

# **ST JOHN'S CHURCH RANMOOR**

## **Reports to the 2021 Annual Parochial Church Meeting**

Publication Date: 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2021

APCM: 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2021

**This report contains information about many of the groups and activities that have taken place over the year. The Accounts are published separately to this document.**

## Introduction

Welcome to the annual reports and accounts of St John's Ranmoor. In spite of all the challenges of the past year, these pages are a testament to the faithfulness and creativity of many members of our church. We are very blessed with gifted and dedicated people who give generously of their time and talents. This in turn means that we have been able to bless others at a time when so many are finding life hard.

In the light of Covid restrictions and following changes to church representation rules, our APCM takes place this year on 23<sup>rd</sup> May at 12 noon. I do hope that you will be able to attend in person but if you decide to join us via Zoom, it would be very helpful if you could send in your questions beforehand.

23<sup>rd</sup> May is the Feast of Pentecost, when God's Spirit was poured out on the disciples, giving them the gifts they needed to build the Church. Please pray that this Pentecost, God will continue to renew St John's, giving us the gifts we need to meet the challenges that lie ahead.

Matthew

## Church Building

The most important work in 2020 was the rebuilding of the main organ. This started in February 2020 and was completed in March 2021. We also upgraded the electrics in the organ chamber and repaired a crumbling wall that was revealed when the organ was dismantled. A Statement of Significance was prepared, along with a Structural Engineer's report and an Electrical & Mechanical Engineer's report. The latter two reports have advised our Architect and have inform the Quinquennial Report that was provided to the PCC in March 2021.

Alongside these reports, the Architect has prepared outline plans developing the building, both internally and by providing a Pavilion on the North Side. These plans are in response to the PCC's requirements to respond to the Vision document produced in September 2019 and the subsequent need to respond to the Church of England's commitment to be carbon neutral by 2030.

In response to the global pandemic that started in March 2020, Services were led from the Vicarage using Zoom. Once the church building could be reopened, an IT network was installed so that Services could continue to be broadcast. Facebook Live was also introduced enabling Services to be viewed at a later time. This technology has enable people who are physically in church and those people who wish to participate from other places can do so.

Brian Parfett

## Deanery Synod

St John's representatives on the Hallam Deanery Synod are John Green, Sarah Beardsmore and David Williams, who is also a member of Diocesan Synod. In 2020 the Synod was renewed with new members elected. Usually this would have taken place in April but the pandemic meant that elections were not held until the autumn.

Since the last APCM, the Synod has held three meetings plus an additional gathering. In July 2020, the Synod met for the first time online. The meeting gave space for parishes to reflect on their experience of lockdown and the changes that have happened in ministry across the Deanery. Before the meeting, members of the PCC contributed their reflections and had a helpful discussion about St John's experience of church life in lockdown.

The Synod next met in November, once APCMs had taken place. Firstly, they met on Saturday 7 November for a Deanery Event with the Ecclesfield Deanery. The event was open to all and included updates on the Diocesan strategy from the Bishop of Doncaster and the Diocesan Secretary and a Bible study led by the Bishop of Sheffield.

Later in November the Synod had a meeting to hear from people across the world about their experiences of the pandemic. Messages and contributions were shared from Nepal, Jordan, Kenya and the USA.

Recently the Synod met again with Ecclesfield Deanery to hear about the implementation of Oversight and Focal ministry in the Diocese. Revd Ian Parkinson, Associate Archdeacon, and Dr Christine Gore, Director of Formation for Ministry, gave a presentation and took questions from the Synod.

Hopefully, the Deanery Synod will be able to meet in person before the next APCM.

Sarah Beardsmore

## Mission Partnership

The Mission Partnership (St John's, St Mark's, St Mary's, St Tim's and The Vine) has now become two Mission Areas (St John's, St Mark's and St Mary's, and St Tim's and The Vine). In March this year, Sue Hammersley was licensed as Priest in Charge of St Mary's Walkley and Matthew was licensed as Associate Priest there. From now on, Matthew will be at St Mary's for the morning service on the third Sunday of the month. He is also a governor of St Mary's School Walkley. The Revd Will Briggs will have responsibility for St Tim's and The Vine from summer 2021.

## Electoral Roll Report

The Electoral Roll membership at the 2020 APCM totalled 172. 2019 was a new year to begin the roll. Over this year we have not removed any people from the roll due to difficulty with attendance, however we have had 3 people removed from the roll who sadly died. We therefore have 169 people currently on the roll.

Once in every six years the preparation of new church electoral rolls takes place, which means that everyone must come off the roll and re-apply. The next occasion for the preparation of new rolls is in 2025. People who would like to be on the Church Electoral roll must complete an electoral roll form. Forms should be completed and handed to a member of the Clergy, Churchwarden, the church office or to Claire Webber, our Electoral Roll Officer.

## Children's Ministry

It has been an even stranger year than the last with very few opportunities for direct contact with the group.

There has been no opportunity to have the messy craft sessions which usually take place four times a year. Although we did manage to have Easter crafts at the back of church on Easter Sunday followed by an egg hunt in the Parish centre grounds which seemed to be enjoyed by all. Top marks to our youngest member of Footsteps who seemed to have the sharpest eyes! However, there was also a lot of sharing going on. I think the parents enjoyed it too as it gave them a rare chance for a distanced chat face to face.

Staying in touch has been difficult, the children and young people are so zoomed out from all their schoolwork and other extracurricular activities, it was difficult for them to engage in more online forums.

It is difficult to express yourself and open your hearts when staring at a screen.

They also need time to adjust to the new normal, whatever that may look like.

We have managed to keep the all age worship going and hope that as we reopen church more that there will be more involvement from the children and that families may start to come back and new families attend.

### What we have done:

We sent out craft bags at Christmas to the children and the choristers (complete with Chocolate Advent calendars), there were 40 bags and the parish centre became a production line. Thanks to Jacky Dakin for turning into postman Jacky.

The toddler area is now open again after a thorough clean, who knew you could put Duplo through your washing machine.

There is a new cabinet at the back of church just outside the Toddler area. This contains paper, colouring, crayons and felt tips. Please feel free to use any of these throughout the service if you are attending with people who might benefit. On top of the cabinet are pew bags containing books paper and crayons to be used in the pews.

As we have not had a formal Footsteps for a while, we have not been using Roots but will reassess what we use when we are back in full flow.

#### What we are doing next:

For the time being we are going to have the all age service on the 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday and then Footsteps on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday both in Church, this is to enable paying groups to use the annex which will help the centre funds, although if the weather is good we plan to be outside as much as possible, enjoying and discovering Gods world and gifts.

Everyone is welcome to join us, and we do need more leaders and helpers especially after September when one of our helpers will be leaving for University.

Our hope is that with more help and children we can return to weekly Footsteps, restart the Messy crafts, and have a Messy Church service where we have crafts, music a talk and share food.

When wedding and Christening re start we will again be producing cards to give to the couples and families. The Children enjoy making them and the couples and families enjoy receiving them.

I cannot finish without thanking Matthew, Matt and Claire for their support, Poppy and Willow for their help, the families who have stuck with us during these strange difficult times, but especially to Helen who has been there throughout, will do anything to help, has great ideas and has been a rock both spiritually and personally. Thankyou to the children and young people who bring joy and laughter to Church and it is wonderful to hear their voices in Church again.

Janet

## Toddler Group

The group is open to anyone who is expecting or has had a baby and is looking for companionship and activities for their baby or toddler. We accept children up to school age. All children are accompanied by a carer. Carers are offered a drink and towards the end of the session children are offered a drink and a range of healthy snacks. We ask £1 for the first child plus 50p for other additional children. We meet Thursdays, term time.

Helen Clark and Ann Darke predominantly run the group with Sally Booker, and Barbara Wozencroft also help occasionally. The availability of volunteers has reduced further despite our efforts. However we have managed to keep the group running, sometimes with only Helen, as Claire is usually in the office on Thursdays and there is now an Art group running should there be any incidents of a health and safety nature. Also Helen is able to contact Steve, the Verger.

Helen and Claire will look at and revise the Health and Safety document during the summer of 2021. We explored the idea of restarting the group before the Autumn mini lockdown but the feeling from the mums we contacted was quite negative from all but one! On that basis I have decided not to restart the group until after June 21<sup>st</sup>. Initially I considered after half term but feel that the extra work involved in putting

together a stricter health and safety protocol would not be worth it. So all being well if the government gives the go ahead for lifting all restrictions that is when we hope to restart the toddlers group. Helen Clark

## Music

As with every aspect of church life, the pandemic has presented the music department with new challenges to meet and problems to solve. We are very glad that we have managed to provide music for virtually all the church's services since the first lock down began, through a variety of means: in the early days, Cathy Rhodes singing and playing the piano from the vicarage; recordings streamed via You Tube and Facebook; live services streamed through the same means; contributions direct from singers' homes and the organ in Julian Gunn's home; and latterly services in church with small choirs and, at last, with congregations present.

These arrangements have presented their challenges. Because the choirs have been small and socially distanced, we have all had to learn new techniques and have needed the courage to sustain lines with just one or two singers. The very small groups that performed for the Holy Week services did this particularly well, despite not having sung for several months and being presented with almost wholly unfamiliar music. It took us a little while, through trial and error, to get the best out of the available technology.

One benefit of the lock down period is that the major repairs that were undertaken on the organ could proceed unhindered. The work is now complete and our magnificent organ can be heard again, sounding better than ever. We are very grateful to the organ builder, Andrew Carter, and our consultant, Paul Hale, for all the dedicated, skilful and meticulous work which has had this splendid result. And, of course, we are also enormously grateful to the congregation, friends of the St John's Music tradition and the various trusts and foundations who have all supported the project so generously. Thanks to that support our marvellous instrument can go forward for another generation. We hope to be able to celebrate the newly restored organ properly from the autumn onwards.

So despite the pandemic, this has been a year of real achievement for St John's music. It has only been possible because of our team of musicians. This year has been particularly hard for children, and we have really missed having our children in church for rehearsals and singing in our services. It is wonderful that we have not lost any singers from amongst our chorister group and have even gained new recruits. Their commitment to Zoom rehearsals and willingness and courage to sing by themselves on line have been remarkable. The teenage choral scholars have shown just as much commitment and enthusiasm. We now have a very strong group of adult singers and they have been wonderfully flexible and skilful in adapting to all the different formats and configurations we have had to use during the year. We owe them huge thanks for their commitment and skill. It has been a privilege and pleasure to lead such a friendly and supportive group of people.

All the musicians were very sorry that Edward Barbieri resigned, for personal reasons, from the role of Director of Music soon after the lockdown started. He did a remarkable job in developing the choirs and the music of the church and his influence is still felt in

the way in which we sing. I doubt that people would have been able to do what they during this difficult year without the confidence they developed under his guidance. We wish him well.

Some people have played particularly important roles. Not much of what we have done would have seen the light of day without the contribution of our technical wizards: Brian Parfett initially, and then Joe Hutchinson and Dom Dakin (who also found time to get a choral scholarship to Emmanuel College, Cambridge). Joe Hutchinson and Georgina Hulse have done a remarkable job in keeping the junior choristers engaged and developing their skills; on the few occasions they have been able to sing in church this year they have shown how much they have come on. Fran Wells has done the same job with the choral scholars with great enthusiasm and skill. Julian Gunn has been tireless in his support; regularly playing the organ from home during the period of lock down and now that we have returned to church, sharing with Joe the load of playing for the choirs. We owe all these people a great debt of gratitude, and we are grateful for the consistent support we have had from the Vicar, the congregation and the parents of the children in the choir.

DEREK GROVER

Organist and Associate Director of Music

## Flowers

The flower rota is coordinated by Sandra Green and Jackie Lowe. Each volunteer on the rota normally commits to providing and arranging one pedestal of flowers by the pulpit in Church, on average once a year.

Volunteers are also invited via the church notice sheet periodically to help at the major festivals of Easter, Harvest and Christmas. This usually entails providing and arranging flowers for either one of the window sills, a pedestal, the font or the church porch.

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic the last twelve months have been different, the church was initially temporarily closed for worship so the flower rota was put on hold. On the reopening of church we were able to reinstate the flower rota from August 2020 until January 2021.

Throughout we kept in regular contact with the members of the rota as government restrictions were in turn imposed, lifted and then reimposed.

For our Harvest Festival we arranged two pedestals at the front of church and a welcome arrangement by the entrance with colourful Harvest flowers incorporating fruit and vegetables.

In October members of the flower rota made posies of flowers that were included in the delivery of a cream tea to a group of people from our congregation.

At Christmas we used red carnations, gold pine cones, seed heads, birch and fatsia leaves together with holly and green foliage from members gardens to make one pedestal at the front of church and a welcome arrangement by the entrance. We decorated the window sills with holly and new battery operated candles purchased jointly from the flower fund and church funds.

After the reopening of church prior to Easter we asked for donations towards the purchase of lilies in memory of someone who had died and the lilies were incorporated in our two Easter pedestal arrangements.

We are always looking for more people to help so please do contact either Sandra Green or Jackie Lowe if you are interested.

## Study Groups

We have run three study groups during the year, which have all taken place via Zoom and everyone has been welcome to join us. We are pleased to report that the number of people joining has been increasing and we give thanks and pray that this will continue.

Our first study group took place during the first lockdown. The book we chose for our studies was 'How Then Shall We Live?' by Sam Wells. Rev Dr Sam Wells is the Vicar of St Martin-in-the-Fields, a well known theologian, preacher, author and broadcaster. The book discussed Christian Engagement with some of the most pressing contemporary political, social and moral challenges facing us at the present time.

During Advent we ran a study group which followed the diocesan Advent course 'Light in the Darkness'. The course helped us reflect on, at the darkest time of the year, our calling to be Lights for Christ. Its main aim was to help us to draw on our experience of an extraordinary year which was coming to its close, and in doing so, look forward as we entered a new season and new year. The course had four parts, which were based around words which had been central to many people's experience during all the upheavals of 2020 - Distance, Safe, Trust and Normal.

In Lent we again joined with Nether Green Methodist Church and ran two groups, one in the afternoon and one in the evening. Both groups were led and attended by members of both congregations.

We chose the Bloomsbury Lent Book for 2021 'Thy Will Be Done' by Stephen Cherry, Dean of Kings College Cambridge. The book took an in-depth look at the Lord's Prayer and used six key words from the prayer as themes for reflection: Heaven, Earth, Bread, Temptation, Forgiveness and Glory.

Our groups are mainly led by members of the congregation but we would like to thank Matt Wood for his support, advice and help in planning and running our courses this year.



We have found that in reading, reflecting, discussing and listening together, we have learned much from each other, helping us to grow in faith and as a Christian community.

Sandra Green

## Eco Church

The Group has continued to meet regularly, through lockdowns, on Zoom and successfully applied to A Rocha, the organisers of “Eco Church”, for recognition as a silver level award church. In recognition of our links to A Rocha, we changed the name from The Climate Crisis Group to the Eco Church Group in January 2021. We also adopted a statement of Role and Objectives, based on the national inter-church Climate Emergency Toolkit, as follows.

1. **Awareness Raising** - *in the congregation and wider community*
2. **Making a Church Commitment** - *as part of discipleship and worship*
3. **Making an Impact** - *by partnering with the local community & influencing decision-makers*

The five areas in the Eco Church assessment questionnaire have guided our work over the past year and include a wide range of new activities, as follows.

### 1. **Worship and Teaching**

- Advent Study group following the A Rocha publication - “Planetwise”
- Climate Sunday on 21st Feb. celebrated our role in caring for creation, with special prayers written by Clare Wood.

### 2. **Buildings**

- Installing Solar Panels and LED lighting at the Vicarage
- incorporating climate considerations into plans for new work in church to create better toilet and catering facilities.

### 3. **Land**

- Taking part in the RSPB wild bird survey on 30th January at the Parish Centre and around church.
- planting new trees in the Parish Centre garden to provide food for insects & birds
- Installing Swift nesting boxes at the Vicarage and the Parish Centre

### 4. **Community and Global engagement**

- Taking part in tree planting on the moors, in a scheme linked to flood prevention.
- Encouraging the Deanery Synod to form an Eco Church support group
- Contributing to the Hallam Citizens Assembly, organised by Olivia Blake our MP, who is developing a Climate Manifesto for the constituency.

- Being part of a national joint churches initiative organised by USPG, called "Make COP26 Count", providing training in political lobbying in preparation for the intergovernmental Climate Summit in Glasgow in November.
- We are supporting A Rocha and Friends of the Earth from our annual giving.
- Continuing to supporting Christian Aid Week projects relating to Climate Justice.

## 5. Lifestyle

- Regular Articles in Inspire on Climate Crisis issues
- Encouraging people to assess their carbon footprint
- Eco tips in the Newsheet

I have had lots of support from group members over the last year. We have been joined by Clare Wood and Lu Skerratt but have lost Deborah Page and Jane Thickett due to their carer commitments. Cathy Rhodes has been a great inspiration in her role as Diocesan Environment Officer and as a member of our group. Debbie Timms and I would welcome more members in what will be another busy year.

John Green

## Ranmoor Ringers

It has been a difficult year for us all – not only ringers.

Since the cessation of ringing back in March 2020 we have managed sporadic ringing for weddings and Sunday services when able. We can have 3 ringers distanced in the ringing chamber as the ventilation and space available allows. The Christmas services and Easter services have been supported with Hand Bell ringers on the lawn at the front of Church after the service which has been appreciated. Tolling a single bell has been done for the Day of Reflection in March and also for HRH , The Prince Phillip, Duke of Edinburgh on the day following his death.

We have kept in touch via Zoom meeting each week and look forward to the day we can ring as a team calling our congregation to worship, celebrating the joy of a wedding, and the remembrance in grief and sending out a welcome to St Johns.

Thanks to the ringers who have supported the continued ringing, when allowed, and have also supported me. Richard

## The Organ Appeal

It's been quite a year for so many different reasons, but amidst it all we can celebrate in our pipe organ having been fully restored. We have been without it for three and half years. Little did we know that when we closed the church for repairs to the ceiling in 2017, it would coincide with our organ falling silent for the foreseeable future.

In June 2020, when it was safe to do so, Andrew Carter, our organ builder, and his team finally came on site to St John's to dismantle and take away the organ. It was taken to their workshop to be meticulously repaired and cleaned. It took several months to undertake the skilled and delicate work of piecing together our 130-year-old instrument. The work has taken a little longer than hoped for as progress was hampered by successive lockdowns and the need to work safely.

As is often the case, the project did reveal additional work. A repair was required to the masonry on an external wall in the organ chamber, an area that's not accessible when the organ is in place and we've had some further upgrading to the electrics in the organ. The cause of a longstanding fault was also identified. The organ has for many decades lost pressure, causing it to be temperamental and lose tune more quickly. The replacement wind reservoir has cost a further £2,500 but our organ consultant Paul Hale assured us "this will be the best £2,500 spent on the Ranmoor organ as it will improve the entire instrument".

The work was finally signed off in March and, although there are still some minor adjustments, it has been wonderful to hear it accompanying our services once again. The digital instrument that we had on loan has been returned, creating vastly more space in the sanctuary.

The full project cost came it at £129,476 including VAT. We received £16,500 from grant funders, £20,815 from the Listed Places of Worship Grant (which repays the VAT on the project), £47,790 in donations including Gift Aid and £3,395 from fundraising activities. The shortfall on our fundraising was £40,976, more than had been expected due to the additional work and the lack of fundraising activity in 2020. £21,014 has been taken from designated and restricted music funds and £19,962 from unrestricted funds. We hope to arrange some events later in 2020 to recoup some of our lost fundraising.

Thank you to everyone who has supported the appeal and held it in your prayers. Some photos of the work can be found on the organ page of the church website.

Sarah Beardsmore, Fundraising Group Chair

## Report of the Pastoral Care Group

The Pastoral Care Group has met 14 times on Zoom during 2020- 2021 increasing the number of meetings at the height of the pandemic to ensure that we could maintain contact and provide support from St John's during this period. During the latter part of the year we have reverted to our regular monthly meetings but kept in regular touch with many people.

**Membership of the group has remained constant.**

Janet Atkinson (chair), Jean Couldrey, Liz Dwyer, Rosemary Farkas, Mary Grover, Trudie Kelly, Barbara Wozencroft and Alison Wragg as a reader. Alison has been unable to attend meetings during the past months as she has been on placement at St Mary's Bramall Lane as part of her training. We look forward to her return. Rev Matthew Rhodes and Rev Matt Wood have attended all our meetings and played a key role in guiding our work and offering support to individual members of the congregation as needed.

### **Roles and responsibilities**

- Mary Grover and Liz Dwyer have led our work to identify and keep in touch with members of the congregation who have been living alone, isolating or managing challenging circumstances
- Trudie Kelly and Jean Couldrey have contacted every member of the Wednesday lunch club by phone each week providing support and keeping members in touch with St Johns. Trudie has also continued to send cards to members of the congregation who are hospitalised or unwell for periods of time.
- Rosemary Farkas has continued to provide her professional guidance and insight on issues relating to pastoral care

In all our work careful attention has continued to be given to data protection and confidentiality.

### **Areas of pastoral care covered since April 2020**

The informal support provided by all members of the congregation has been exceptional during the pandemic with people looking out for each other and keeping in touch via Zoom or telephone. Thanks are due to all those who have set up and enabled us to access the technology to make this possible.

We have been grateful for the jigsaws donated by members of St John's and others and thank Mary Grover for developing and managing a Covid safe loans system. The jigsaw library continues to be available to people although demand has decreased in recent months. Thanks also to Peter Chatterton whose weekly quiz has provided another pleasurable opportunity for people to meet on Zoom, test their knowledge and enjoy the company of others.

### **Delivery of Teas**

Thanks to an idea proposed and organised by Rev Matt Wood, since August 2020 we have delivered afternoon teas on 7 occasions, approximately once a month, to all the members of the Wednesday lunch club. This number quickly expanded to include other older and isolated members of St John's and we now have 19 volunteers delivering to 29 older people every four weeks. The success of this initiative has been due to people's willingness to volunteer as drivers and deliver teas and the appreciation of those receiving afternoon tea and enjoying conversation on the doorstep. As from March 2021 we have been able to bake in the Parish Centre kitchen which will open up the potential for other innovative ways for people to keep in contact with others as Covid restrictions ease.

As part of our commitment to supporting older people and becoming a more dementia friendly church Wendy Bant and Janet Anker are involved in ongoing discussions within our mission Partnership about possible links with the Dementia Action Alliance and the Anna Chaplaincy Ministry.

### **Thanks and Looking Ahead**

We have tried to respond to the challenges of supporting people during the challenges of 2020/21 and are grateful to so many people for the contacts that have been developed and maintained within the community of St John's both formally and informally.

We should also like to record again our particular thanks to Claire Webber who continues to play such a significant role in relation to pastoral care by listening, supporting people, providing practical help and referring requests on to the pastoral care group. Much of what she does is unseen by others but is hugely appreciated.

If you are interested in finding out more about our pastoral care activities or feel you might like to contribute in some way, particularly as we come out of lock down and plan ahead for the coming year, please contact Claire who will pass on your details to a member of the pastoral care group. We ask for a commitment of only twelve months as it is important that people are able to step down when ready; thankfully others are always found enabling us to continue providing care and support.

Janet Atkinson on behalf of the Pastoral Care Group. April 2021

## **Social Justice Committee**

The Social Justice Group meets every three or four months. Members are involved in different aspects of the way we are called to respond to the vulnerable in our own society and beyond. We try to support each other's activities and to link the work of different groups. Though some aspects of our work have had to be suspended during the pandemic, some have expanded, most notably our involvement with the Burngreave Foodbank.

**Christian Aid.** Because of the pandemic the house-to-house collections in 2020 and 2021 were cancelled. In 2020 members of the congregation entertained us all in various ways on line. Philip and Susan Walshaw ran a large plant sale for which they had prepared a rich variety of seedlings, all in the best of health. These activities prompted donations of £5,523 in total. Alan Heath also raised £686 from his sponsored walk.

In 2021 we will again be inviting the congregation to share their talents and for walkers to seek sponsorship for Christian Aid. In addition, we will be delivering donation envelopes which recipients will be asked to return to the Parish Office. Donations can

be made on the church's Just Giving page on line: [www.justgiving.com/fundraising/stjohnsranmoorchristianaid2021](http://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/stjohnsranmoorchristianaid2021).

Malcolm and Janet Anker would like to thank everyone for their help in the last year. Our congregation has been hugely supportive of Christian Aid. (see separate CA report)

**The Fair Trade stall** has sadly had to be suspended during the pandemic.

**Baby Basics** - Baby Basics continues to be well supported at St. John's. Susan Hepworth coordinates our efforts. Because of its new, bigger premises, Baby Basics is now taking big equipment in good condition and clothes for children up to four years of age. In addition toiletries for mother and baby are most welcome. Susan would like to say thank you to all those who generously donated to this much needed charity. During this Covid 19 crisis it would be best if people wishing to donate could telephone on 2787262, as the opening hours will be different. The big request at the moment is for newborn size cardigans and jackets, so we hope that St. John's knitters will be able to pass these days of isolation 'craftily'! *Susan Hepworth*

**Burngreave Foodbank.** This last twelve months has seen an unprecedented rise in donations from our parish to Burngreave Foodbank .This is in response to an unprecedented rise in need. Our fortnightly donations to the foodbank have provided roughly 11,500 meals over the last year, that is over 4 tons of food. The foodbank hugely appreciates the support we at St John's give them. Rachel Snow, who runs the foodbank, came to St John's on Sunday 25 April to talked to us about how the foodbank works. She preached a very moving sermon about God's response to those who find themselves without support and without hope. Our fortnightly gatherings in front of the church to collect donations have also given us a chance to keep in touch with each other during the pandemic.

**St John's Eco Church Group** now meets independently of the Social Justice Group. It is highly active and is chaired by John Green. Through their efforts St John's has become an A Rocha Silver Eco Church. (see separate report).

**REACH** youth group have continued to focus on their social justice agenda despite the difficulties presented by not being able to meet together. As is noted in their report, several members of the group took part in a Sleep-In to raise funds for Roundabout, a local charity that works with young homeless people in the city. A good relationship has been forged with Roundabout which will hopefully lead to further collaborations in the future.

**Conclusion-** The variety of activities to support greater social justice in this world and the number of people involved in these activities demonstrate how closely linked these concerns are to our Christian faith at St John's. **Debbie Timms**

## Christian Aid

Because of the Covid 19 outbreak and lockdown, we were not able to collect house-to-house this year, nor to hold our Garden Party which together raised £4,838 in 2019.

Not doing anything, would have left Christian Aid with a big problem for all their ongoing commitments in the poorest parts of the world. This year's appeal was for help with the drought and famine conditions in Kenya, which could be alleviated by the building of earth dams from which the local people could collect water to irrigate their crops. Here at St Johns a wonderful week of events was organised to highlight the need for generous giving. Claire Webber, our administrator put in a great effort co-ordinating everything, Brian Parfett became our IT wizard, and then Peter Chatterton with quizzes, Matthew and Cathy became hairdresser and victim, a team of musicians organised by Cathy gave an inspiring concert, Andrew Coombe gave an uplifting insight into his task as Lord Lieutenant, and Susan and Philip Walshaw organised a highly successful Plant Sale, after Susan herself had grown and nurtured many plants. In addition to all this, our intrepid hiker, Alan Heath, was able to walk a route of 30 miles sponsored for Christian Aid. It was a gruelling effort, and Alan became very ill afterwards. We are pleased to see him back to health and wish him well as he builds up his strength to full fitness again.

The final total raised was £5,468. This was a very worthwhile effort which we are hoping to repeat this year, since we have been advised not to collect house-to-house. We shall be using delivery only envelopes in most houses of the parish with instructions on how to make on line donations, and we shall also hold a week of "virtual" entertainment, again with online donations. Details will be given in the May edition of the church magazine "Inspire". We would like to thank everyone involved last year, and encourage all who will be taking part this year. Janet and Malcolm Anker

## REACH – Youth Social Justice Committee

I am very grateful to Mary Grover for the work she has done in recent years encouraging and galvanising this group of young people into a series of significant social justice-based projects within the community. She has also been invaluable in helping me to get to know the group from afar as, due to Covid restrictions, we have been unable to meet since my arrival (in June 2020).

The group have stayed in touch during our enforced lack of contact through regular deliveries of chocolate, which have been accompanied by updates on goings-on at church, social justice news and some encouragement in what have been deeply challenging times for everyone, not least those in secondary education.

In the autumn (2020), in place of a planned Sleep Out together at church, members of the group Slept In at home, giving up their beds for a night and sleeping on the floor in the house or in their garden to raise funds for Roundabout, Sheffield's charity for young homeless people. We raised a good sum of money and strong links have been forged with the charity. It would be good to investigate some more hands-on work with them in the future and we will arrange for a representative from the charity to come and speak to the group as soon as that is practicable.

As restrictions ease, we shall gather together outside the Parish Centre to share some pizza and reflect upon how this last year has affected people. This will also be a time to think about what sorts of projects the group might like to focus on in the future. Possible future topics and projects include:

- Local community outreach e.g. proposed community cinema at St John's
- Work with Sheffield's young homeless through Roundabout
- Social justice work with e.g. Tearfund
- Contribution to Sheffield Diocesan Eco Conference (June '21)

Looking to the future, it would be good to see whether a monthly gathering of REACH might be possible (given how busy our young people are) and to investigate ways to further strengthen links and interaction between REACH and the wider church family of St John's. We will also be looking to make best use of the resources we have for young people across the Mission Partnership, including offering older members of the group (16+) the option of trying out SCM (Student Christian Movement) at St Mark's.

Revd Matt Wood

## Safeguarding

As members of the Church of England we are concerned with the wholeness of each individual within God's purpose for everyone. We seek to safeguard all members of the church community, of all ages. It is the responsibility of each one of us to protect children and young people and vulnerable adults from physical, emotional and sexual abuse, and from neglect.

The PCC appointed me as independent Parish Safeguarding Officer. I have attended many training courses on safeguarding and ensure that the PCC are up-to date with all aspects of keeping our church safe.

St John's is very pro-active, ensuring that DBS Certificates are in place for any people working with children and vulnerable adults. Risk Assessments take place for every piece of activity we may conduct, and First Aid Courses are ran to ensure we have emergency training to help anybody who falls ill or has an accident. This year due to the pandemic we have ensured that the use of media, images and consents are all up



to date for parents. We have also increased awareness about church being a safe place for all. We have introduced registration forms for adults and children joining any of our groups.

Importantly I ensure that people who work with children and vulnerable adults in our parish are trained and aware of what to do to keep our church a safe place.

Claire Webber

## Social Events

Due to the Covid Lockdown this year, we have had significant difficulty in organising social events. Thank you to Pete Chatterton especially for all of his help this year. Pete Chatterton has held a weekly quiz every Friday for lovely group throughout lockdown. Huge thanks to Pete for doing this every week so faithfully. Pete has brought the real joy of fellowship and friendship to so many during this time.

We had a very successful Christian Aid Week with various events throughout the week including quizzes, a talk from Andrew Coombe HM Lord-Lieutenant of South Yorkshire and an online concert. Not forgetting Matthew cutting Cathys hair live online for all to see. This coming year for CA Week 2021 we will be holding a combination of virtual and in person events. On Shrove Tuesday we managed a virtual pancake evening as well as a quiz which was really lovely for the people who attended.

Mothers Day - Everyone was encouraged to enjoy tea and cake whilst Pete hosted a quiz. Hopefully as lockdown eases we can start to put important social events back into our calendar for this year. Claire Webber

## Craft and Chatter

Craft and Chatter has been available on Zoom on Monday and Wednesday afternoons throughout the pandemic.

We are hoping we can resume meeting in the Parish Centre in September. Sandie Parfett

## Inspire Magazine

The magazine continues to flourish under the editorship of Philip Walshaw. Until his sad death last month, Tom Dakin provided invaluable assistance doing the proof reading and he will be greatly missed. During the pandemic, the magazine has either been hand delivered or posted, with copies being left in the church porch for anyone to pick up. Additionally, it is emailed out to everyone on the Church's database.

Although some advertisers have not renewed this year, there is still a good balance of articles to advertisements. Offers of help with the magazine and the submission of articles for inclusion are always welcomed. Philip Walshaw

## Weddings

St John's is a wonderful church where on average we have 16+ weddings taking place each year. Around half the couples that are married here attend regularly to come on our electoral roll. Many have another qualifying connection to be married such as – they have lived in the parish; their parents or grandparents were married here and so on.

At the start of 2020 we had 25 weddings in the calendar. Many couples moved their weddings to 2021 or 2022. We were able to hold 5 weddings in St Johns with limited people attending. This has been a very stressful time for couples. Some of the couples have moved their weddings dates more than twice. We are planning to host around 14 weddings this coming year of 2021. We are helping nearby Fulwood Church by hosting a couple of their weddings whilst their re-ordering work takes place. We have 18 weddings already booked in for 2022.

We hope and pray for all couples being married in St John's this year and wish them all very well in their lives together.

## Prayer and Fellowship

The group started meeting when James Grenfell, was vicar. At that time we numbered 7 or 8. Since then the group has evolved in different ways. We have not been able to meet for more than a year due to the pandemic and feel now is the right time for it to finish as over the years some have moved away and some have died. We can continue to support one another and to pray, but in an unstructured way. Bridget Brooke

## Sides People

What a change since last year's APCM. Sides-persons have had to adapt from mainly meeting and greeting to making the church Covid-secure (when we are open), being part of the Test and Trace process and grapple with providing services on line. Covid has meant church closure for a significant part of the year and many of our team members have had to cease helping because of shielding. The advent of on-line services has meant a completely new technical team has been developed, led by Dominic Dakin, who are responsible for broadcasting services on Zoom and Facebook -Live.

Younger members, such as Sarah Beardsmore and Georgina Hulse have helped out whilst the choir has been in abeyance, for which we are very grateful. We can begin to see a way forward, after 12th April, so those rota team members who feel able to re-join will now be part of more stable arrangements, after the ad-hoc rota at Easter.

Hopefully, as we learn to live with Covid, congregations will increase, necessitating a return to a full team of 4/5 members. We have managed with teams of 3 this past year because, even though there is more to do with Covid - (sanitising and recording names) there is less to do with not using hymnbooks or taking collections. The attached list of Sides-persons for re-election at the APCM will probably need updating before the next APCM, as people feel able to re-join or volunteer once again.

Thank you to all those who have helped at services through the pandemic and all those who are re-joining the rota.

John Green

## Wardens and Duty Wardens

Brian Parfett	
Mark Gregory***	
John Green	
Carl Webber***	
Andy Clark**	
Peter Wozencroft	
Senior Sides-persons	
Peter Chatterton	
Sandra Green	
Peter Lowe	
Anthea Priestley	
Barbara Wozencroft	
Dominic Dakin***	
Sides-persons	
Janet Anker	Mark Allcock ***
Malcolm Anker	Janet Atkinson
John Atkinson	John Biggin*
David Booker	Norma Chatterton
Helen Clark*	Pam Cooper*
Nigel Edmonds	Rosie Gregory*
Pauline Heath*	Susan Hepworth
John Hepworth	Trudie Kelly
Jackie Lowe	Chris Lewis
Peter Marrison*	Cathy Rhodes***
Will Stone***	Morag Shaw*
Mandy Stockley	Veronica Sullivan
Wendy Weeks *	Pat Thompson
Gwyneth Warburton *	Claire Webber **
Clare Wood ***	

\* Evensong    \*\* All Age    \*\*\* Tech Team

**Thank you to everyone for your contributions.**