of diligent planning and preparation throughout the interregnum. In September last year, at the Section 11 meeting, PCC formally approved the draft Parish Profile, pending a few minor changes. Sue Pounce and Mel Giddings were thanked heartily for leading the process of consultation and formulation to produce the Profile, but they were anxious that the many

other contributors to the superb final booklet were also appreciated. These two stalwarts were elected at the meeting as the PCC representatives on the vacancy and appointment panel.

The fruits of all this labour were examined in detail by Bishop Alan at the Section 12 meeting in November. This was an open meeting attended by about 30 parishioners in church and a further few online. The Parish Profile was subject to Bishop Alan's page by page assessment, before he concluded that "Overall, this is a brilliant document". Mr Tyrwhitt-Drake, Parish Patron, pronounced the Profile "Fantastic" and "all-inclusive". The subsequent vote to adopt the Profile was unanimous. The meeting then discussed the advertisement and appointment schedule, and the format of the interview days. These went very smoothly and resulted in a successful appointment. The rest will be history!

PCC's usual business did not decrease during the above and meetings continued to be well-attended and productive. Not counting the very brief meeting to elect officers immediately after the July 2021 APCM, PCC met formally in October and in November 2021, and in February 2022. The names of the 21 members of the PCC for most of this period appear at the end of this report. Average attendance at meetings this year was 18, a recurring testament to the commitment of the members. The minutes of all PCC meetings are available on request from the Parish Office or from me. At the suggestion of Co-Area Dean Reverend Peggy Ludlow, who Chaired the APCM last year, the Chair at PCC meetings is taken in turn by the four Church Wardens.

The Standing Committee of core PCC members is empowered to take decisions, within guidelines agreed by the full PCC, on specific issues when no full PCC meeting is imminent. Its decisions are always reported, and occasionally reviewed, at the next PCC meeting. Standing Committee is authorised to spend a maximum of £5000 if an emergency requires it and no PCC meeting is imminent. If the need arose, £200 may be spent without reference to other members of the committee.

The Wardens of both churches give a report at every PCC meeting, as does the Treasurer; updates on Safeguarding and Data Protection are also mandatory agenda items. The PCC receives regular reports on Youth Work, Charitable Giving, Mission, our two schools and the Almshouses. There is a report from the Deanery Synod, if a meeting has taken place.

Some matters discussed by the PCC in 2021-2

1. One permanent agenda item is Fabric and Property in both churches, the main aspects of which are covered in the Church Wardens' reports, and which are the constant concern of our two Treasurers.

2. The replacement of the Church Office computer has been a major concern financially, technologically and in terms of the data stored; problems have been solved appropriately, though not without significant cost.
3. The live streaming of services at St Mary's, with our new CCTV style presentation, has proved a popular success.
4. PCC approved the outlay for the marital blessing of Steve and Lindsey Poulson, as a wedding gift from the parish.
5. The installation of roof alarms is being pursued, as are improvements in the maintenance of the organ in SM.
6. We were given information about Bishop Stephen's visit to the Amersham Deanery in May by Mr Tebboth, Lay Chair of the Deanery Synod. Mr Tebboth told the meeting that the bishop wants to see community events of some kind: Steve Poulson's work and the Amersham Martyrs Play, he suggested.

Steve Johnson,
PCC Secretary.
April 2022

Amersham with Coleshill PCC
Annual Treasurer's Report
For the year ended 31 December 2021

I am pleased to provide you with our annual accounts and this Executive Summary:

Key objectives for 2021 were to:

1. To implement Parish Finance Simplification Strategy by end FY 2021 in order to support financial sustainability that will future proof the finances of the parish.
2. Provide finance and strategic guidance & controls to support day to day cashflow & support Mission and Fabric proposals across our Parish

As reported at our quarterly PCC meetings, the workings of the parish and our finances were continued to be significantly impacted by COVID (C19) Pandemic. The key objectives above remained, however we were navigating and transitioning out of the Pandemic whilst still experiencing C19 impacts from church closure & social distancing. Certainly, the much talked about road to recovery seemed like the stop / start local roads around Amersham – littered by potholes and with too many roadworks!

Summary of Financial Performance for the year ended 31 December 2021:

- Operational Surplus: Unrestricted Funds has a surplus of £2,433 up from £1,066 in 2020. Given the yet another challenging year, important to add much needed context to this figure.
 - 2020 Financial performance was underpinned by significant increase in Gifts & cash offerings. In 2021, we saw reduction in Gift & offerings but increase in regular giving.
 - Tax Recoverable down – largely due to significant VAT re-claim (23k) received for 2020 fabric works.

- Cash Collections continue to reduce year on year– largely down to periods of church closure and also changing consumer behaviour re cash and increased confidence in donating via cards.
- Income from Church Activities increased to £62,091 (up 74%) due to:
 - Increase in Special services income to £27,378 (220%) due to increase in services from 2020. This led to overall increase in income to £253,588 (up £12,238)
 - Parish Rooms successful transition from 2020 C19 impact - £6,948 – proved yet again that it provides an important service to local community.
 - Income from Use of Church increased to £23,859 (up 68%) – significant net contribution (£14,857) from Piggotts End rental. We will see a reduced contribution in 2022 with substantial capex required on roof repairs and new water tank.
- Operational Expenditure Increased by £24,614. This was expected given increased usage of church and therefore increased upkeep / maintenance required.
- For second year running, our Parish Share was reduced by £961 to £90,131. We continue to pay our Parish Share in full every year.
- The good news is that 2022 Parish Share Annual Charge is £86,720.08 / £7226.67 pm – good news c3.7% reduction from LY (£284.27pm / £3411.26 pa cash upside)
- Balance Sheet: up £26,350 (4.3%) to £639,784 from £613,434 – again, important context on balance sheet increase is the significant increase in valuation of our investments (£45,503)
- It is important to understand when analysing Parish Finances that there are 3 types of Funds:
 - Unrestricted Funds – general funds for general objectives of the church – Day to day operational cash flow but does include unrestricted assets of which £89,000 is the Piggotts End property – decreased by £18,327 to £225,530. Therefore The PCC is well endowed and has c£1136k (not incl PE fixed Asset value) on unrestricted funds as at 31 December 2021. Funds also exist for the maintenance of both churches.
 - Restricted Funds – can only be used for the specific purpose for which they have been given eg Fabric – Increased by £19,667 to £217,804 from £198,137.
 - Endowment Funds – represent endowments where capital must be maintained and the dividend income used only for the restricted purposes specified in the establishment of the endowments – increased by £25,010 to £196,450

As reported last year, we decided to use 2020 C19 impact to significantly improve two of our assets – St Mary’s Church (133k Capex spend) & Church Rooms (£33k Capex Spend). Due to this, we were able to open both these assets quickly as & when C19 allowed, which has resulted in increased usage to support our mission, community & income generation.

- Church Rooms – now at a good standard and delighted in the work the Dorothy and others have done to secure bookings that has resulted in an operational surplus being produced.

- Piggotts End – thanks to continued efforts by Sue Pounce, the property had already been maintained to a rental standard and good tenants were found. As stated above this produced c£14k of rental upside. However, we are anticipating this figure to reduce by c50% in 2022 due to substantial roof works and new water tank.

Planned Giving & Gifts are our largest income source (c74%) and we must thank every one of our congregation for their continued support and contribution during another C19 impacted year. Tax efficient Giving & Cash collections were up £15,317 - must be noted that £8,535 of that was donated for Thank You Collections for 4 of our members leaving their important positions within the parish and cannot be counted as regular giving. Without ongoing Planned Giving and these generous “one offs” we simply cannot function. Thank you for what you donate now. If you are able to give more then, I can assure you, that we will put it to very good use and that every penny is accounted for and nothing is wasted.

Delighted to say that due to significant input from the many volunteers of the Book & Flower stalls in particular, that our Church Giving increased substantially (despite not being able to hold our fete again) and many good causes benefitted in addition to our 4 chosen charities. I have no doubt this will be covered in more detail in our Church Giving Report. We did continue to support Stephen Poulson / CMS with his important work in Honduras but our support to other good causes was significantly impacted. Delighted that the church fete will be held in 2022 and I will be working with the Mission Giving committee to ensure that we maintain the focus and impetus in 2022 especially given the inflationary pressure / cost of living increase leading to local hardship and the Ukraine situation then all monies we raise will be important to the good causes that provide support. I will also be working with the PCC & new Rector to define usage on Rectors Discretionary Fund (£14,081) that is defined in the accounts as support for “alleviation of need”.

Good Box Contactless Machines has become an important part of church finances. In 2020, we had 292 transactions totalling £1661-00, delighted to report (as evidenced in the table below) that usage across the parish in 2021 increased to 1110 transactions totalling £6,054. Therefore after 2.5% charge and the 10p per transaction charge we as a PCC received £5,791.69. Good Box continues to increase in importance in terms of income generation and we have replaced all 3 machines in last 3 months. So far in 2022 after 3 months, we have again seen significant increase as visitors donating behaviour changes from cash to card.

Good Box 2020 / 2021 Comparison:

	ASC	StM	Plant / Book Stall	Total
2020 (FY)	64 / £493	228 / £1168	0 / 0	292 / £1661
2021 (FY)	182 / £1412	740 / £3733	188 / £904	1110 / £6054

Good Box has become an important revenue generator - also being used for Gazebo / Marquee Hire.

2022 – we have already seen an uplift in Good Box usage YoY:

	ASC	StM	Plant / Book Stall	PCC
Jan – March 2021	5 / £33	31 / £153	0	36 / £186
Jan – March 2022	50 / £308	164 / £831	5 / £33	219 / £1172

Key Finance actions undertaken to address our key challenges and support delivery of sustainable 2021 financial Performance:

- All Regulatory (incl Diocesan, HMRC & Charities Commission) returns up to date including recent completion & update of bank mandates & KYC Due Diligence process.
- Auditors have given us a clean report in the way that we are managing our finances and regulatory obligations.
- Comprehensive Treasurers Report prepared and discussed at every PCC meeting.

As announced at last year's AGM, Peter Clackett and I have been working to complete the Parish Finance Simplification Project work to enable the Parish to work as "One Parish" with regards to our finances. The approach was given full support by PCC and also our auditors Mercer Lewin. To recap, the benefits of this approach are:

- Supports cashflow across the parish
- Provides a "One Parish" approach for all general "day to day" operations and will be more transparent when audited. The eagle eyed amongst you will have noticed that I have not reported / commented on St Mary's or All Saints finances separately. This is deliberate as we are committed to working financially as one parish.
- The investments for both churches will remain separated. Each church will continue to maintain their investments to fund any unexpected fabric or operational costs.

I can report that the main transition work was completed within timescales – with following actions taken:

- Planned Giving for whole parish now managed by Clare Atkinson
- Church Rooms & ASC now integrated into main parish account
- Bank Mandates, Online Banking & Charities Commission fully updated

With the main transition work completed, we have 4 more tasks to complete

- Build integrated cashflow / Budget that will support Parish in 2022 & beyond – complete for June PCC
- Review Parish Reserves & investment policy – complete for June PCC
- Review utilities spend arrangements across the parish and agree way forward to buy as one parish across our main assets – complete for June PCC
- Launch & integrate accounting package into the parish during 2022.

Looking back over last 2 years of C19 impact and having spoken to numerous church treasurers and Rectors, we have fared better than most. We should be proud that we have continued to pay our Parish Share thus supporting Deanery and wider Diocese. We have used the enforced closures to utilise restricted funds for the very purpose they were given to future proof our buildings and now we can look forward as the whole country transitions to the new economic norm.

Our 2021 cashflow showed that we needed £543 per day / £16,542 per month to run our parish, this is a significant amount of money that we need to raise just to stand still. It is vital that we continue with focussed, disciplined management of our finances. In terms of operational cashflow, there is very little margin for error, every penny is used and if it is not used for day to day operations then we need to ensure it is only used to support the main good causes both at local and national level.

The PCC is still well endowed with both unrestricted & restricted funds as at 31 December 2021 and as highlighted, funds also exist for the maintenance of both churches. With that in mind, we have two large projects under discussion at St Mary's – Boiler Room Project and the Organ project – headline numbers at this stage are looking somewhat terrifying! As we did with the Lighting and decorating projects, we will need to plan and scrutinise the scope, scale and timings to ensure their affordability in line with the many other calls on our resources.

In summary, 2021 was another challenging year. However, despite everything and with phenomenal support of our congregation we were able to show continued signs of financial stability & sustainability. Unfortunately, we had to postpone moving ahead with key strategic plans eg Family / Youth Worker but with our solid financial foundations we are in a good position to re-evaluate those decisions during 2022 /2023.

Lastly, I would like to acknowledge the support from Peter Clackett, Loraine Hollett and Clare Atkinson who work so hard to support the parish finances. In addition, the Church Wardens, & Parish Secretary Steve Johnson for giving me the time at PCC to report, discuss & debate key financial challenges that we are facing. In particular, a special mention to Reverends Tim & Sue for everything they have done during the interregnum to keep our very important show on the road. Thank You.

Should you have any queries concerning the contents of this review or should you have any general questions about the parish finances, please do not hesitate to contact me via mobile 07703 963990 or email at treasurer-pcc@outlook.com.

Graeme Coles - PCC Treasurer
April 2022

PLANNED GIVING 2021

You will see from the Treasurer's report that our planned giving and cash collections are vital to sustaining the life of the church. Whilst inevitably the amount received in the Collection plate has dropped, we remain incredibly grateful to those who have switched to giving through a regular standing order mandate and also through the Goodbox machines which we have in both churches.

I continue to ensure that the tax man makes a regular donation too, through the Gift Aid scheme – we are also able to claim Gift Aid on donations made through the Goodbox receipts and any cash collections. The gift aid scheme adds an extra 25p per £1 donated at no cost to the donor so is an excellent way of boosting donations further

Since July, I have also been managing the donations made to All Saints following changes to the structures of the Parish Finances. I remain indebted to Loraine Hollett who banks all of the cash gifts we receive – it's all a real team effort.

Clare Atkinson
5 April 2022

CHARITABLE GIVING COMMITTEE (CGC)

Every year, the Charitable Giving Committee proposes a number of charities which have connections with our local community and meet the criteria of the Charitable Giving policy which are then approved by the PCC.

Due to covid restrictions, most Parish fundraising events were unfortunately cancelled, including the annual Church fete – our major Parish fundraising event. Instead, a book and plant sale was held over 18 Saturdays from May – August and in October. A total of just over £5,000 was raised. The funds were divided between four charities: Niche International, Bucks Mind, the Rwanda Sisterhood, and the Linda Jackson Macmillan Centre at Mount Vernon. Each charity received £1,300.

Steve Poulson, our mission partner, continues as a beneficiary through our ongoing links with the Church Mission Society and Street Kids Direct. Steve works with Duncan Dyason's charity, Street Kids Direct (SKD) and in Honduras has set up a successful mentoring to support vulnerable young children.

In 2021, the total annual Charitable Giving amounted to £18,977.

Church Warden report for 2021/22 APCM

When we reported nearly a year ago, we were about 16 months into lockdown. It seems unbelievable that it was only on 31st of March this year that the church layout was finally restored. We now have to learn to live safely with coronavirus, and as public confidence has grown, we have gradually removed covid restrictions in our services and patterns of worship.

We are very grateful to Loraine Hollett who has regularly carried out risk assessments as and when the Government and Church of England have issued regulations and guidelines. We are thankful that God has sustained us, as a church community, during this challenging time. We recognise that for many this has been a time when people have suffered in terms of physical and mental health and we have been working together to develop Pastoral Care within our church community. We are looking forward to developing this further when our new Rector Rev'd Jonny Rapson joins us on May 24th.

During the interregnum, not only have we continued to be blessed to have our Honorary Associate Rectors, Rev'd Tim Barnard, Rev'd Sue Gill and our Licensed Lay Minister Sheila Shield to lead our worship, but we are so grateful to have had amazing support from the Deanery. Our Area Dean Rev'd Peggy Ludlow and the Associate Archdeacon Rev'd Chris Bull have led our worship many times during the last year. Additionally, we have enjoyed the ministry of Rev'd Canon Chris Samuels, Rev'd Canon Alan Mustoe, Rev'd Derek Carr and David Robinson and we thank them all. Sarah Ainsworth-Coles, Mel Jackson and Edward Brown, our authorised preachers, have also inspired us throughout the year and we thank God for them.

Having got to grips with the new streaming technology installed last year, Martin Pounce and Anthony Brown have offered training and support so that the streaming team has increased to include Ernest Newhouse, Bart Schmal and David Cuffley. Our thanks go to them and to Dan Solomon from Terry Tew of Sound and Light for his on-call support in times of need.

Our Director of Music, Edward McCall has been with us for just over a year and in that time has effectively developed the musical life of the church. Edward took on an organ scholar who has played competently and confidently at several of our services. We congratulate our organ scholar Harry, who recently passed his Grade 6 organ examination with distinction. We hope to encourage others to come forward. Under Edward's leadership the church choir has grown numerically and continues to enhance our regular worship with a wide range of Anthems sung during communion and the monthly services of Choral Evensong. Edward's skilful playing of wonderful voluntaries and postludes has made an enormous difference to our worship and he has successfully introduced a new setting for our service of Common Worship. Psalms 100:2 says "Worship the Lord with gladness; come before him with joyful songs." Thank you, Edward and the choir for helping us to do this.

Simon Hollett took over as children's worker in June last year and we thank him for his faithful service as he seeks to build this important part of our mission.

Although we were unable to hold our annual Fete for the second year running, a team led by Martin and Loraine Hollett and Valerie Simmonds set up the book and plant stall throughout the summer. This brought in substantial additional income for our charitable giving. We are delighted that the Team led by Martin and Loraine Hollett are planning for our fete to be held on June 18th which our new Rector Rev'd Jonny Rapson will open.

We are again, both humbled and encouraged by the generosity shown towards St. Mary's over the past year. For example, a very generous donation from a member of our congregation has paid for the hymn book trolley, new noticeboards and our new portable noticeboard in place in the south transept. Without the financial support so generously offered by you, our church would simply not be able to function in the way it does. On behalf of the PCC, we would like to thank you all for your faithful on-going financial support of the work of our parish.

We are pleased to report that we now have 13 cameras and an alarm system fitted on our roof to prevent theft of lead. We are also happy to confirm that the buildings and fittings are in good order. A quinquennial inspection took place in November 2021. No matters of utmost urgency were noted. All the regular checks are up to date (gas safety, electrical report, lightning conductor, fire extinguishers etc), and the organ has been serviced and tuned as per contract. We have drawn up a Pastoral Care policy and reviewed policies in line with recommendations. The PCC have ratified policies as per schedule. We are extremely grateful that Loraine Hollett, our Health and Safety Representative, and Martin Hollett carry out regular risk assessments in preparation for services. Throughout the year we ensured the appropriate risk assessments were carried out and measures implemented to make the buildings COVID 19 secure. We are grateful to members of the congregation who have regularly cleaned the church between the Sunday services.

The "Curate's House" at Piggott's End is privately let as it is not currently required for a Curate and brings in a useful income for the PCC. The tenants found by Hadlands have extended their tenancy for another year and the PCC have agreed to this. Following our Church surveyor's report in the Autumn 2021 about damp we have carried out extensive work including re-roofing.

Our thanks must go to Amersham Town Council which has the responsibility to maintain the Churchyard. They carry out their duties so well.

We would like to thank all PCC members for their commitment throughout the year. The working teams, Standing Committee, Staff Meeting Team, our Sacristan Loraine, and Dorothy, our Parish administrator who all continue to maintain the working dynamic of the Parish. The smooth running of the parish is the result of the tremendous support and assistance received from the many helpers within our congregation and parish throughout the year. This is, as ever greatly appreciated and our thanks go to all who contribute to the Church services as well as the regular tasks of cleaning the brasses by Val Royal, flower arranging led by Jo Coldham, management of noticeboards both internal and external by Karen Martin, bell ringing led by Jan Galloway and Valerie Simmonds, the choir under the leadership of our Director of Music, Edward Mc Call and the careful stewardship of our finances by our Treasurer, Graeme Coles and Assistant Treasurer Peter Clackett. We are grateful to Clare Atkinson who manages the gift aid envelopes and stewardship details for both St Mary's and All Saints Churches and to our Electoral Roll Officer, Sarah Ainsworth-Coles. The Church as we know it would have difficulty functioning without all this, often unseen, work and we are truly grateful to everyone involved in its running. We would welcome more volunteers. If you are interested, more

details can be found on the website under the tab 'about us' or please come and talk to us. We are very grateful to Michelle Caternach who designed and maintains our parish website so efficiently.

Following extensive consultation across the parish and the community, we drew up the Parish Profile, this and the website were key documents in the appointment process of a new Rector. We advertised for a new Rector in December 2021, interviewed and appointed Rev'd Jonny Rapson in February 2022. We are busy getting the Rectory ready for Jonny and his wife Jenna to move in early May. We are looking forward to the evening of May 24th when a service of Institution will be led by Bishop Alan. Jonny will be presented to the parish by our Patron, William Tyrwhitt Drake and he will be inducted and installed by the Associate Archdeacon of Buckingham, Rev'd Canon Chris Bull. So, it is with that in mind we put our trust in God, praying for our new Rector Jonny and his wife Jenna, for Tim and Sue in their roles as Honorary Associate Rectors, for Sheila as our Licensed Lay Minister and Sarah, Mel and Edward our authorised preachers. We remain thankful for the great spirit and shared purpose shown in their ministry.

Susan Pounce and Valerie Simmonds

April 2020

Music Report

It has been immensely gratifying to sing more regularly as various restrictions have eased since the last report.

Huge thanks are recorded to Jeanette Cash, who has been our choir secretary for many years. Jeanette has spent countless hours, and even more so at the 'crunch' points when the choir is preparing for major feasts, organising music files and ensuring lines of communication are in place. Personally, I was ever so grateful for the support Jeanette gave me as I settled into the post during my initial months. As life has got busier, Jeanette has decided to pass on the reins, and she does so with enormous gratitude from us all. I was delighted that Anne Weatherall and Miriam Richardson have agreed to take on the role. Since starting earlier in the year, they have been busy familiarising themselves with the required tasks and developing a welcome pack. This will mean that when new choristers join us, they will be given the essential information and resources to enable them to settle in quickly. Additionally, Anne and Miriam have been instrumental in sourcing the new choir folders which we now sport, increasing our 'team' identity!

I am looking forward to increasing the links with St Mary's Primary School in the coming months. No doubt, Jonny Rapson will be in an advantageous position to visit the school and encourage potential choristers to consider joining our ranks. I will actively be seeking support from the two local Grammar school Music Departments; we have choral links with both! It is so important to encourage, train and invest in our youth to ensure that the love of ecclesiastical music is passed on to others.

One my organ students who has been learning for a little over 12 months, has made excellent progress. Having already passed Grade 6 with Distinction, and played for various parts of services, he is well placed to increase his involvement in due course.

As the church community already know, we recently had our first solo Organ recital for many years to launch the organ restoration project. As the time of writing, we are discussing the project with specialists to understand better the scope of the work which we undertake. Any work done will protect the instrument and any enhancements will be in keeping with the instrument.

Sue and Tim have given us incredible support over the year. It is wonderful to have clergy with first-hand experience and understanding of music; thank you!

Huge thanks go to the Choir. I believe we are one of the few churches in the area who provided live choral music throughout the pandemic. Although we sang with reduced numbers, there were only a few Sunday services during the restrictions where we were not able to sing in four-part harmony. The summer of 2021 was particularly busy with an increased number of Weddings. With this mind, I was incredibly grateful that the ASC Choir supported these and other additional services. It is good to be able to collaborate and strengthen our links here. I am always so grateful for the commitment of the choir who give their time so freely to sing amongst the busyness of work and family commitments. We have very much enjoyed (I hope I speak for all!) exploring new repertoire as well as refining that which is already known.

ALL SAINTS' CHURCH **WARDENS' REPORT 2022**

The report this year, which relates to the year ended 31st December 2021, continued to be influenced by the interregnum and overshadowed by the impact of the corona virus. After lockdown, the Church was opened for private prayer on Wednesdays and Sundays, and finally opened for communion services early in 2021, as soon as was legally permitted, and in accordance with safety and risk assessments.

WORSHIP:

The pattern of services has remained generally as in previous years, with, where possible, the addition of a number of themed services. Additionally, there were monthly zoom services for those unable to attend church.

Our house group, with members from both churches, averaging a total of 11, and very ably led by Audrey Tridgell, continued to flourish meeting on a regular basis, every Wednesday.

Coffee (and a chat), immediately after Sunday morning service, used to be a firm favourite, however we have still been unable to re-instate this in 2021 due to Covid restrictions. We do hope to reinstate this after Easter 2022.

SPECIAL SERVICES:

We held themed services to encourage particular groups of people from the village and Winchmore Hill to join us, and we especially welcomed the children.

The children from the village Church of England school and their families joined us formally twice in the year – for Harvest Festival, and Christingle services. They continue to prove a great success. In addition, they visited the church at the end of each term. Bibles were again presented again to school leavers at the end of the Summer term. Rev. Sue Gill held assembly in the village school each Wednesday during term.

During Passiontide and Easter, we held special services; an Ash Wednesday service, Palm Sunday, an evening meditation for the Parish on the Tuesday of Holy Week, with a special service of hymns, prayers, meditation, and the lighting of candles on Good Friday, together with our regular 9.00am morning service on Easter Day.

Our “Pet Service” turned out to be a great success again. Rev. Sue Gill took the service and was able to bless all creatures great and small – the animals behaved impeccably !! We were pleased to see non regular churchgoers attended.

Other themed services included bees, patronal celebration, baptism renewal, Remembrance, and Mothering Sunday. We aim was to hold a themed service each month, where practical, but, due to COVID restrictions this, again, was not possible.

MISSION ACTION PLAN:

We continued to hold regular monthly prayer meetings in church. The number of attendees remains encouraging.

PASTORAL CARE AND OUTREACH:

Events and activities were organized to support people within the villages of Coleshill and Winchmore Hill.

The Magpie Club for pre-school children has restarted with weekly meetings in the Village Hall.

The Patch system which is designed to support those who are ill or need company, and to welcome newcomers to the village was maintained via zoom. Twice yearly in-person meetings are expected to re-start in 2022. In September a newcomers’ party took place at the Cricket Club and was well attended and successful.

ACTIVITIES:

Other activities, like the normal Christian Aid week collection, walk, breakfast etc., did not take place due to COVID rules.

FABRIC:

Running repairs were made to the Church during the year and the Quinquennial inspection took place in May 2021. The report did not indicate any further items of concern. We obtained a faculty to renew the damaged brick gate posts in Barrack Hill and this work was carried out in November.

A “parishioner church clean” took place in June, leaving the church looking clean and greatly improved. We plan to have similar clean in 2022.

The trees in our churchyard were surveyed. following on from the survey a number of the trees have been pruned and a diseased, dangerous, Ash tree was removed. Two new Hornbeam trees will be planted in place of the Ash in early 2022.

PARISHIONERS:

All Saints’ is a beautiful 1861 Victorian rural church, designed by GE Street, which plays an important part in the community life of the village and surrounding parish.

The Church Committee met on two occasions during the year. There are many people with specific roles and talents who keep our church in an attractive, open, and welcoming state by giving generously of their time:-

- We are fortunate that our worship is enhanced by having a fine organ, a consummate Director of Music, Ruth Murphy, and a loyal band of faithful singers.
- One of the glories of All Saints’ is the colourful and artistic floral decoration organized by Rosemary Valentine and assisted by the flair and hard work of the team of talented workers.
- Chris Wege, as well as being the secretary to the Church Committee, devotes a great deal of time and care to the maintenance of the churchyard, including a redesigned flower bed, which is admired by local people and visitors alike.
- Peter Clackett, our All Saints’ treasurer, is responsible for ensuring financial controls are in place. In 2021 plans were put in place, by the treasurers for St Mary’s and All Saints’, to strengthen these by the combination of the finances of both churches. This was completed during 2021 and from January 2022 the finances are fully combined.

The village school continues to maintain a close relationship with the church – within current distancing rules.

Jane Stefanovic has continued her duties as cleaner, and works very hard to keep the building spotless, shining, safe, and sanitized - which is appreciated by worshippers and visitors. Paul Evans ensures that the church is unlocked and locked – and therefore remains open, every day, to all.

The list is not exhaustive, and we are fortunate to have such a faithful team of sidespersons, readers, choir, as well as those who prepare the church for services. We also need to thank our lay preachers, Mel Giddings, Anthony Brown and Sarah Ainsworth-Coles.

We must especially thank those parishioners who provide regular financial support to the church and have continued to do so. The money they so generously provide helps keep All Saints' open and in good condition.

Finally, we need to register our huge thanks to our two associate rectors, Rev. Sue Gill and Rev. Tim Barnard who have covered the majority of church services in the absence of the rector. We also extend our thanks to the support of visiting clergy: Rev Peggy Ludlow, Rev Chris Samuel, and Rev Canon Chris Bull.

Petrina Clackett

Howard Pool

All Saints' Choir

For the second year, we have experienced restrictions imposed because of the Covid-19 pandemic.

On Mothering Sunday 2021 the choir was able to sing a few hymns again, but it was not until July that the congregation could join in.

The choir sang at the two weddings we held in June although it was still the case at that time that only six choristers were allowed. This limit was relaxed later in the year. In recent months we have often joined St Mary's choristers to augment choir numbers for weddings at St Mary's. These are welcome opportunities for us to get together.

Choral Evensong recommenced on the first Sunday of October, Harvest Thanksgiving, with the choir singing the anthems 'Sing to the Lord' (Rowley) and 'Thou visitest the earth' (Greene) and the Hylton Stewart in C setting of the Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis. Since then, everything has returned almost to normal for the choir, except that a hymn is still not sung during the receiving of Holy Communion.. Although the wearing of masks has ceased to become mandatory recently, choristers continue to do so.

Many thanks to Revd Sue Gill for her practical support and to Gerard Anderson for playing the organ once a month.

Thanks also to Dorothy Potter for always keeping us in the picture.

Petrina Clackett has retired from the choir; we are very grateful to her for her support over several years.

Finally, very many thanks to everyone in the choir for their constant support, interest and good humour.

Ruth Murphy

Bellringers Report 2022

The last year has been a difficult one for everyone, not least the ringers. Once normal services were allowed again, we were able to resume ringing for services and eventually to have practices again.

During lockdown in 2020 and 2021 we were able to keep in touch with Zoom meetings replacing our usual practice night. This was very useful for those members of the band who for various reasons were being more careful to avoid contacts. Without regular ringing for nearly two years, we all felt very rusty, so we took things slowly, ringing call changes or simple methods we were all familiar with.

We have rung for Sunday morning services and also resumed Sunday evening ringing once a month for choral evensong. We have also rung for several weddings during the year. Whilst ringing for a wedding on 30th August 2021 we rang 100 changes for the 100th birthday of the mother of one of our ringers.

In July and August 2021, two peals were rung on our bells by visiting ringers. Our band has rung 6 quarter peals this year, three of which were to commemorate the following special events:

14th November 2021 for Remembrance Sunday

6th February 2022 for the 70th anniversary of the Queen's accession

20th March 2022 as a wedding compliment to Shakeila and Richard Simmonds, son of Valerie our deputy tower captain, who were married in Singapore.

We also took the opportunity to dedicate this last quarter peal to Shanta and Jamie Lerner, who were married by Tim Harper on the night before the first lockdown on 23rd March 2020 and so missed the ringing for their wedding.

At very short notice in November, we were asked to host the Oxford Diocesan Guild 10 bell striking competition. There are not very many towers in the guild with 10 or 12 bells and only a week before the competition, the tower which was to have hosted it had a problem with their tenor bell. We were asked if we could step in. Unfortunately, both Valerie and I were not available on that weekend. Also, there was a concert in church in the afternoon but with the help of several members of the tower and also the congregation we were able to host the competition and even supply refreshments. Everyone was very impressed. I would like to thank everyone who helped to make it a successful event.

I would like to thank the band for their support this year and to the PCC for allowing us to ring the bells.

Jan Galloway

Tower Captain

Sacristan's Report

My second year in this role has seen the church continue to return to its new normal, with more services in church and a gradual increase in numbers in the congregations close to pre pandemic levels at times. Most of the Christmas services returned this year,

although you did have to pre book for them. I enjoyed having the candles lit for the advent carol service and other services at this time.

The candle stand continues to be well used by both visitors to the church and the congregation.

There are many people who assist with the sacristy tasks associated with the smooth running of the services and church in general and I would like to thank those who have continued to do this; but there is always room for more to join the team.

Lorraine Hollett, Sacristan

Flowers at St Mary's.

Due to the lockdown at the beginning of 2021 we were unable to collect names for lilies in memory of loved ones. The Easter service went ahead so the flower arrangers were able to do some stunning arrangements. We have been able to flower arrange for weddings which started half way through the summer.

Various groups in the church were again invited to decorate a window sill to symbolise Harvest Thanksgiving.

A special arrangement was placed in the Prayer Corner to commemorate the death of Prince Phillip.

The annual lunch party was able to go ahead and was held at Shan Pearce's house. It is a great way for everyone to get to know each other and have a good time.

We would like to thank all those who have contributed in any way and would love to hear from anyone who might be interested in joining us in the Flower Group

Jo Coldham, Flower Co-ordinator 01494-725284

ALL SAINTS CHURCH FLOWER TEAM

At last in 2021 we were beginning to feel more confident in decorating the church again for a weekly pedestal by the altar, annual festivals and ceremonies.

There were two weddings during the summer, with wonderful professional displays, allowing us to enjoy them for the weeks following.

In April we stopped putting flowers in the lichgate, which we had kept up weekly during all the Covid restrictions, to look cheery for passers-by. By Easter we decided to decorate the church again but with jam jars full of spring flowers and only 2 bigger arrangements. There was a photo and flowers in church in memory of the Duke of Edinburgh following his death as our tribute to him.

The village show asked villagers to enter the competition with colourful flowers to represent a rainbow. Dumpy Swerling won with a perfect rainbow of flowers. Sadly, less entrants than in 2019.

By harvest we were back in the swing again and the church looked beautiful. We are getting our confidence back!

As usual we decorated All Saints' for Christmas with greenery and candles and managed to keep it looking good from early December for the Christingle service and over Christmas and up to the New Year.

In January we had a most successful coffee morning and bring and buy in the large village hall. Fifty generous people came, chatted, had coffee and cake and raised enough money for the Flower Fund, the Village School and the local charity Christian Eye to receive £300 each. A triumph.

As I write we are planning to decorate the church for Easter with Lilies and spring flowers, donated in memory of loved ones. A list of names will be put in the porch. Lastly, more plans, we are hoping to have a Flower Festival in June for the Queen's Jubilee.

We are so lucky to have a wonderful flower team in Coleshill, loyal and generous with their time and talents. I am so grateful to them all.

Rosemary Valentine

COFFEE ON SUNDAYS AT ST. MARY'S

It was in March 2020 that I last wrote a report, and since then we have largely not been able to enjoy our weekly get-together due to the covid pandemic. With 3 lockdowns, and the church having to remain closed for some months, and more recently the arrival of the omicron variant, we have remained out of action for the best part of 2 years.

We did attempt towards the end of September 2021 to restart a somewhat limited socially distanced coffee half hour, but after just 11 weeks, this idea had to be abandoned as the omicron variant arrived, and we ceased coffees for a further 7 weeks.

As I write, we restarted again on 6th February 2022, and we are keeping our fingers crossed that we shall continue.

During our absence we lost 8 members of our coffee team due to moving away, sickness and deciding to retire from the team, so we had to make a heartfelt plea to the congregation for additional new members. Luckily, we had a good response, and happy to report that we are back to our full complement of 26 members. Long may it continue this way!

We cordially invite any new members of the congregation to join us after the service for refreshment and half an hour of socialising and meeting new friends.

All are most welcome!

SIDESTEAM REPORT

The Sides team are a great group of efficient, happy and enthusiastic members. Being on the team is a nice way to get involved at St Mary's and to get to know people. We cover all services including special services and support the Verger role for weddings and funerals. Everyone on the Sides team works well together in a caring and supportive way with each typically on duty two or three times a quarter. The team has the important role of welcoming people to the Church and the feedback received shows how well this is received and appreciated.

We adopted some new ways of working to keep people safe over the last year but have retained the warm welcome for which we are known at St Mary's. Thank you to such a great team and to those not on the team please speak to Howard Hughes if you'd like to join us.

PARISH OF AMERSHAM-WITH-COLESHILL

**Members of the Parochial Church Council, 2021-22
Elected at the Annual Meeting 11th July 2021**

Parochial Church Council:

Rev Tim Barnard	Honorary Associate Rector
Rev Sue Gill	Honorary Associate Rector
Petrina Clackett	All Saints' Churchwarden
Howard Pool	All Saints' Churchwarden
Susan Pounce	St Mary's Churchwarden
Val Simmonds	St Mary's Churchwarden
Graeme Coles	PCC Treasurer and Deanery Synod
Peter Clackett	All Saints Treasurer
Lorraine Hollett	Sacristan
Clare Atkinson	Lay representative Planned Giving
Nadia Daly	Lay representative Data Management
Louise Baneke	Lay representative Charitable Giving
Sarah Ainsworth-Coles	Lay representative, Electoral Roll, Deanery Synod
Roy Evans	Lay representative Policies, Deanery Synod
Clare Samuels	Lay representative Safeguarding Officer
Lucy Hann	Lay representative Parish Website
Mark Paton	Lay representative Church Rooms
Karen Martin	Lay representative
Mel Giddings	Lay representative
Bart Schmal	Lay representative Streaming
Steve Johnson	PCC Secretary

Representatives to the All Saints' Committee:

Dumpy Swerling

Ruth Murphy

Lindsey Eardley

Chris Wege

Pat Dawson

Maddie Murray