



**St Thomas the Apostle Parish Church and
Kingfisher Church, Trowbridge**

Annual Parochial Church Meeting

7.30pm on Tuesday 26 April 2022

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1. AGENDA

1. Opening Worship
2. Apologies
3. Minutes of 2020 Meeting
4. Election of Churchwardens
5. Election of PCC Members
6. Presentation of Accounts for 2020
7. Election of Independent Examiner for 2021
8. Reports:
 - a. PCC Proceedings in 2020
 - b. Deanery Synod
 - c. Electoral Roll
 - d. The Fabric of the Church
 - e. Safeguarding
9. Presentation of Inventory and Log Book
10. 2021 Reports from Organisations
11. Any other matters of Parochial or Church concern*
12. Vicar's address: "Mission on the Meads ... and beyond"

* Please notify the Vicar by the Tuesday 19th April

**Minutes of the Annual Parochial Church Meeting held on
Tuesday 27 April 2021 at 7.30pm at St Thomas' Church**

55 people were present virtually, over zoom.

1. Opening Worship

Allan opened the meeting in prayer, noting that this would be our first APCM on zoom.

2. Apologies

Were received from Anita Bowater, John and Ruth Chettleburgh, Jayne Gibbons, Carrie Farnell, Helen Shields, Martin Gailey,

3. Minutes of 2020 Meeting

Were duly received and approved.

4. Election of Churchwardens

Allan reminded the meeting that these posts would legally function for both St Thomas and Kingfisher. Allan had received nominations for Paul Edwards and Geoff Carter and these are therefore duly elected.

5. Election of PCC Members

Allan expressed his thanks to Geoff Tate who is standing down one year early from his role on PCC.

Nominations have been received for Pat Kerbey (who is willing to serve one more year as Treasurer), David Bowater and Esther Brown. Given there are no other nominations at this stage Pat, David and Esther are duly elected.

There remains one two-year vacancy on Deanery Synod and a one year vacancy as a result of Geoff Tate stepping down. Geoff's contribution to fundraising and in particular his work on furnished chairs was noted with particular thanks.

6. Presentation of Accounts for 2020

Pat presented the report as set out in the booklet. There was a £5k deficit last year, which considering how difficult the year had been for churches and charities, is a remarkable result. Pat was sincerely thanked for all her work on the accounts.

7. Appointment of Independent Examiner for 2021

Pat's recommendation is for Oakensen to be re-appointed to this role. The APCM signalled its agreement.

8. Reports:

- a) PCC Proceedings in 2020
- b) Deanery Synod
- c) Electoral Roll
- d) The Fabric of the Church
- e) Safeguarding

Were duly received and approved.

9. Presentation of Inventory and Log Book

Paul presented the 'Terrier', which is now available as a word document for light reading. The books will have the necessary signatures added as soon as practical. The log book also records information such as when work was undertaken and e.g. fire extinguishers checked. The APCM received the inventory and log book with thanks.

10. 2020 Reports from Organisations

Allan noted the breadth of reports but in particular that Chris Whittock will be retiring in summer as co-ordinator of Scramblers and Climbers after more than 25 years - and expressed his thanks on behalf of the congregation. Any volunteers to take this role on would be greatly appreciated.

11. Any other matters of Parochial or Church concern

None.

12. Inclusion at St Thomas' – a topic for consideration

Allan introduced the item, noting that various terms to cover disability/ inclusion/ accessibility had been considered for this and that this work is focusing on making sure those of all abilities feel included and welcome.

Martyn spoke about this work, including a draft policy which had been developed by Martyn and Philip Shields with input from PCC members. The draft policy covers an important area of church life and draws on best practice documents from Dorchester and Exeter. The document covers all the areas for consideration in church life to make sure everyone feels welcome, as well as a process for addressing concerns that are raised.

An inclusion champion is sought and volunteers for this role are welcome.

In the discussion that followed the following principal points were made:

- Alison Bennett has a useful contact at Bristol Diocese that could help inform the work.
- There may be a need to consider other areas where people might feel excluded in due course
- The aim of the work should be to raise awareness, to give everyone confidence to raise issues and a clear process to handle these
- A year of meeting differently has helped us to consider accessibility and inclusion and there is a need to maintain an online presence (hybrid church).
- Further submissions to the work via the church office are welcome

13. Vicar's remarks: "Response; Recovery; Rebuilding"

The title of these reflections (Response; Recovery; Rebuilding) borrows language from the world of emergency services and relief agencies, which recognise three stages in dealing with natural disasters (like floods, earthquakes, or famines) and major incidents (such as violent crimes, plane crashes and terrorist attacks... or a normal day on Line of Duty!) What we've been through is less extreme and has unfolded more slowly, but it's still a helpful framework.

The Crisis Response stage involves getting casualties to hospital, food and water to people who have been left without it, and setting up basic systems to sustain life. There is a lot of frantic activity, confusion and need for external help. This stage is usually quite short – four weeks to three months – but in our case, the whole of the last year has been a sort of slow motion emergency response... and it may not be over yet.

The second stage, Recovery, is about healing the physical and emotional trauma people have been through. It may involve rehabilitation of people with serious injuries, counselling for those who experienced trauma, and rehousing those who are orphaned or homeless. Typically this stage is longer taking months or even years. The experts think we are transitioning between Response and Recovery now.

In the third stage, Rebuilding, life can begin to return to normal, albeit the 'new normal'. This involves long term strategic planning leading to new infrastructure, jobs and ideally, a better future. Let's look at how those three stages apply in our circumstances.

The Response Phase. It's just over 6 months since we met for our last APCM – which you will recall had been delayed because for the first national lockdown. Much of what I said at that meeting about our response to the COVID pandemic still applies, so rather than repeat myself, we emailed out those remarks along with the official Annual Report from our accounts.

But here are a few facts that stand out for me. In the 13 months since that first lockdown began on 23 March 2020, we have met in church on less than half the available Sundays. Since our last APCM on 20 October, we have met on only 11 out of a possible 26 Sundays. In the same 13 month period (23 March 2020 till now) we have posted over 100 YouTube Videos and our channel has had over 18,000 views in total. We have met on Zoom, in many different groupings – including weekly Kingfisher Services, Holy Trinity Sunday evenings, Virtual Coffee after Church, Cells, Beracah, Youth Groups and quizzes... and two lengthy periods of Lockdown Daily Prayer, with never less than 2, and at times as many as 11 people attending.

I could go on, but I hope that gives a snapshot of what an extraordinary period this has been for church, as for every aspect of life. That we've come through it at all (and, in my opinion, in remarkably good spiritual health) is entirely the result of team work... in the broadest sense. You are an amazing team and have worked together incredibly hard, with tolerance and good humour, bringing a huge variety of gifts, and made everything work better than I could have dared to hope. Often at APCM, we spend quite a bit of time thanking individuals – quite rightly – but today I want to celebrate the whole church team rather than singling anyone out. So, thank you all so very much.

The Recovery Phase. I repeat that our experience has not been as extreme or traumatic as a major emergency, especially in this part of the country where we have been more fortunate than many, but there are parallels. And apparently, a common mistake is to try to move too quickly from Response to Rebuilding, skipping the Recovery phase.

Throughout this time I have been attending webinars led by James Lawrence of CPAS to help clergy navigate the unfolding crisis and have found them an invaluable resource. Currently, James is advising us to take time for Recovery, before we begin to initiate Rebuilding. It would be tempting, as soon as things begin to feel a bit more open, to launch a grand vision for a post-COVID church. The time for that will come, but it is important first to allow ourselves space to recover.

For those who have been working flat-out that will mean time to rest and, hopefully, have a holiday. Those who have had to shield or self-isolate for long periods, or have found the whole thing pretty traumatic, will need opportunity to talk, and be heard, about what we've been through and how we feel now. And those who have nursed or lost loved ones (not necessarily from COVID) will experience normal grieving with the added difficulty of having been on your own, isolated from normal support structures or face to face medical help. There's some quite heavy stuff there and a time of recovery will be essential.

So I'm giving us permission (if you need my permission!) to make space for Recovery over the summer months; and to continue the 'R' theme, to

Remember (particularly if we have lost someone) Reconnect with others, Recuperate – physically, emotionally and spiritually – and Reflect on what we have learnt, or lost, or both. You may want to do that on your own or with others. And it may be as simple as just talking and listening, around questions like:

What has been hardest about the last year?

What do you want to thank God for?

What have we learnt?

How are we feeling now?

What are our hopes and visions for the future?

This is important, according to James Lawrence, because Recovery paves the way for the Rebuilding Phase (he uses the word Reshaping). If we recover well, we will reshape well... under God. So let's give ourselves time and space to recover and by autumn, it may be clearer if we are really through the worst and the time is right for God to reshape us into his plan for his post-pandemic church.

Allan concluded the meeting in prayer and with the grace at 8.30pm.

REPORTS

3. Core, Deanery and Administrative Activities

3.1 The PCC in 2021

The Parochial Church Council met six times during 2021. Meetings have continued to be via zoom with ratification of relevant motions by email when necessary.

The PCC discussed and decided upon a wide range of subjects. Members act as trustees, looking after financial and other assets (such as the fabric of the Church buildings).

The PCC connects with the wider Church of England, through Bradford Deanery and Salisbury Diocese, and in matters such as faculties (permission) for changes in buildings and furnishings. PCC members also act as a link with the congregation, able to bring matters of concern to the PCC and explain PCC decisions to members of the congregation.

The PCC receives regular reports from the Vicar. The Treasurer presents financial updates and the Wardens report on matters relating to the church buildings. During 2021, the PCC discussed and prayed over a wide range of other matters:

- Lockdown and covid secure opening as well as a new focus on the tech we need
- Mission on the Meads and Women's Shed
- Inclusion and accessibility
- Church giving at home and abroad
- Buildings Development – the reopening of St Thomas and services at Holy Trinity
- A variety of fundraising activities and grant applications through the Building Finance Group.
- Church Safety and Safeguarding policies

Please thank God for all the amazing service of wardens (Paul Edwards and Geoff Carter this year), our treasurer, those involved in building development and Allan our Vicar in ably chairing the PCC. Pray also that suitable volunteers will come forward for the role of PCC secretary.

Thank Him also for all the amazing progress that has been made. The PCC will be considering a range of issues in the year ahead, including conducting a review on the use of Holy Trinity. Pray that he will guide us in His way and bless us in the year to come.

David Bowater (PCC Secretary 2016-2022)

3.2 Deanery Synod

2021 saw the Deanery Synod meet three times throughout the year. February and June were done on Zoom but at our October meeting we had the privilege of being the hosts, partially on Zoom and partially in house. Our equipment here at St. Thomas' came into its own with the assistance of Paul

Edwards operating it. There were a few hiccoughs which we were able to sort out and bear in mind for future events. A good learning curve.

We had the usual business meetings followed by special guests who came and talked to us, all of which was issued in the monthly magazines following the meetings. There were updates on the church in Kadugli in Sudan which the Diocese as well as the Deanery support.

Two people who are known to us and have worshipped with us have been voted onto Diocesan Synod, they are Rev Jane Palmer and Chris Hicks. Deanery are expecting some good reports from them in the future. We saw the Rev. Rob Thomas retire from Deanery and St. James and its associated church in Keevil. He will be missed but our wishes go to him and his wife.

Our Deanery Treasurer wrote an amazing report on the finances and the Diocese, breaking it down into Deanery and Parish Churches, informing us all about the Fair Share and stating that it is an investment, not a tax. His report has gone viral in that it hit the desk of the Church of England and has been instrumental in a survey of Fair Share.

Our prayer for the coming year of 2022 is for our meetings to be held in churches and for each member to seek the Lord's wishes for the local church and the wider church. May His will be done, and His kingdom come.

Barbara Hakes

3.3 Electoral Roll

Every effort has been made to accurately update the Electoral Roll, within the limitations imposed by the Covid-19 shutdown.

The total on the Electoral Roll now number 145.

John Reynolds, Electoral Roll Officer

3.4 Safeguarding:

We reviewed and updated our Safeguarding Policy at the first PCC meeting after the APCM, as we are obliged within the Church of England rules to do,

hence this was in May 2021! We also have to reappoint our Parish Safeguarding Representatives at the same PCC meeting.

Martyn Whittock and Barbara Hakes are our Parish Safeguarding Reps responsible primarily for safeguarding of children (Martyn) and vulnerable adults (Barbara) at St Thomas' and Holy Trinity. Jo Hockett was the Parish Safeguarding Rep at Kingfisher until the end of 2021. But all three reps are available at any time.

We will appoint Safeguarding Reps at the May 2022 PCC meeting.

There Diocesan Safeguarding Microsite seems to be working reasonable well although recently there seem to have been a few problems in e mails sent re renewing DBS Clearances.

In the Parish there was no significant Safeguarding issue that needed to be addressed.

Pat Kerbey, Safeguarding Administrator

3.5 The Parish Office

So much has happened in the past year.

2021 started off in lockdown and restrictions varied a bit over the early months, so again zoom and you tube was well used, while our hall and rooms remained very underused.

Gradually over summer as the restrictions eased we were able to get back to something a bit closer to normality and able to meet together in church with masks. Some people liked this while others were much more concerned about this new 'freedom' so we continued with you tube services.

And then we said goodbye to Ruth Barber in September. Ruth has done a fantastic job in the Church Office over the past 6 years or so and we owe a huge debt of thanks to her.

As Ruth left, I took on the role of Acting Church Administrator. I had hoped that we would have a new person in post by the New Year but as I write this (in the middle of March) I am still in the role – although it was very good to announce that new Church Administrator will be starting on 1 May.

With the purchase of new equipment and the expertise of Paul Edwards and others we were able to start livestreaming our services and currently we livestream every week except All-Age services when safeguarding issues mean we have a you tube alternative instead. We are also now able to offer a livestream option for funerals and weddings.

In the long term there have been some good things come out of covid – not least that our publications (ie weekly news, monthly news etc) are now sent out electronically on the whole meaning that we now no longer use reams of paper every month (even though this was mostly recycled when finished with it is much greener not to use it in the first place.)

I have been grateful to work with Andrew Palmer (our Admin Assistant) for the last 7 months or so, and to rely on him and also learn from him some of the office technology.

Our buildings are very well used now with new hirers, but unfortunately we no longer have the pre-school using the church hall daily after some 50 years.

Pat Kerbey

3.6 Youth Worker

My role as Youth Worker continued to be a mixture of all sorts of things in 2021.

It involved both online meetings and discipleship and in-person games and clubs when Covid rules were relaxed. Both had their joys and their challenges and we still had the majority of our young people engaging with Junior Church and mid-week activities.

It was a pleasure seeing our young people grow through deep discussions on a Sunday morning, games on a Wednesday or Friday night or at socials interspersed into the year.

They've been an integral part of leading a number of All Age services throughout 2021- we surely are blessed with the talents and confidence of our children and young people.

Beth Wigley

3.7 Cradle Roll

Children on the Cradle Roll are those who were baptised or dedicated at St Thomas' or Kingfisher Churches. They receive a birthday card from the church each year up to and including their 5th birthday.

At the end of 2021 there were 31 children on the Cradle Roll. Pandemic lockdown measures meant that Baptism / Dedication services were reduced in number, leading to the lower number of children on the roll. As restrictions are lifted in 2022, numbers will probably increase.

Margaret Hewitt

3.8 Eco Church

Having been awarded the Eco Church bronze award prior to lockdown, there wasn't very much that we could do to work forward on this but we will be looking at how to progress it now that we are much more back to normal

Andrew Sharland

3.9 Verger Report

Since church meetings have resumed, Wendy and I have shared the duties of Verger as prior to the pandemic. We still maintain the head count which you may wonder why we are seen counting folks each week. Our Vicar is responsible for sending certain data to the Diocese for their statistics and the Fare Share calculation and so we do a breakdown of adults and children and their groups. It also helps to know how many chairs to distribute around the church.

We don't deal with the Communion as before due to the different changes in how it is prepared and distributed, but we do try to guide people to the front to partake of Communion in an orderly fashion.

We attend baptisms and funerals of which there have been too many of the latter from our own community during this past year. In general, we keep an eye on things and trust they run smoothly to enable all of us to enjoy our times of worship together.

Barbara Hakes & Wendy Armitage

4. Pastoral Care

4.1 Lay Pastoral Team

Lay Pastoral Assistants are part of the Pastoral Team of the church consisting of the Vicar, Lay Licenced Ministers and Lay Pastoral Assistants (LPAs).

St Thomas' is an all-member ministry and the LPA team, which is fairly small in number, relies on friendships and church groups and organisations to fulfil many of the caring needs of the congregation and acts, in many ways as an overseer and backstop.

We have continued to meet regularly during the year either by zoom, in the vicarage garden or more recently together indoors. This year we have reviewed the list of those who attend either St Thomas', Kingfisher and Holy Trinity and used this to try to ensure that all our congregation were in touch with others from the church. We are sorry if any of you feel that you did not have any, or little, contact and we would like you to let one of us know so we can improve our service in the future.

We continue to take turns compiling and updating the 'Please Pray for . . .' section of the weekly news to try and to ensure the prayers are fresh and relevant. We individually and as a team are also in contact with many church members especially those who are sick or needing help and also try to make contact with new members. We take Holy Communion to the housebound or sick when required although this was rather curtailed due to Covid.

Do get in touch with us if you feel we can help or if you are interested in joining us as a team member.

Liz Atkins, Alison Cook, Rosemary and Keith Earley, Barbara Hakes, Stella Leeder and Marjory Wade

5. Mission

5.1. Kingfisher Church

Being a Christ-Focussed Church Family meeting on The Meads

Sunday mornings at Kingfisher church fell into 3 categories in 2021

- From January to April 2021 – we continued meeting virtually via a Zoom link. Whilst we greatly missed being physically together in the Mead School Hall, and especially not being able to sing together, it was so good to stay connected during the challenging periods of isolation brought about by the Pandemic.
- From the end of April to our usual summer break in August 2021 – we met OUTDOORS in the school garden which meant that we could sing together without breaking any government guidelines regarding the pandemic or putting anyone at unacceptable risk. Despite being driven out of necessity, this outdoor worship experience proved to be very uplifting as well as an opportunity to witness to our community'. Being closer to nature brought a multi-sensory aspect to our worship which was lovely, and several said they were reluctant to go back to meeting inside! In addition, our singing was heard and appreciated by the school gardening club made up of parents and children who were present in the school grounds from time to time on Sunday mornings.
- From September 2021 we were able to return to a well-ventilated school hall where we have been meeting since.

Our times together on Sunday mornings are precious and the Holy Spirit is clearly working amongst us. In particular, several people have taken up new areas of ministry this year, which God has clearly been equipping them for, which is exciting to see.

We have continued our weekly prayer hour on Sunday evenings and made good and frequent use of our WhatsApp prayer group for 'in the moment' prayer requests. We have enjoyed close and supportive fellowship once

again, all the more necessary as several of our folk have faced major challenges around health and family issues.

Rev Andrew Judge has continued to provide valuable mentoring support to the leadership of Kingfisher church and has taken a service of Holy Communion once a month.

Community Outreach on Paxcroft and Castle Meads

In the early part of 2021, during her internship with Kingfisher Church, Ruth completed the “*Missionally Engaging with your Community*” course led by Ali Boulton, a Pioneer Minister in Swindon, which gave her a useful framework for approaching ministry in new housing areas. She felt led to leave her job to focus on being a Mission Enabler with Kingfisher Church (part-time, voluntary role) in September 2021. We launched this year with a Prayer Day on 30th September, including a Prayer Walk around the local area and Prayer Spaces.

Schools: We are thankful for good links with both of our local Primary schools, and did Easter Assemblies on Zoom, produced a Remembrance Day video, did five “Living Nativities” to 8 classes, and did a talk on Christian Christmas symbols to 60 children.

We support Castle Mead Resource Base (for children with additional needs), and Ruth helped them make food for homeless people, assisted with their Nativity, and goes into the youngest class once a week. Kingfisher supported by making stars for their “Journey” theme, and snowflakes for their “Cold” theme.

We have tried to link the Christians in the school together in prayer and may be setting up a WhatsApp group for this, together with a focussed “schools” session each term on our weekly prayer Zoom. We gave each Christian teacher at Castle Mead a card with Bible verses and words to encourage them and will be involved with Easter assemblies/activities in both schools this Easter.

Community contacts: We are part of CATA and are looking at ways to link Christians in the area wanting to support community activities. We were able to lead Carol Singing at the Red Admiral before Christmas and are now busy

with plans for a family Easter Egg Trail in Paxcroft Mead, and celebrating the Queen's Jubilee in June.

National contacts: we participated in “*New Housing Conversations*”, linking people across the UK on Zoom (led by Ali Boulton), and were invited to a national event in Swanwick to listen to what God is saying to New Housing Areas, in preparation for a summit in June in London. Ruth felt privileged to be part of this event, and later offered to give administrative support to Ali Boulton, a role which is proving to be mutually beneficial.

We rejoice in all we see God doing in and through us and are excited to see where He will take us through the rest of

Alison Bennett

5.2 Mission Awareness Group/Overseas Mission

The Mission Awareness Group met online or in-person every two months to help our church support its overseas mission links. Many of the people we are standing with are suffering injustice, persecution, violence, poverty plus the ongoing effects of the Covid 19 pandemic. As Covid continued through last year so our Mission program was again affected – meaning we couldn't have guest speakers in the usual way.

However, we were able to focus on various overseas missions:

CMS - **Azaria Spencer** spoke to us on zoom about her work in Guatemala.

Sudan and South Sudan - we welcomed **Jan Ransom** who spoke to us via zoom from Flame International.

Arab World - we enjoyed a video message from **Majed**

Mercy Ships - we had lots of short videos about the Hospital Ships.

MAF - **Kevin** (our MAF rep) and his wife Judy led a MAF service.

Our church **mission representatives** are:

| | |
|-----------------------|-----------------|
| Arab World | Ed Greening |
| Mercy Ships | Angela Grist |
| Sudan and South Sudan | Andrew Sharland |

| | |
|------------|---------------------------------|
| Ugandaid | Jane Bullock and Pauline Butler |
| CMS | Colin and Vicki Turner |
| MAF | Kevin Wright |
| Tear Fund | Lyndsey Wright |
| Compassion | Ty Butler |

Please use our Overseas Mission leaflet to pray for our link missions. If you have a particular interest in one area then please talk with the church rep and get further information. We have been sending prayer updates out to the church family every two months. Thank you for your support of the overseas mission.

Angela Grist.

Tarija Bolivia Project

We have recently been able to send a further Tythe of our Building Fund to Tarija. They continue to save to be able to build new premises in a more 'down town' part of the city.

The Church of the Good Shepherd continues to reach out to people in its community. Recently they were able to collect clothing for people in the Chaco who had suffered from severe flooding.

We rejoice in the news that Rev Walter Torro has been appointed to be the next Bishop of Bolivia, he will continue as Pastor of the Good Shepherd. He will be consecrated on May 1st and he would value our prayers for his new ministry, for wife Adela and the congregation of the Good Shepherd as they adapt to this new phase in the church's life.

It is good that Walter is the first indigenous Bishop of Bolivia and this reflects a major aim of the CMS Lent appeal to encourage local and indigenous leadership in South America.

Colin Turner

5.3 Messy Church

What a huge year of change we've had! Having prayed about the direction for Messy Church before and during Lockdown, our prayers have been answered by God leading us to a very different Messy Church format than there was before:



Messy Church: We have held 2 Messy Church sessions since September 2021 both on Saturdays between 11 am and 1 pm. The sessions have offered crafts and a bring your own picnic in the hall, and a short time in the church with a story, song and prayer. Obviously we have needed strict number and movement limits due to Covid but everyone seems to have had a good time. We have more sessions planned, for 2022 when we plan to loosen restrictions slightly by offering a light lunch of bread and cheese to our families. We are very excited that past Messy Church families have attended the sessions and some more from Toddlers are booked in for the next sessions. As we look to the future, we hope to loosen restrictions eventually and have more free movement between the crafts and continue to build relationships with these lovely families.

Mini Meet: A smaller team have continued to meet at St Thomas' on Thursday mornings and we invite a small number of families who had good links with our previous Thursday Messy Church sessions or who need company or support. At present we have 5 families who come along when they can.

We have an informal time of play, chat and coffee. We have started a parents coffee time when a team member goes into the Audrey Prentice Room to have coffee and chat with the adults, giving them a time to relax while their children are cared for.

It has been such a joy to meet with these families and be able to support them in small ways. We hope to build deeper relationships and pray for openings to share our faith with them. We hope to be able to invite one or two more families as restrictions ease.

The Messy Church and Mini Meet Teams

5.4 Parent and Toddler Group

This has been yet another exciting and completely different year. The Summer term was spent trying to work out how and when we could restart our in-person Toddler sessions. We also worked on building a new team.

Working out safe procedures that the team and the families would be happy with was extremely daunting and complicated. We are so grateful to Ruth Brooks-Martin from the “New Parent, New Baby” group who gave us so much sensible advice.

So in September we returned to much scaled down and simplified sessions. Many families who had come before returned but we've had new ones too. We are so grateful to each of them for abiding by the many rules we've had to put in to make everyone feel safe.

The numbers are quite low especially in the afternoons when it would be good to have some more families but relationships have been building. We weren't sure if we would manage a Christmas party and how that would work but after much prayer and anguish, we did just one in the morning. Everyone had a good time and we are grateful to all our extra helpers.

Moving on we look forward to combining our Toddler Summer Event with the Church Platinum Jubilee celebrations.

Please pray for wisdom and guidance as we try to safely relax Covid restrictions.

Thank you so much to the lovely Toddler team and the joy of working with you all and to our many Prayer Partners who have supported the group for a long time.

Jane Bullock and the Toddler team

6. Children, Young People and their Parents

6.1 Crèche

During Covid restrictions there has not been as much need for the creche. From Sep the room was fully available again (after being used for storage). As there are only a few people who may need to use the room on a Sunday morning, there isn't the need for a volunteer rota. However, Emily Croft and Liz Atkins have agreed to check the room is tidy and heating on (if they are at church). Another occasional helper to oversee the availability of the creche room would be appreciated.

Anita Bowater

6.2 Scramblers and Climbers (3 – 7-year-olds)

Christine: Scramblers and Climbers (3–7-year-olds) started meeting back in-person after Easter 2021. As part of a general reconfiguring of Junior Church rooms, we are now meeting in the 'Meeting Room'. This has been very successful as we have facilities for cooking and making drinks and are able to use Messy Church tables and chairs. We have six regulars and about ten children on the books.

I retired as overall leader at Christmas after over 25 years in this role. She is continuing to help on the rota once a month, along with Anita Bowater and Ruth Chettleburgh. We are very grateful to Anita for taking on being the overall lead and co-ordinator for the group. Rachel Humphries has stepped down due to family commitments.

We have continued to use Urban Saints' Material ('Kids' Club At Home'). It has been good to get back to 'nearly normal' as Zoom was not suitable for this age group.

It continues to be a privilege to work with this delightful group of children.

Anita: From Jan 2022 I have taken over as coordinator of the 3–7-year Sunday School group (Scramblers and Climbers. Numbers fluctuate, from 2 – 10 children each week. There have recently been 3 new families join the group, which is encouraging.

Christine Whittock and Anita Bowater

6.3 Explorers (8 – 11-year-olds)

Explorers have been meeting in person again which is great, although the zoom sessions worked surprisingly well.

We have 15 children on the register but numbers vary greatly each week.

We tend to read bible passage together with the children taking turns to read We talk about the passage then do a mixture of craft and games which link with the teaching. We also try to find different ways to encourage prayer.

They are a fantastic group to be with. Claire Silk helps every week and Caroline Fone and Harriet Heard take turns to lead the sessions.

Harriet Heard

1/

6.4 Pathfinders (11 – 14-year-olds)

Having spent over a year on virtual Zoom meetings we all feel happier now we can meet normally. %1There are usually between 6 and 10 Pathfinders each Sunday and our leadership team has remained unchanged.

In the past year we have covered themes that have included The Church (having been away for so long), Christian belief and Christian Commitments which has provided some reflection for those considering Confirmation.

We had a Friday evening social in the autumn and many of the Pathfinders were involved in an All-Age drama in February, for which we expect more than one Oscar nomination!

The group remains a cheerful group who seem to enjoy reflecting on matters of faith.

John Chettleburgh

6.5 Apprentices (14 – 18-year-olds)

We started 2021 by meeting on zoom on Sunday mornings. We enjoyed being able to meet from the comfort of our own homes and having a lie in although we were excited when we were finally able to start meeting in person again after Easter. We spent a lot of time in the vicarage garden when the weather was nice which helped us not having to wear masks.

We welcomed the new Apprentices in September with a social in the Heard's garden.

In December we took a much enjoyed visit to Toby Carvery as our Christmas social.

In 2021 in Apprentices, we discussed a range of topics including healthy relationships, doubt, wisdom, belonging, purpose and the future.

We now have twenty young people on our books with about eight to twelve attending regularly on a Sunday morning.

Beth Wigley

6.6 Friday Night Games

Games night looked a lot different again in 2021. There are only so many games you can play over zoom! But our regular attendees had their favourites and we always enjoyed catching up on the week before having some fun playing either a quiz or articulate, categories, charades, codenames or scavenger hunt- to name a few.

Once September arrived, we were able to meet in person again and began meeting in the church rooms to play games together and eat and drink Janet's famous sponge cake and hot chocolate! We have between 5 and 10 young people on an average Friday night coming along.

Beth Wigley

7. Worship

7.1 Worship Teams

This report as always, looks back and reflects on the previous year. It is my great joy and delight to lead a wonderful group of gifted and anointed musicians, and I thank God for each one of you. The team is wholly committed to serving the church week in and week out, always willing to step in the gap and support each other in whatever capacity is needed.

Our purpose remains the same - to lead the congregation in passionate, sung worship that glorifies God and draws us into deeper intimacy with him, transforming us and the lives of the community in which we minister. We continue to serve within our church family across St Thomas' and our teams have also been involved in Churches Together celebrations such as Easter, weddings, baptisms and funerals, and anything else in-between.

Last year was a bit of a 'hybrid' as we began to emerge from lockdown, and we recorded worship songs and hymns to be used for online Services as well as leading worship 'in person' as the covid restrictions eased.

The number of people within the worship team has reduced over time, partly due to some members moving and others feeling called to other churches. A number of people within the team also have 'other hats' within the life of the church and at times it has been challenging to ensure we have a full team. The core teams are headed up by Carrie Farnell with responsibility for youth and young people, Jenny Gailey and Ian Gibbons, Paul Edwards, Robert Jones and me. We remain encouraged by our young people developing their skills and talents and helping to lead worship regularly.

We are short of piano/keyboard players and guitarists, so if you feel God calling you to serve on one of the teams, or you would just like to explore it, please do come and speak to myself or one of the other Team Leaders.

Every blessing,

Judy Wright

7.2 Prayer Ministry

Prayer Ministry is offered by a small but dedicated team at the end of morning services, and our thanks go out to them all for their provision of this vital service. Special thanks go to Ruth Barber for looking after many of the training sessions when I was unavailable.

Several members of the team are no longer able to commit as frequently as in the past, so the team is quite small, and we would welcome new volunteers. – training is given!

Please contact David or the church office for details.

David Goldstone

7.3 Hospitality Team

For much of 2021, of course, the welcoming and after-church drinks teams weren't needed – in fact we didn't re-start serving coffee on a regular basis until 2022

We now have 10 people on the Welcomers/Sidesperson team – which means two people each week once a month

We have 15 people on the Coffee rota – but a few weeks for this year aren't covered – so we may not be able to provide coffee on those dates

If you could help please contact one of us – the more people we have on the rotas the less often each person's turn will come up

Geoff Carter and Pat Kerbey

7.4 Flower Team

Members of the Flower Team work on a rota to provide flower arrangements within St. Thomas' Church every week, except during Lent. Three times a year the whole team decorate the Church for Easter, Harvest and Christmas.

There are 6 members in our team, with no one person in overall charge. It would be lovely to have a few more, so new people would be most welcome, either on a regular basis or to help at Festival times. If you are interested in joining us or contributing to the cost, perhaps on a Sunday that has a special meaning for you, then please talk to Barbara Rogers or Marjory Wade.

Barbara Rogers

7.5 Audio and Media

As we've returned to holding regular services in St Thomas', the newly installed PA and AV equipment has been put to full use.

During 2021 we developed the capability by adding the ability to livestream services. This hadn't been envisaged when we specified the equipment as part of the reordering, but with the help of our supplier we were able to identify appropriate additional equipment which was installed in the autumn. We are grateful for a number of generous donations that helped to fund this.

The aim was to make the operation simple enough that one AV operator could manage the livestream as well as the in-church AV. It's been quite a learning experience for both the AV and PA operators, who have worked really hard to get to the point where we can routinely livestream the services.

We've now reached the stage where livestreaming of the morning services is happening every week (except for all-age services), and the facility has also proved invaluable for other events such as weddings and funerals. This is proving to be an important part of the church's ministry to those who cannot attend in person.

To give a rough idea of numbers, each week we are seeing about 10 people watching live and another 30-40 people watching later on.

My thanks to Rob Slater and Simon Wright, who respectively manage the AV and PA equipment and teams, and to the teams themselves who support this important ministry week by week. It's good that we are seeing some new recruits also joining and being trained to support the teams.

Paul Edwards

8. Midweek Groups

8.1 Cell Groups

Cell and Home Groups continued to be a vital means of nurture and support during 2021. For most, it was a story of meeting partly in person and partly on Zoom as the various tightenings and easings of COVID restrictions ebbed and flowed. Some slowly returned to meeting in homes, while others chose to use the church Rooms where they could be more socially distanced.

Most groups continue to base their meetings loosely on the 'Four Ws' (Welcome, Worship, Word, Witness) and to use the notes from Sunday sermons as the basis for the Word section.

The YouTube video services (and more recently Livestreams) have meant that members can 'catch up' on sermons even if they aren't present on the Sunday morning.

As always, my sincere thanks to the leaders who facilitate our Cells and Home Groups. Do consider joining one if you are not already a member – feel free to approach group leaders directly, or ask me if unsure and I will be happy to put in you touch with a suitable group.

Allan Coutts

8.2 Beracah

Beracah mostly met on zoom in 2021, although we did have some face-to-face meetings as the restrictions were eased and people felt a little more able to meet up. On average there are 8-10 people who join the group each week, and the meetings follow the normal structure.

Angela Grist has continued to lead Easter and Christmas Reflections, and we have a had good number of speakers including one from Japan, also UK and local speakers including some from St Thomas'. In these difficult times, Beracah has reached out and been a support to those that have attended.

Janet Boffey

9. Social/Outreach

9.1 Men's Sport

After months of either not being allowed to meet or having to play outside, because of Covid restrictions, we are back in Clarendon Sports Centre, resuming our Saturday morning 9am slot.

It remains an enjoyable hour of fun jumping around after the ball with a wide range of ability and ages. All attendees are now men, having lost our one lady, Barbara, who returned to her native Italy in the summer. We also said farewell to one of our founder members, of well over 20 years, when Steve Oldrieve moved to Devon.

Anyone who wishes to find out more, see Richard Butler, John Chettleburgh or Geoff Heard.

John Chettleburgh

9.2 Church Weekend Away

There was no weekend away in 2021, but there will be one in 2022 to Viney Hill (30 September to 2 October) and to Hebron Hall in 2023 (22 to 24 September).

Pat Kerbey

9.3 Trowbridge Women's Shed

Following on from our Taster Day back on 25th September 2021, this new venture has flourished and continues to grow, meeting every Wednesday from 10:00-12:30pm at Holy Trinity Church. The session costs £2.50, including refreshments. It is quickly becoming embedded in the community with about 60 members.

The Women's Shed sits under the umbrella of the PCC and its aim is to bless the Community, by providing a wide range of crafts and activities, and an opportunity to meet old and new friends over a cuppa. We are welcoming and inclusive, and we aim to create a connected community where women are empowered and enabled to pursue their interests.

Some of the activities include our art group, book club, card-making, iris-folding, clay decorations, knitting, crochet, felting, sewing, jewellery-making and sugar-craft. We've also been involved in a number of community events.

You can find more information on our website

www.trowbridgewomensshed.com, or our Facebook Page. You can also contact the Trowbridge Women's Shed Team: Judy, Jenny, Lyndsey and Liz via email at trowbridgewomensshed@gmail.com.

Judy Wright

10. Buildings

10.1 Fabric Team

Regarding building development, the main milestone in 2021 was the completion of the Holy Trinity toilet refurbishment. Our thanks go to the team that has seen this through to completion. We've also made good use of the refurbished space at St Thomas', and particularly benefitted from the flexibility of the seating!

Regarding other planned maintenance, an inspection of the roof summit at St Thomas' showed no urgent issues but some things to consider for the future. We have also appointed a contractor to undertake some necessary interior high-level roof repairs.

We had a few unplanned fabric 'events' in 2021. In August we had a major water ingress behind the organ at Holy Trinity during torrential rain. It damaged the high-level plasterwork but the damage is not structural. The cause appears to have been blocked guttering, which was quickly cleared and we're now doing more regular visual inspections of the guttering.

Then both of our church heating systems failed soon after the start of the season. They both took longer than we would have liked to get back working, and the Holy Trinity pump replacement was quite a major item.

The church cottage continues to be a useful source of income, and we have had almost continuous occupation throughout 2021 and so far in 2022.

We've now got an online 'logbook' running to keep records of all fabric-related activities, and we've started setting up a maintenance plan to manage the priorities of future jobs.

Geoff Carter and Paul Edwards

10.2 Church Buildings Development Working Group

The CBDWG has not met in the last year, and the final work on the Holy Trinity toilets is now completed.

Esther Brown - on behalf of the CBDWG

11. Trowbridge-wide Activities

11.1 Impax

2021 was a year full of fun at Impax. We started the year alternating between zoom and face to face meetings. When we meet in person, we meet at Paxcroft Mead community centre with roughly 10- 20 children, some of which being non-church attenders. (We would love some more boys!) We play a wide variety of energetic games, have time to buy some sweets from the tuck shop and spend time engaging with a short talk about Jesus.

In 2021, we had the pleasure of Azaria Spencer speaking to us on zoom, a day of crazy golf and games, a trip to the Whitehorse for sparklers, games and doughnuts, a swimming trip with hotdogs and a Christmas party!

Unfortunately, Coronavirus cancelled any hopes of going to SPREE in 2021 but we are looking forward to our weekend of camping in June 2022!

Beth Wigley

11.2 Christian Action in the Trowbridge Area (CATA)



‘How good and how pleasant it is for brothers to dwell together in unity’

Psalms 133 v1

CATA is an organisation which provides an opportunity for churches to work together to share the love of Jesus with Trowbridge, in both word and action. There are currently 12 member churches. CATA Forums are held every 2 months. The Officers currently serving are David Ross (Cornerstone Christian Fellowship) - Chair; Geoff Tate (St Thomas) - Deputy Chair; Maree Farrimond (Wesley Road Methodist/United Church) – Communications; Jean Covington (St John’s West Ashton) – Treasurer.

CATA organises a number of annual events - The Good Friday March of Witness/Joint Easter celebration; Church in the Park; CATA Celebration; The Living Nativity – but apart from the Living Nativity, which was very well supported and a great success, no regular events took place in 2021 because of Covid.

However, there are plans to “restore normal service” this year with the Good Friday joint service and March of Witness on 15th April in Emmanuel Church; Easter Sunday Celebration; Church in the Park is likely to reflect the Queen’s Jubilee celebrations in June; Living Nativity on 17th December.

In addition to the above, CATA supports a number of initiatives which minister to the community, including: Street Pastors; Town Chaplains; Breakthrough (homeless project); Soup Run; Storehouse Foodbank; Trowbridge Debt Advice Centre; MENUNITED Trowbridge.

We have much to thank God for in the way churches co-operate in reaching out to the community.

Geoff Tate

11.3 Soup Run

Despite all the difficulties experienced during the pandemic the soup run has continued to operate every night of the year – including Christmas Day! The Brown's Cell very kindly made up Christmas gift parcels for us to hand out. These parcels included a token from Greggs so that our guests could purchase a sandwich/coffee. These gifts were so gratefully received.

The number of guests continue to vary which makes forward planning quite difficult. Joan Bond and I are grateful to the sandwich providers from all our churches, without whom it would be impossible to work. We always welcome anyone who wants to come onto the rota and join with us in showing in some small part the love of Jesus in a practical way to those on the margins of society.

Celia Russell

11.4 Street Pastors

Street pastors patrol the streets of (Trowbridge) on a Saturday night/Sunday morning spreading God's love to those who partake of the night-time economy. We come from many of the different churches in Trowbridge and are supported by the Christian community by prayer and finance.

Patrols restarted as soon as lockdown allowed groups to gather in the pubs and clubs areas, and our return to the streets was greeted with much delight by the revellers. There appears to be a greater appreciation of our work post Covid, and it is a real privilege and delight to be able to witness in this way.

Shortly after we started again, David Brewer, one of our longest serving pastors, decided at the age of 81 that he was unable to continue active service, and another long serving pastor, Jean Allan, passed to be with the Lord. We miss them both greatly, but thank the Lord for the mighty work both of them achieved with us, and we will miss their cheerful encouragement on the streets.

This year we also said goodbye to David Breeze who retired from the post of coordinator due to ill health, and we welcomed Julia Wade as a new coordinator. We are grateful to David for all his sterling work, and to Julia for taking on this very important role.

Other pastors were unable to return to duty after the pandemic, and we are now very short on numbers and are only able to maintain patrols every weekend because some pastors are volunteering to go out twice a month to cover absences. We have been speaking at local churches to encourage volunteers both as street pastors and as prayer pastors, covering us with prayer over the week and where possible, while we are actually on patrol. All pastors and prayer pastors receive weekly reports about the patrols and other activities of the street pastors. If you would like to know more about these two roles please contact David or the church office.

David Goldstone

11.5 MenUnited – Trowbridge

We are back on stream at Trowbridge Rugby Club, and have recently enjoyed three wonderful Guest Speakers at the Breakfasts. Curry Evenings are also back to normal.

Prayer underpins everything we do, as we strive to follow God's vision for us in 1Timothy2 verses 1 to 8. Our February and March Prayer Meetings were live at Bethesda Baptist Church. In March we focused, for an hour of prayer about the conflict in Ukraine – a particularly emotional experience.

The Monthly Lunch Club in March, at The Kings Arms, had 20 men joining together for fellowship and a really good meal.

We keep in touch with men, across BA14 and beyond, via the Monthly Newsletter and the Website: <https://www.menunited-ba14.co.uk>

Please pray that the Lord will continue to use MENUNITED, to be an effective force in promoting church unity, reaching the unsaved and holding up our nation in prayer at this crucial time. We pray that everything we do will:

ENCOURAGE

EMPOWER

and EQUIP men to get the best out of life

John Reynolds

11.6 Town Chaplains

November 2021 saw the Town Chaplains celebrate five years in serving the community. Quite a milestone as we only go out on Wednesdays. We had a good year, welcomed back with friendly smiles following lockdowns when many shops were not open. We have seen changes in the town with more empty shops where the owners just haven't been able to keep going but some from the indoor market in Castle Place moved into Silver Street and upstairs in the shopping mall itself. We are praying for even more to come and help revive our town.

We said farewell to two of the team, one unable to return after a stroke out with us and another lady who now walks streets of gold with the Lord she loved to serve. Two more ladies are joining the team, one has already been out a couple of times and the other will start in March 2022.

If you would like to know more about our work and are interested in joining us, come and have a word with me or with Alice Bull at Kingfisher Church. By the way, men are also invited, we have three in the team but more are welcome.

Barbara Hakes

2020 Annual Report and Accounts for Annual Parochial Church Meeting 26th April 2022



Although 2022 started with restrictions still in place, the latter half of the year was much more normal in church life.

We were still able to benefit from the Job retention Scheme in the early months and then as restrictions started to be eased groups began to come back to their meetings in our hall and rooms, so creating some more income.

Over the year our income actually exceeded our expenditure by £3,6k, which was an outlook we hadn't predicted – at one stage it looked as though we would suffer a big loss. Thank you to everybody who gave extra in response the generous giving sermons that Allan preached in St Thomas', and to those who gave specifically towards the expected shortfall. We also received some generous gifts that covered the cost of the livestreaming equipment.

The delay in the heating repair at Holy Trinity enabled us to show a surplus – we had paid 50%, but the remaining £2,900 was not paid until 2022 as the repair wasn't completed until then.

The following four pie charts show 2021 income and expenditure.

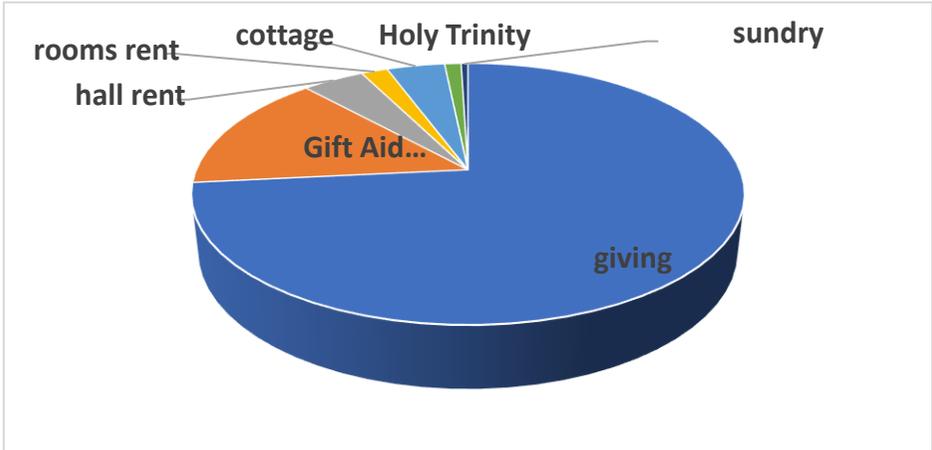
Again thank you to everybody who gives - obviously many of our costs are rising in line with all costs so we still need to be careful in what we spend while maintaining the mission and ministry of our churches. And Praise be to God for the resources that enable this.

Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen.

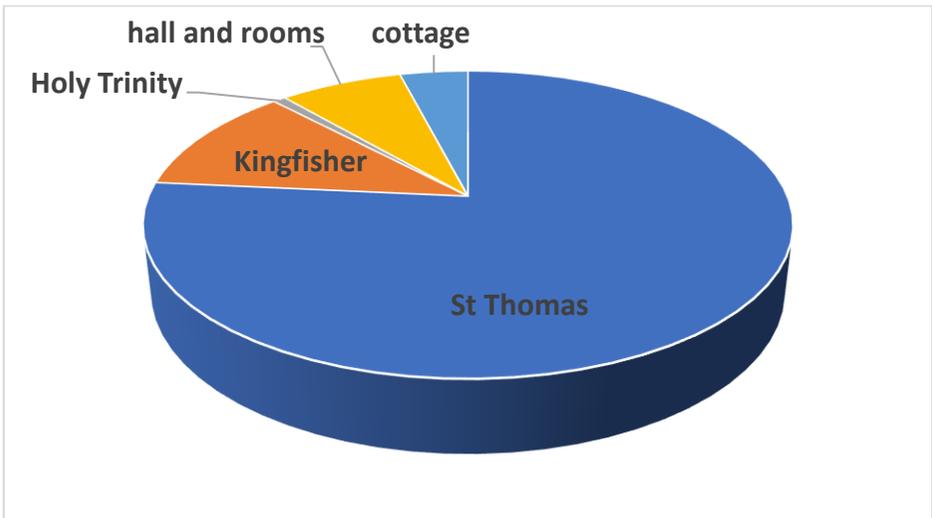
Ephesians 3:20,21

Pie charts showing 2021 income – the first one by source of cost the second one by cost centre.

Income = £174,947

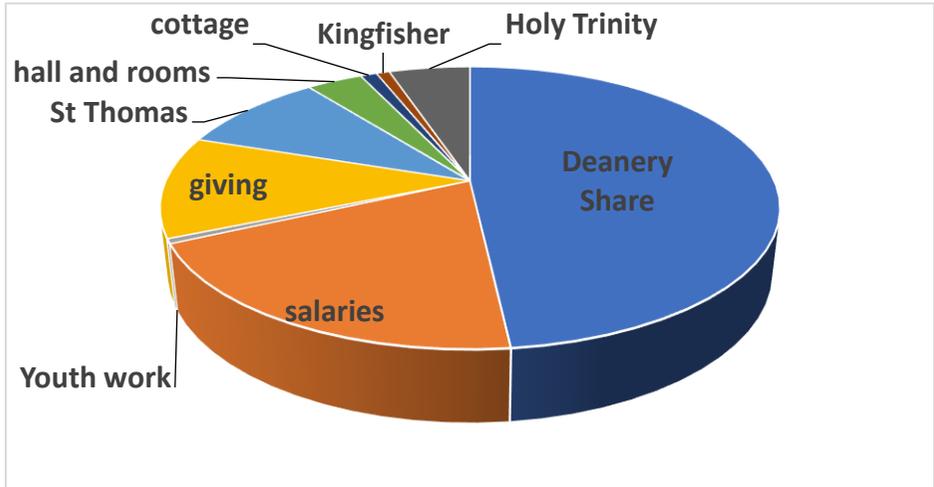


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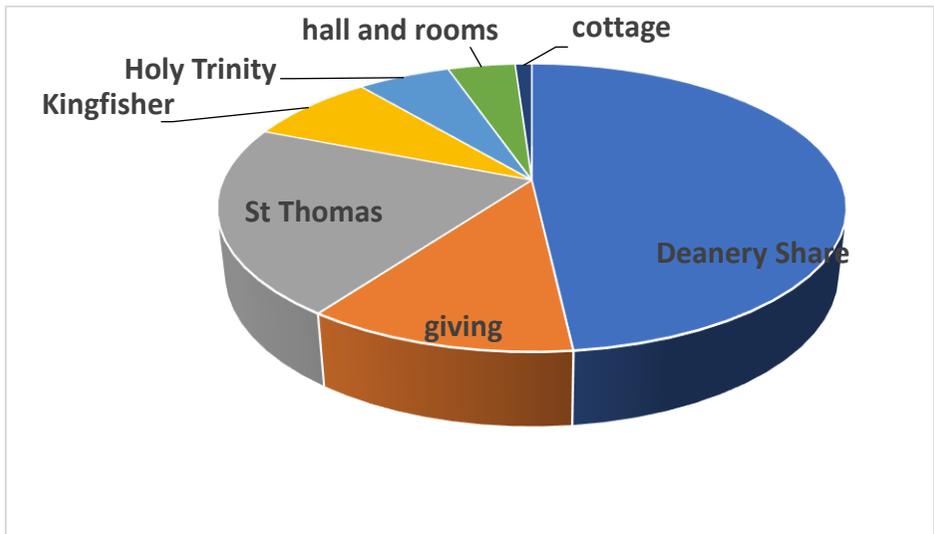


Pie charts showing 2021 expenditure – the first one by source of cost the second one by cost centre.

Expenditure = £170,898

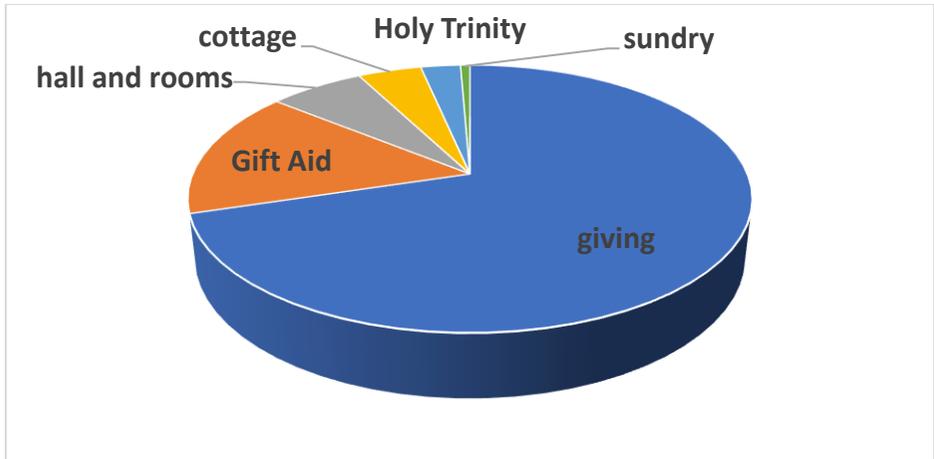


Expenditure = £170,898

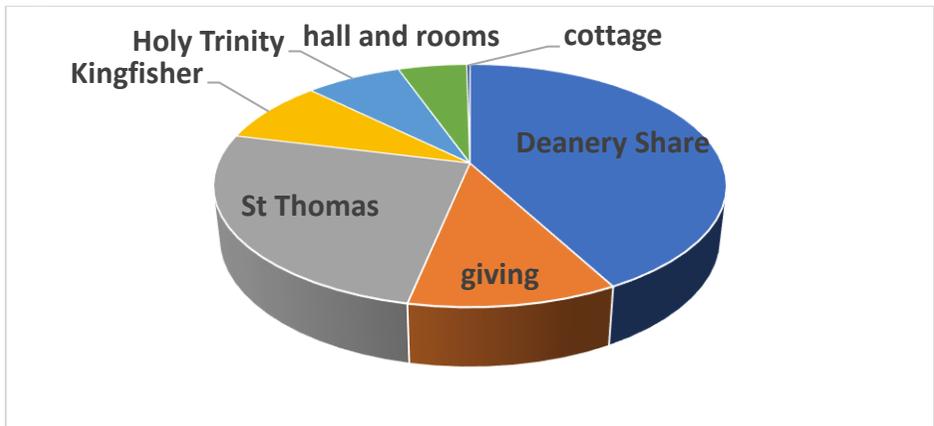


Pie charts showing 2022 budget as agreed by the PCC in January 2022

Income = £184,200



Expenditure = £ 202,200



Thanks be to God for His amazing grace, and for His amazing generosity.

All things come from you, and of your own do we give you

Pat Kerbey, Treasurer