

St Leonard's Church Swithland



Report for the Annual Meeting

4th May 2022

St Leonard's Church, Swithland
PCC Annual Report

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Chairman's Introduction to the report

Welcome to the St Leonard's PCC Annual Report for 2021. It is such a delight to be meeting back together in person after, what seems like, a very long 2 years.

"Our Lord Jesus Christ said, the first commandment is this: 'Hear O Israel, the Lord our God is the only Lord. You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength.' The second is this: 'Love your neighbour as yourself.'

I am the first to acknowledge that we don't always get it right. Sometimes the Church forgets the commands of Jesus and looks in on itself rather than out to God and our neighbours. This report is our opportunity to share with you some of what we have been doing, and are planning, as your Church here in Swithland.

The last couple of years have been difficult for everyone, and the local Church has not been exempt from those struggles either; yet throughout the pandemic our church members here in Swithland have been getting on with those two objectives with which I began: loving and worshipping God; loving and serving the community.

We now have a new pattern of weekly worship; and the opportunity to join in with an online daily service of Morning Prayer at 9am on weekdays continues. All of our services are advertised on the church website at stleonardsswithland.org.

Our service to the community continues as we partner with the food bank based in Mountsorrel. Our excellent Friday club team provide a much needed toddler group. I also remain available to visit the sick, to pray for the dying, to celebrate the gift of love in marriage, the joy of new life at Christenings and, when the time comes, to mark the end of life with family and friends in funeral services.

I can't do this by myself so I would like to take this opportunity to express my heartfelt thanks to the wider team of ministers, Church officers, PCC members and all our volunteers (you know who you are) for all that you have done to ensure that we continue to love and worship the living God and serve our community after the example of Christ.

God bless you all, Colin Resch.

Treasurer's Financial Review - 2021 Accounts

The Parochial Church Council of St Leonard's Church Swithland Financial Review - 2021 Account.

The continuation of the pandemic and various further lockdowns meant in financial terms it was little better than 2020. However, despite this we are fortunate to have a good core of regular givers and we have again met all our commitments. Sadly, our congregation numbers have not recovered and this is a worrying trend for the future.

RECEIPTS Total receipts on the General Fund were £43761 of which £27072 was unrestricted planned giving and receipts from collections at services amounted to £2432. Gift Aid recovered totalled £7102. Marriage and Burial fees income was £5038 and investment income for the year totalled a mere £73. Collections at services are up on the 2020 figure (£1014) but nothing like receipts enjoyed prior to the pandemic. Marriage and burial fees were good compared to 2020 (£1534) when there were few weddings. Our Gift aid claim was £1800 less than 2020. We also received a legacy of £1000. The Fabric Fund benefitted from Ride & Stride money (£428) raised by those parishioners who took part in September 2020. We have one restricted fund which is The Bell Restoration Fund which at the year end stood at £5946 although further expenditure is envisaged in early 2022 on installing rope guides.

EXPENDITURE Total expenditure on the General Fund amounted to £48681. Our Parish Contribution for the year was £33000. General Church running expenses were £11251 and this included insurance premium of £2506 with utility bills totalling £2839. The net result for the year on the General Fund was a deficit of £4920. Expenditure on the various Designated accounts totalled £5181. Our Mission Giving and donations were £2035 and included donations of £500 each to CMS fund, laptops for Christ Church School Mountsorrel, and LOROS and Rainbows from the Men's Club Christmas 2020 initiative. Smaller donations went to other charities including the YMCA, Royal British Legion, The Cathedral and Launde Abbey.

We also paid for the new kitchen cupboards and fittings prior to them being installed. The work on the kitchen/office area which has now been completed and paid for during the early part of 2022 was funded from the legacy received in 2019 from the estate of the late Ian Hammond. Our balances have diminished by a total of £10341 over the course of 2021 but this includes expenditure on the designated accounts from income received previously and similarly the expenditure on the Bell Restoration restricted account. Our combined monetary assets totalled £126720 at the year end. Please see the Financial Statements.

Reserves Policy It is the PCC Policy to try to maintain a balance of unrestricted funds in the General Fund which equates to at least 6 months and if possible 12 months of unrestricted expenditure. This would be a maximum of £50000 and although currently our reserves are in excess of this figure the PCC are mindful that we continue to lose regular givers, our balances are diminishing year on year and collections at services will continue to decline in the foreseeable future

What a year 2020 has been a very difficult year in many ways owing to the coronavirus pandemic and not surprisingly this has had some effect on our finances. However, despite this we are fortunate to have a good core of regular givers and this has enabled us to meet all our commitments and our balances have held up surprisingly well.

The full accounts follow on, the treasurer will assist with any questions you may have. The full accounts were independently examined by Mrs Helen Harrison FMAAT Central Business Services on 5th April 2022 and presented to and approved by the PCC on 6th April 2022 St Leonard's Church PCC Swithland.

Val Capewell Treasurer

St Leonards PCC, Swithland

Financial Statement for the year ended 31st December 2021

	Unrestricted £	Designated Fund £	Restricted Funds £	Total 2021 £	Total 2020
Voluntary Receipts					
1 Planned giving	27,072			27,072	27,948
3 Collections at Services	2,432			2,432	1,014
4 All other giving/voluntary receipts	832	172		1,004	3,130
6 Gift Aid recovered	7,102			7,102	8,900
7 Legacies	1,001			1,001	-
8 Grants				-	4,566
	38,439	172	-	38,611	45,558
Activities for generating funds					
9 Fundraising Activities	245	680		925	1,285
Investment Income					
10 Investment Income	39	31	3	73	553
Church Activities					
11 Fees retained by PCC	5,038			5,038	1,534
Total receipts	43,761	883	3	44,647	48,930
Payments					
Church activities					
19 Parish Gift	33,000			33,000	33,000
21 Staffing costs	1,526			1,526	1,220
18 Mission giving and donations	65	2,035		2,100	2,201
Church expenses					
23 Church Running expenses	11,251	397	1,126	12,774	7,417
24 Church Utility bills	2,839			2,839	2998.00
Cost of generating funds					
17 Cost of generating funds				-	228
Major capital Expenditure					
27 Major repairs to the Church		2,749		2,749	6,235
Total payments	48,681	5,181	1,126	54,987	53,299
Excess/Deficit of receipts over payments	- 4,920	- 4,298	- 1,123	- 10,341	4,369
Transfer between funds				-	-
Cash at bank at 1st January	81,508	48,484	7,069	137,061	141,430
Cash at bank at 31st December	76,588	44,186	5,946	126,720	137,061



Central Business Services

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St Leonards PCC, Swithland

Statements of Assets and Liabilities as at 31st December 2021

MONETARY ASSETS

	General	Designated	Restricted	Total 2021	2020
General Funds					
General Funds	76,588			76,588	81,508
	<hr/>			<hr/>	
	76,588			76,588	81,508
Designated Funds					
Fabric Fund		32,002		32,002	34,297
Friday Club		2,882		2,882	2,901
Mission & Outreach		1,033		1,033	2,983
Organ Fund		4,085		4,085	4,084
Tower Fund		4,184		4,184	4,219
		<hr/>		<hr/>	
		44,186		44,186	48,484
Restricted Funds					
Bells Restoration			5,946	5,946	7,069
			<hr/>	<hr/>	
			5,946	5,946	7,069
Total Cash in Hand at end of Year	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
	76,588	44,186	5,946	126,720	137,061

Debtors

Advanced payment for Jan event				-	388
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Liabilities

Accountancy Fee				-	180
Poppy Appeal cheque #103628				-	35
Mens Club Carol Singing Chq #103653	30			30	
Accountancy Fee	195			195	
	<hr/>			<hr/>	
	225			225	215



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Churchwarden's General Report

Churchwarden Report

What a year! I don't feel I can give a very comprehensive report this year obviously due to the Covid pandemic constrictions imposed on all churches.

Analysis of the entries in the Church Service Register records that only twenty-four Sunday Services were held in 2020, plus a service on Ash Wednesday and an evening service following the very successful Snowdrop Festival in February.

Included in one of the services was a Baptism, two funeral services were held in church, two Burial of Ashes were recorded and only two weddings took place. Friday Club was only able to meet on five occasions prior to lockdown. Throughout the year due to the restrictions no school services were held in church. The school continued to be involved in the designing the Christmas Card.

Reports on the Health and Safety Policy, Safeguarding, and Church Fabric have been submitted separately and forwarded to the PCC secretary. Once access is allowed, Revd Colin Resch has reported that a planned revision of the Churchyard Plan will have to be undertaken

It is still my wish that once we are able, is to re-organise the Vestry in a hope that it can be cleared and used more efficiently.

I will end this report and thank you all for your help and support during this difficult year.

Sally Allen. Churchwarden

Church Fabric Report

Church services commenced in the building at Easter. The yearly maintenance was completed, the electrics have been PAT tested, the fire extinguishers have been checked, the clock has been serviced as has the boiler, with no issues highlighted.

The application to have permanent flood defences fitted was strongly opposed by Historic England and after considering other possibilities it was decided to cancel the DAC faculty request.

The QI (quinquennial report) is due 2022 and it was decided to engage an architect closer to the Church for ease of management. After an advertising and interview process the PCC appointed an architect from Mountsorrel. A full electrical inspection will be done prior to QI.

Ongoing work is being done due to tree root ingress to the surrounds of the Danvers Monument and some stone work on the Hind Sisters monuments within the church grounds.

Faculty Applications:

Bates Gravestone Removal/Replacement Ref:2019-045576

The reordering of the kitchen/office space and toilet have been completed.

A check of the Headstones will be made with the H&S officer this year.

A check of the church silver and Terrier will be updated and completed this year.

Chris Watts

Electoral Roll Report

The Church Electoral Roll has been reviewed this year in keeping with the requirements of the Church Representation Rules.

There are 76 members on the roll.

Ali Wright Electoral Roll Officer

Health and Safety Report

There is very little to say other than there have been no accidents reported and when the church has been open, Covid regulations have been strictly adhered to, though following National guide lines they have since been lifted though wearing of face masks and use of hand sanitiser is recommended.

Inspection of fire extinguishers, emergency lighting and electrics PATT test have been performed.

Gravestones still to have official tests carried out which have been delayed by Covid. However, periodic inspections have found them safe and official tests will be carried out this summer.

Martin Greenwood

Safeguarding of Children & Vulnerable Adults Report 2022

We, the PCC, have adopted and reviewed up to date policies for Child Safeguarding and Safeguarding Adults. We have adopted the model diocesan Child Safeguarding Policy and Safeguarding Adults Policy issued in March 2018. The policies were reviewed by the PCC on 08/09/2021. Safeguarding is regularly on the agenda at PCC meetings as a standing item.

We have Coordinators in place for Safeguarding Children and Adults. Our Child Safeguarding Coordinator is Ali Wright. Our Safeguarding Adult Coordinator is Chris Watts.

Ali Wright submits a written report to the PCC secretary prior to every PCC meeting.

We are clear about what activities are taking place with children, who is responsible and where and when they take place.

We have no activities specifically with adults with additional needs.

We make clear our commitment to safeguarding by displaying the policies and helpful information. The Child Safeguarding and Safeguarding Adults policy statements are posted on the church noticeboard. The safeguarding poster with the Childline phone number is displayed in places where children can see it. Relevant information about help for adults (eg. In relationship to domestic abuse) is available. Contact details are displayed for the Safeguarding Coordinators, Churchwardens and the Diocesan Safeguarding Team. A hard copy of the Diocesan Safeguarding Handbook is available.

We know who is working with children and / or vulnerable adults. The number of people authorised to work with children and young people

is seven. The number of people authorised to work with vulnerable adults is three.

We ensure that everyone who is eligible has a DBS check. We are registered with CCPAS for online DBS checks. The lead recruiter is Ali Wright. We have a record of DBS checks. DBS checks are renewed every 5 years in line with the Church of England policy.

In addition to DBS checks we use safer recruitment for everybody we recruit to work with children / young people and or vulnerable adults, both paid staff and volunteers. It is clear who is responsible for making the appointment decision. All new appointments are subject to a recruitment process which includes a role, application form, references, interview/conversation, and confidential self-declaration.

We ensure that all people who work with children/young people and/or vulnerable adults attend safeguarding training.

We ensure safe working practice in work with children/young people and/or vulnerable adults. The number of current authorised leaders and helpers is sufficient and the OFSTED staffing ratios are maintained. Adequate insurance and a risk assessment is in place for all activities. All volunteers and paid staff have received the relevant safeguarding policies and the Pocket Guide to Safeguarding Children. The number of leaders and helpers who are qualified First Aiders is one. Volunteers and paid staff are advised on appropriate use of social media, mobile phones and texting.

We ensure that any information / disclosures / concerns about possible abuse are passed on to the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor. All volunteers and paid staff have received instructions and /or training in what they do if they receive information or have concerns about possible abuse. All information known to the leadership has been passed on to the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor.

We ensure that any blemished disclosures are passed to the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser. There have been no blemished disclosures for 2021.

We ensure that information about convictions and about people who may pose a safeguarding risk is passed onto the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser. There have been no such instances.

We keep information safely and maintain appropriate confidentiality. All personal records (consent forms, recruitment information, safeguarding records) are kept locked away. Where necessary, computer files are password protected. Share email are not used for correspondence on confidential matters.

We ensure that external bodies who use church premises have appropriate safeguarding arrangements in place. There are currently no external bodies using Church premises.

We act to improve safeguarding arrangements and to respond to new and revised policies and guidance.

Ali Wright, Safeguarding Officer

Worship and Education Committee

Covid has once again proved difficult for the Worship Committee with face to face services being suspended until 14th March and our planned March meeting was not held. Fortunately face to face services were resumed in time for us to celebrate Easter though not everyone was comfortable to attend but Zoom services were still available.

We were able to resume committee meetings on 30th June when we held a special meeting to discuss the pattern of services post-covid and after the departure of Rev. Darren Walker to take up his new posting. As there would be a shortage of priests to conduct Holy Communion as a result of this it was questioned whether we should still hold services at 8am and 9.30am each Sunday. It was decided to continue the regular pattern until the end of the year and until the forthcoming Questionnaire had been analysed.

We held a meeting on 20th October when it was decided to recommend to the PCC that during this Winter there would be no 8am BCP service of Holy Communion but that there should be a pattern of services to include both BCP and Common Worship Communion, Family Services and Morning Prayer all to be held at 9.30am. This to be reviewed in the light of SBGT initiative and the Questionnaire result. Remembrance Sunday arrangements were discussed and the date for the Bluebell Service for 2022 was fixed as 24th April. The Cathedral Choir had been invited but are not able to attend on that date but would like to do so on another year.

As Boxing Day fell on a Sunday the Committee arranged for a 'Sing a Song of Christmas' to be held as the only service on 26th December.

Fortunately, there were no further Lockdowns in 2021 and we hope the virus is controlled and we can look forward to a more fulfilling year in 2022.

Olga Harris

Deanery Synod Report

June 6th 2021 Zoom

Rev'd Wendy Dalrymple to leave the role of Area Dean this Summer.

'Racial Equity Strategy' – Rev'd Lusa Nsenga-Ngoy Lusa talked about the reality of racism within our churches, both in its systems and structures, but also, in the experience that many have as we cross the threshold of our churches.

October 28th 2021

Held at Christ Church Mountsorrel

Rev'd Laurette Wilson who has taken Wendy Dalrymple's role.

Conversations around Shaped By God Together (SBGT) the reordering of the diocese. Video played from Bishop Martin then group discussions.

February 9th 2022 Zoom

Talk from Rev'd Andrew Hall, Burbage Church on gaining their Gold Eco Award.

5 requirements are: Worship & teaching

Management of church buildings

Management of church land

Community & global engagement

Lifestyle

Conclusion in my breakout room was it was very difficult to gain the gold award, most seem to get stuck at Bronze.

Chris Watts

COMOT Report 2020

The Community and Outreach Team (COMOT) re-started meetings in July 2021 and have continued to meet on a monthly basis from this time. The LINK was published throughout the year, initially being sent out electronically and then reverting to manual distribution later in the year.

The proposed content of the Parish Survey, instigated in July and co-ordinated by Virginia Aspinall, was considered over 2/3 months in depth, as were the ways in which COMOT could promote its success prior to findings being submitted to the PCC in November.

Open Church afternoons took place on 14th August, 11th September and 9th October. All proved successful in spite of the lack of the opportunity to advertise them widely.

An extremely successful Coffee Morning for Macmillan Cancer Support was held on Wednesday 22nd September which was very well attended and raised £650, plus the profile of St Leonard's within the community.

A Harvest Lunch was organised for the congregation on Sunday 26th September.. The number in attendance was somewhat reduced from previous years but it was nevertheless a very enjoyable and worthwhile occasion.

Ride and Stride also had much less support than previous years, but still raised over £900 through the use of Just Giving pages for the Leicestershire Historic Churches Trust.

Closing our social events for the year was a 'Parish Praise' early evening concert on Saturday November 20th.

The content and musicians were excellent but again, this was not as well supported as we would have hoped.

It was decided that our Christmas Card for Christmas 2021 would not involve St Leonard's Primary School and Janet Lee very kindly offered to undertake the necessary artwork for us. The card was distributed to everyone in the Parish with the December issue of The LINK.

In summing up, I would say that 2021 was a very difficult year for COMOT due to the understandable lack of enthusiasm of the general public for getting out and about. We did, however, manage to organise a varied number of events and attendance at our meetings was always very good and supportive of all ideas for outreach.

Mary Toone – Chairman

Friday Club (Toddlers Group)

Friday Club reopened last September; and we have many new families attending and some from pre Covid. Numbers attending vary each week but on the register we have 12 children and have a cohort of families that always attend. It is noticeable that these toddlers / children have lived through lockdowns as their confidence is less; it is pleasing to see them flourish and new friendships are being made amongst mums, dads and grandparents.

Our format remains the same with play activities; coming together to have drinks and biscuits whilst listening to a bible story, action story, nursery rhymes and our 'Good Morning Jesus' prayer. Many parents really appreciate the bible stories and child friendly prayers. Our Christmas party was great fun and a happy event.

The new kitchen facilities and dishwasher are a bonus too.

If you would like to join us on a Friday morning during term time 9.00 to 10.30 am please do.

Ali Wright

Bell Ringers

This has been another interrupted year for the tower, with the 2nd lockdown restricting ringing and a further period of restrictions at the end of the year.

In January, the 5 bell was tolled by Nick Cunningham for Eric Atkinson's funeral. Eric was an honorary member of our tower as he was actually a member of Thurcaston, where he started ringing. However, he used to come to our Thursday practice nights and we still miss him. Eric and Nick shared a birthdate in January as well.

During the 2nd lockdown, one bell was chimed for most Sunday services.

Following the death of the Duke of Edinburgh, the bells were rung according to Royal Protocol, at 3 times: a bell was chimed by Janet at 6pm on the same day, Nick tolled the 5 bell 99 times the following day and culminated in Guy tolling for 15 minutes on the day of the funeral.

We had 13 weddings this year, several of which were on a Sunday, but due to Central Council guidance, were not able to ring for the weddings early in the year. Even then, in June, we were only permitted to have three ringers following social distancing rules. However, this reduced ringing seemed to be much appreciated by the wedding parties. From July, we had full wedding rings of 6, although I had to bring in some ringers from outside. We are lucky in that we have a good range of contacts.

We resumed practice nights after our AGM in September, only to halt them again following further Covid restrictions in the Autumn. Similarly with ringing for services, we resumed ringing at the beginning of October, but reverted to chiming one bell.

Marc Wainwright has continued to ring the 5 bell for the 8 o'clock service but now has stopped ringing as the service is no longer at that time. He has been ringing at Swithland since the 1970s.

We have lost several ringers over the last two years for various reasons and need to find some way of recruiting more ringers over the next few years.

Janet Beeby Tower Captain

Swithland Church Wives

2021 was another frustrating year for the Wives group as together with the country we were unable to meet for most of the year due the restrictions caused by Covid. We met for the first time in the year in September when a group of us enjoyed in spite of the rain, a talk and guided walk lead by Canon Anne Horton through Swithland . Anne told us the history of many of the houses in the village. We ended with a glass of wine and some social time at the Memorial Hall. Restrictions then prevented us meeting until later in the year. It was therefore with some trepidation, as restrictions were lifted at the end of the year, that we arranged a Christmas Flower demonstration. We gathered suitably distanced and ventilated in the Memorial Hall to watch Mary Linett who showed us some beautiful ideas for Christmas decorations. We were very grateful to receive a generous donation from the Church to cover the cost of the Hall and the speaker. Mary chose to give her speaker fee to Macmillan nurses. We were also able to hold our Gift service in early December. The food donations were given to the Soar Valley Food Bank. Members also prepared decorated shoe boxes filled with items to help young people at the Y centre. We have our fingers crossed that 2022 will be a better year for all of us with a meeting in March and an Easter week service. We would like to arrange a garden outing in the summer and then resume meetings in the autumn.

We would like to encourage new members to join us. If the Covid pandemic has taught us anything it is surely the importance of friends.

Jan Beeby, Val Capewell and Sarah May

Swithland Church Men's Club

The first presentation was an addition to the programme as the scheduled speaker had to pull out at short notice. The presentation at the AGM was given by Derek Holloway on "Captain James Cook R.N."

We therefor had a further scheduled presentation by Derek Holloway in November on "Agincourt" both presentations were well received.

Derek has presented to the club before and with an extensive well researched programme it was good to be able welcome Derek back, all be it with more presentations than originally programmed.

Unfortunately our Annual dinner had to be cancelled as the numbers of attendees was below the minimum to do justice to the restaurant at the Griffin. I fear the 'Omicron' variant was too strong a worry for our usual festivities.

We did however hold Carol Singing at the Village Hall. This was an outside event encouraging residents of Swithland to join members and representation from the Church Choir. The Carol Singing was well attended by Swithland residents keen to get into the Christmas Spirit. With mulled wine and Mince Pies provided, a total of £240 was raised on the evening, to be split between Loros and Rainbows.

In January we had a presentation by Chris Aspinall on his life working with glass called "Through the Looking Glass" This gave the membership an insight into the properties of glass and Chris's career highlights.

Then in February we had our much-anticipated return to Rothley Fisheries for "The Pike Supper" the attendance was good and a lovely meal was had by all. Martin Greenwood gave an update on the Pike and recounted the story of how the Pike came into his possession. It was great to be able to meet again for this popular event.

Our last presentation for the year was given by Cllr Andrew Brown (no relation) about being the High Sheriff in Rutland. This was an excellent entertaining and very amusing presentation. The role of High Sheriff is as much ceremonial as an active role in the community but Andrew Brown had attended over 250 events, representing the county and the position, bringing notice to the excellent work of the emergency services. Especially those that uphold Law and Order.

We very much look forward to a position when we can all meet safely again.

Andrew Brown Chairman

Christians in the Forest

Last year CITF had a full year of Bible study courses although sadly we were once again unable to put on a Shrove Tuesday Lecture because of Covid restrictions.

The Epiphany course was a study of Luke's Gospel written by John Houghton.

Our Lent Course was a study of 2 Corinthians by Bishop Michael Baughen entitled "A Passion for Christ".

For our Spring course we looked at the history and stories behind our favourite Hymns.

The Summer and Autumn courses were a study of the Book of Acts written by Christine Platt.

Lastly, the Advent course, written and devised by Hilary Ayling, asked us to look with fresh eyes at four Christmas stories, The Angels, The Shepherds, The three Kings and Jesus.

We have a full year of Bible studies planned for 2022 and have just completed the Epiphany Course which this year was an exploration of the Book of Ruth.

Christians in the Forest is most grateful to St Leonard's for its continuing support by way of funding and for allowing us the use of the upper room as one of our three meeting places – the others being the Baptist Church, Woodhouse Eaves and the Methodist Church, Woodhouse Eaves.

Gary Lee

CITF Coordinator

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