

2021 REPORT OF THE VICAR OF CHRIST CHURCH, THE REVEREND MICHAEL BURNS, FOR THE 2022 APCM

Stop-start was very much the theme of 2021! As the year unfolded, national restrictions were gradually lifted and by the end of the year we were beginning to run our worship and activities. We are fortunate that so many of the congregation are on email and we worked hard at keeping everyone in touch through regular newsletters and so on. Thanks to the invaluable work of a small, dedicated team, we were able to worship online as well as in church when permitted. We are grateful to Tom Theakston who kept our musical life going during 2021. Sadly though, many activities were suspended for much of the year – including our Toddler Group, Junior Church, Together on Thursday social group and our KFH youth group. It has also been very frustrating that our Hall had to remain empty, but are pleased to see its gradual reopening, with thanks to Stefan Bown and Angelina Skelton for their ongoing supervision and to our weekend caretakers. Many other people contribute much to the life of Christ Church when this has been possible. We are grateful to them all including our children's group leaders, refreshment servers, altar servers, church cleaners, flower arrangers, the choir, readers, intercessors, stewards, study and prayer group convenors, gardening group, grass cutters and the social events committee amongst many others, as well as Bill Petch who does so many odd jobs for us. Thank you also to Paul Brazier for maintaining the website, which has been a crucial tool of communication to keep us all together in these past years and to Tish Mousell and Naomi Lowe who are currently working on a template for a new church website.

We are enormously grateful to Julie Grainger and Tish Mousell who are our Churchwardens. They have been absolute towers of strength and we could not do without them. We are sorry that Sarah Castle (our Southwark Pastoral Auxiliary) has now moved away and has had to step down from this role and we thank her for her pastoral work. We continue to be grateful to our two Readers, Farhad Hedayati and Flis Banks for their support and work for the life of the church. The whole church continues to be hugely indebted to Sara Taylor our Administrator who continues to work behind the scenes ensuring everything runs smoothly. The PCC met on zoom every other month during 2021 and all members have been faithful in their attendance: in particular we thank Judy Luddington for her work as PCC Secretary and John Davey for his work as PCC Treasurer working alongside our part-time paid bookkeeper, Margaret Hamps.

Safeguarding is a vital issue for every church to ensure proper and robust procedures are in place to care for our children and vulnerable adults and we are grateful to Jenny Tomlinson and Jane Simpson who look after this important aspect of our life for us – their formal report is below.

It is good to record that thanks to some generous donors we have been able to transform the back garden – with enormous thanks to Karen Chinn and our garden team who have worked so hard on this project and it was wonderful to be able to formal open and dedicate the garden in September. Generally, our buildings remain in a good state of repair. Some things, such as our eco-church project and refugee sponsorship project, have been ongoing during 2021 and we are grateful to those who are taking the lead – and in particular we are so pleased that both these projects are seeing positive results as we move through 2022.

In all this, we should never forget that uniquely the local Church of England parish church exists for those who are not its members. It has been wonderful that the easing of Covid regulations has meant that visits to the schools and residential homes in the parish have begun again. We also play an active part in the life of the Diocese of Southwark, the Deanery of Merton and Churches Together in West Wimbledon. What unites us together is our worship of God and our care for others. Despite all, we remain optimistic our life will pick up again. The time we spend together on Sundays in worship and the care and welcome we seek to offer, are crucial and we pray that we will faithfully continue to be active in *SHARING GOD'S LOVE* Sunday by Sunday and week by week.

Michael Burns