

# Annual Parochial Church Meeting

## The Parochial Church Council of The Parish of Stratton St Margaret And South Marston

### Reports and Accounts For the Year Ended 31<sup>st</sup> December 2021

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## St. Margaret's churchwarden's report 2021.

Our 2021 report shows how Covid-19 has affected our church life at St. Margaret's Church and Coleview.

Again it has been a challenging time with a lot of our time spent thinking on how best we can keep our congregations safe when we were able to open for worship and how we can communicate and support each other when we could only offer online services.

On 5th January 2021 the PCC met and decided to suspend the 'live' church services in St. Margaret's and Coleview as the Covid numbers were rising again.

Rev. Elveen Mead and Rev. Mark Tidey continued to lead us in online Morning Worship 6 days each week and an online Sunday service. These services are known as 'Church at Home' and are countable towards our annual return to the Bristol Diocese.

We have all had to get used to the new way of Church and not being able to meet our Church family face to face, or if we did, it was behind masks.

Last year Bill Kingdon decided to retire as our Health and Safety Officer and we thank him for all his dedication to the role over many years. Karl Glover was elected as Bill's replacement and we wish him every success in this valuable roll.

As Church Wardens we have a duty of care to you all and to keep a church running smoothly requires a team of dedicated people. We are both grateful for the support and strength we get from our deputy Wardens David Horne and Ian Jones, Karl Glover, Health and Safety officer, and Mike and Mary Boshier, Safeguarding officers across Stratton Team Ministry and Pat and Ray England for assisting in welcoming everyone into church. At that time we felt it safer to limit the sides people to just us few until we get back to normality!

Easter Sunday 4th April 2021 - it was decided to hold a 'live communion' service albeit that the congregation only take the wafer, no wine is shared. The whole team above were involved in doing risk assessments, providing hand gels, masks, sanitising and keeping Track and Trace records in line with the Government guidelines. Safe distancing signs were displayed and we thank Georgina Martin our Church Administrator for her help with all the building signage and communications to those at home. A huge thank you to Rob South and Geoff Walters who played the organ in St. Margaret's even though for several months we could only listen to the music as no singing was allowed in church.

July 2021 Elveen formed a 'Vision Team', made up of wardens and representatives from all our churches to look at what we are doing now and what we want to do in the future. How we want to be seen in our community and to review our 'Team name'. This is an ongoing process and some meetings couldn't take place due to Covid etc.

During one of these meetings, Angela Breakspear suggested that her and Rob, her husband formed a Community Choir. Members to include people from our churches and communities who enjoy singing. Choir Practise started on Sunday evenings in October to prepare for Advent. What a joy to get together in St. Margaret's and sing even though we were socially distancing and following the guidelines. Over the months the choir has grown and Angela would welcome new members.

Monday 23rd August 2021 Triennial Inspection - one of the things each church has to comply with is their Triennial Inspection and the Wardens have to be on hand when the representatives from the Bristol Diocese visit with their task list. They checked the building outside and in, accessibility for those people with disabilities, the assets listed on our 'Schedule of Plate' from silverware and items held in the safe to the number of hymn books we have and all our legal documentation (Insurance and Fire certificates etc).

Our church services at the Coleview Community Centre could not start again until the centre reopened. Our first service, a Celtic communion, was on Sunday 26th September and in line with the guidelines, only a wafer is received. These services are held once a month and were welcomed by the congregation there, as some of them hadn't seen each other for 18 months.

St Margaret's is committed to ensuring that its church buildings, worship, activities and congregations are as welcoming and inclusive as possible, for all in our local community, and including people with disabilities.

Armistice Day November 11th 2021 - fell on a Thursday so we combined our Coffee morning with a special Communion service in St. Margaret's and we collected some of our congregation who had not been into church for over a year. It was a real privilege to give them the opportunity to meet in person within the guidelines and share communion.

Because of the Covid restrictions, we did not have floral displays in the church each week but Richard and the team provided the wonderful colourful displays for special services when we reopened.

During 2021 there were members of our congregation working behind the scenes to keep us all 'together' and they are a real blessing to us all.

To Adam Jenkins who continued to provide us with helpful daily prayers through the Prayer Diary online.

To the 'choir from home' who were recording hymns individually and sending them to Rob South to collate into the wonderful music we heard online. A huge thanks to them all.

To Georgina Martin for keeping the communications flowing either by email, telephone or mail.

Christmas Eve 2021 - was a very special time as were able to share Midnight communion in St. Margaret's in person. Thank you to our bellringers who rang in Christmas and we enjoyed a lovely service.

Although we have had so many challenges in the last year, our Ministry Team have been constantly there for us all and we thank Elveen, Mark, Lisa, Alison and Dan for their inspiration.

We have a plethora of talent across our team and we look forward to being able to involve everyone when it is safe to do so.

We pray that as we go forward in 2022, normality will return, and we will be able to meet regularly and more openly.

We have all learnt how to get through the pandemic with God's help, so let us continue to support and be a blessing to each other and our communities.

**Yours in Christ June Lewis and Richard Pflieger – Church Wardens**

## [PCC Secretary's Report for the year 2020 - 2021.](#)

Our last APCM was held in May 2021. The July 2021 PCC meeting was held by zoom, September in St Margaret's church, November and January meetings were held by zoom to save costs for heating and lighting, and to make it safer and easier for people on dark winter evenings. The March meeting was then held in the Church centre.

The Triennial Inspection of the 3 churches in our benefice took place this year, which the Churchwardens organised, and they will be able to give details on.

Richard Pflieger has been working on the alterations and repairs to the Bells and Bell Tower and plans for the introduction of a raised floor with stairs, toilets and storage area at the back of the church, to include an area for coffee and refreshments. This is no small undertaking and is still ongoing but nearing the start of the actual work. The finance for the bells and tower were specifically left to the church by a previous bell ringer.

During this year there has been a change of Deanery reporting. These are now sent from the Deanery to the PCC Secretary to circulate before the PCC Meeting. Also the PCC secretary now completes the information for the election of officers online, rather than sending a scanned copy to the Diocese.

In our September meeting we began the discussions about the Parish Share. Due to the churches being closed there has been a reduction of income. We agreed that we would do our utmost to pay, but a fair amount should be calculated. The treasurers will give more details in their reports.

Elveen set up a Vision Team to look at what we have learnt from our time with covid, what we have missed and what was important to us in the church life.

We have also looked at ways we can try to improve on climate change, and boxes for collecting waste were set up. There are also boxes for food bank in our churches. Collections of clothing taken to raise funds for the church.

A summer fair is being planned to take place in the rectory and church hall area. Ian Jones gave a presentation showing the plans and they were accepted in principle by the PCC. He and Roger Smith are working with the local council, which will give our church a higher presence in the community.

Thrift club and meeting point have started again, and this has been welcomed by people who attend.

It was with sadness that we heard Mark Tidey was leaving us and the last weekend in January was his leaving service. He had been governor at South Marston School, and Rachel Jones agreed to take on this role. Elveen has been looking for extra support

from local Lay ministers and clergy in the area, but also hoping that members of the congregation will also lead services on a regular basis going forward such as home groups and worship group.

A new team choir has been formed from all the churches, led by Angela Breakspear, with Geoff Walters assisting on piano. We have had regular practices on Sunday nights and have been able to lead the congregation and sing anthems regularly at special services. "Jerusalem Joy" was also enacted during the Passion Sunday service, including several non-choir members who just enjoyed singing. This was well received.

The music group has also been meeting for team services, and this has raised the worship to a special level. They have also led Taize services, the last one over the Easter period. Special thanks go to Rob South for electronically making recordings of a virtual choir over the covid period when we could not actually get together safely.

We have looked at the Queens Jubilee celebrations, and how to join with the local areas to enhance our presence. Also, we have been looking at a summer fare in the rectory and church hall area with the parish council. We have also looked at London Bridge arrangements.

Due to the relaxing of rules, Baptisms Weddings and funeral numbers have been increasing and it is good to know we are well considered in the local areas. Elveen is looking at possible Confirmation classes with confirmation in November this year. Chris Marchant stepped down as wedding coordinator, as arrangements are now done electronically. She was thanked for many years hard work.

A new Bump and Baby group has started up by Becky and Alex, to draw in mums with tiny babies. This was welcomed by the PCC.

Karl Glover has taken over as H&S officer and set up a spreadsheet for all the actions. This was well received.

We held our March meeting in the church hall, as things seemed back to normality. More members of the church are getting covid, including Elveen and two churchwardens. Rules are relaxing in the country overall, but we still acknowledge the need to take care of one another.

**Ros Mitchell PCC Secretary.**

## Music report for Stratton Team Ministry APCMs 2022

Since the autumn we have been getting back into the rhythm of worshipping with live music in our services, now that we finally have our freedoms back in this respect. The whole experience of online worship was not without its benefits and opportunities for creativity, but I think many of us have rediscovered how valuable live music is to our personal faith and interactions with others.

A new start is an opportunity to try new things, and we are grateful to Angela and Robert for the offer to make the Team Choir a more permanent and central feature of our worship in all the churches, with regular rehearsals to develop our skills and draw more people into our musical life. I will let Angela comment more later on the notable successes we have seen here.

The process of choosing hymns has also been upgraded a little, with a team of musicians involved in making recommendations to the clergy in advance for most services to help bring in new ideas, allow the choir to rehearse and reduce the burden on those taking services, who still have an opportunity to add their own recommendations or make changes.

Most of our organ accompaniment is currently being handled by Geoff and myself, but we are grateful to Peter, Roger and Alison for their occasional involvement in the rota, which helps give us some variety and reduce the burden a little. We have established a fairly regular routine now, made somewhat simpler by the need to minimise the number of evening services at present, though on a personal note I miss the chance to play in the evenings as the services tend to have a different character.

Music Group has continued, but is perhaps not back to full strength yet; we are only playing at the team services at present as there is no St Margaret's family service, though members of the group do help out sometimes with the South Marston and Stanton family services. I am sure our instrumental opportunities will develop further over time though as the Team Choir becomes established in all the churches and the range of hymns, songs and anthems that we tackle is widened.

**Rob South**

## Team Choir

With Elveen's, Geoff Walter's and Robert South's blessing we started a Stratton Team Ministry Choir in late October 2021. We decided on a Sunday evening practice time of 7-8:30pm and a commitment to sing once a month at the Team services and other festival services across all the team-churches. This group of musicians has grown in number and skill and I have been humbled by their enthusiasm, support and dedication.

The choir sang a very beautiful Advent Service at St Leonard's as our first "gig" and followed that with a well-attended successful Christmas Carol service at St Margaret's with some of the anthems chosen by choir members.

We are planning to perform a wide range of music and musical styles, from Renaissance Polyphony, all the way through to arrangements of modern worship songs. Our plans for 2022 include presenting a musical telling the Easter Story on Palm Sunday and Choral Evensong in the Summer

My thanks go to Geoff for his continued support and good humour for whatever music I throw at him, and also to the two Roberts – South and Breakspear for their assistance in running the choir.

We are always looking for new members – no musical knowledge necessary, and no auditions. If you like to sing and would like to join in – just come along.

**Angela Breakspear – Choir Director**

## Care Homes Report 2021 for the APCM in April 2022

Due to the Covid restrictions the team have not been able to visit monthly during 2021.

The 4 homes we normally visit are Church View and Wemyss Lodge Nursing Homes and Herbert Harvey Court and Midwinter Gardens Retirement Housing Complexes.

However, we do keep in contact by telephone or post cards through the main doors and in the case of Church View via Facebook.

### Christmas Carol services:

By prior arrangement, we were able to sing carols at Church View and Midwinter Gardens, both within each Care Homes' recommended guidelines. Sadly we were unable to go into in Herbert Harvey Court and Wemyss Lodge.

### Church View - Thursday 9th December

Some members of the team were able to go and sing carols in a gazebo in the garden and the residents were sat inside the downstairs lounge with the doors open.

One of the residents who is wheelchair bound and used to come regularly to our communion services, insisted on being wheeled outside so he could join in.

A group of over 17 people attended and everyone thoroughly enjoyed the afternoon

### Midwinter Gardens - Monday 13th December

Because they have a large lounge with plenty of opening windows, the team could stand one end and the residents at the far end. They provided refreshments safely afterwards and a very enjoyable afternoon was had by all.

A group of over 25 people attended.

Christmas services in the Care Homes are a joyous occasion and we are truly blessed to have a wonderful team. Our grateful thanks go to Geoff Walters for bringing his keyboard, playing and arranging the carols and to Janet Freeman and Ken Kirkman, who joined us for the carol services. It is so special to see the residents singing the carols.

And a huge thank you to our regular Care Home Team members -

Mary Carter, Graham Haines, Pearl Jell, June Lewis, Lisa Lodwick, Chris Marchant, Dan Read and Jeanne Read and Geoff Walters.

Sadly at the moment, even though some restrictions have been lifted, we are not able to go into the Care Homes as a group. However we are still keeping in touch and as soon as we are able, we all look forward to getting back to regular visits safely in the next few months.

Initially we may only be able to go in and sing hymns and offer prayers but will be checking with the Care Home Managers regularly to see when we can share communion with some of the residents.

It is a great privilege to be able to visit all 4 of the homes and we get as much pleasure out of the services as do the residents.

If anyone would like to join our team at any time, please let one of us know.

Thank you to everyone who prays for us and supports us in this worthwhile mission.

**June Lewis and Dan Read**

## Safeguarding Report for the APCM April 2022

Since the last report in April 2021, Mary and Mike Boshier, Joint Parish Safeguarding Officers (PSOs), have been keeping a close eye on all aspects of safeguarding for the Parishes of St Margaret's Stratton, St Leonards Stanton, St Mary Magdalene South Marston and Coleview. Aably assisting us are the 'eyes and ears' in the parishes, Chris and Anne Pope for Stanton and Mary Crichton for South Marston. The 'eyes and ears' are the close personal local contact in the churches who can pass safeguarding concerns onto us. We thank them for their vigilance.

We have been keeping all members of the two PCCs current with their DBS certificates. There were a number that needed renewal during this year. It is a Diocesan requirement that all members of a PCC have a current and valid DBS certificate and has undertaken Safeguarding training at C0 and Foundation Level training. The DBS Certificate and the training should now be renewed every 3 years

A Safeguarding Report is presented to every PCC meeting for both the Stratton and South Marston PCC and the Stanton Fitzwarren PCC to keep all members up to date with safeguarding developments and information.

The Parish Safeguarding Officers welcome the fact that regular meetings are now taking place with the Priest in Charge to keep the church leadership up to-date with all aspects of Safeguarding.

In the Stratton Team Ministry, we are particularly lucky to have the services of a Mental Health First Aider (MHFA) available to help with any members of the church communities who find themselves in mental crisis. Contact details for the MHFA are available from the Parish Office and the Stratton Team Ministry Web site.

In order to keep all church leaders and PCC members in touch with safeguarding developments at Diocesan and National level, there will be some Foundation Safeguarding Training taking place in May.

The thrust of our work continues to ensure that all members of all the churches are safe to worship and go about their church business without risk. To that end, Mike and Mary would ask every member of every church, both leaders and congregation, to recognise their personal responsibility in making Safeguarding their concern. There is no option to leave a concern to someone else. If there is an identified issue, it must be passed on to the PSOs to be investigated and acted upon as a matter of urgency. "If you see something, say something" should be a point of action for everybody.

Mary and I would ask all of you to observe and exercise an attitude of informed vigilance. In that way, everyone will be as safe as possible. If you have a cause for concern no matter how trivial you think it might be, please talk to the 'eyes and ears' in your church or contact the PSOs Mike or Mary via the parish web site email address or call on 07799835437.

**Mike and Mary Boshier  
Parish Safeguarding Officers (PSOs) April 2021**

## Annual Report from St Margaret's Social Committee

A very quiet year again due to the pandemic.

We had a Picnic Lunch in August which was our first get together in 2021.

In December we had a very successful Wreath Making Evening. We all enjoyed mulled wine and mince pies and all went home with a wreath to hang in our porches.

Sadly Mark left us for pastures new in February and we put on a Buffet Lunch after the Sunday Morning Service.

Hopefully we will be able to organise more Social Events during this year as we return to some semblance of normality.

**Carole Horne  
Committee Member.**

## 5th Swindon Boys Brigade.

We started face-to-face meetings after last Easter holidays, as soon as we were allowed by the National Youth Agency and Boy's Brigade HQ. We had managed to keep in touch with the Boys and their families during the lock-downs, sending activities through email and post. At our last meeting in July 2021, Elveen was our guest of honour at our annual Presentation evening, where we presented the Boys with their badges and awards. It was good to see the Boys families once again, although the evening was not quite the same as previous years, as we did not have a display or any refreshments afterwards. We have run our programme for all the sections and have taken part in various Gloucestershire Battalion events during the two terms, the football competition in Tewkesbury, Battalion Church parade, the Swimming Gala and, recently, the Senior/Company Hike competition around Northleach. The Battalion Junior camp takes place during the May half-term holiday, the first time in three years. We will be taking three Junior Boys from this Company to the Boy's Brigade training Centre at Broadleas in Devon. Unfortunately, we now have fewer Boys. A few have moved away and due to Covid, some parents did not allow their sons to return to meetings. This session has been a real struggle. We have a dedicated team of staff and helpers and I thank them for all their hard work and commitment during this difficult time. We were saddened to learn of the passing of Helene Edwards in January. She was officer-in-charge of the Junior Section for many years. She was deeply committed to the Boy's Brigade and will be missed by officers and Boys that knew her. We are grateful to the Clergy and congregation of St. Margaret's Church for all their continued support of the 5th Swindon Boy's Brigade Company.

**Teresa DGLISH.**

## Grange Drive Home Group

"Unfortunately, due to Covid, we've only had a handful of meetings in the past year. We did manage to meet a few times in September and October 2021, and had some interesting studies looking at the life of Peter. It was so nice to be able to have Christian fellowship for those few weeks, and we also enjoyed a lovely Christmas meal together, but then the new wave of Covid hit, so we decided it wasn't a good idea to gather together in a home. However, we still see each other at church services, and we hope to start meeting as a home group again fairly soon."

**Lisa Lodwick**

## Saturday Scene

Unfortunately due to Covid we were not able to meet for much of 2021. We still kept in touch with our families via our Facebook page and by emailing them each month.

Happily in October we felt able to open up again and waited with baited breath as to which families would return remembering that the children would be 18 months older than the last time we saw them! Thankfully our previous regulars returned and also a new family, and with Covid safe measures in place we were so pleased to be able to meet with them again.

Our numbers have not been as high as before but the atmosphere has been great and with fewer numbers it is easier to be Covid safe. We have introduced moving to the church for our worship session which has gone down well and was pleased that Elveen joined us to lead these sessions for October and November.

Saturday Scene is part of the Stratton Team Ministry church and as such we need to make them feel part of our church family. It would be lovely to see some of the congregations visiting us to see what is going on and more helpers would be lovely. We meet on the 2nd Saturday of each month apart from August.

Although it happened in January 2022, so really is not part of the 2021 report, we cannot omit how brilliant it has been having Mark with us for each session leading the music. We said a sad farewell to him at our January meeting – he will be sorely missed.

**Kate Mitchell**  
**Saturday Scene coordinator**

## Electoral Roll Report for APCM 2022

On 23 April 2022 there were 104 people on the roll.

In April 2021 there were 108.

In the past year:

2 people have passed away,

2 people have left the parish and

2 people have stopped attending and did not reply to letters.

2 people have joined the parish and the register.

There will be a full (six-yearly) revision in 2023.

**Andrew Martin**  
**Electoral Roll Officer**

## St Margaret's Flower Arrangers

The flower arrangers for St Margaret's Church are a group of 10 at the present time.

We had to work with the restrictions of Covid during 2021 due to when there were services. We tried to arrange for the festivals during the year making sure we were social distanced and also safe re when in Church arranging.

We arranged flowers for Easter, Pentecost, Harvest and Advent/Christmas with colour schemes Advent this year working along with the theme of Angels which were displayed in the church.

We were unable to have our Flower demonstration coffee and cake morning due to restrictions.

If you would like to find out more about arranging flowers in Church please have a word with

**Richard Pflieger**

## St Margaret's Church cleaners.

Due to the covid restrictions we have not had a regular rota for church cleaning. Thank you very much to all those who have kept the church clean and tidy. As things are beginning to get back to some normality I will make the annual rota. Again if there is anyone would like to help out and go on the rota, please let me know.

**Pat England**

## St Margaret's Church building report 2021

We started the year looking to rehang the bells and to carry out work around the Tower area to improve existing tower chamber by removing the old Victorian Chimney raise the ring chamber up by 2.5 Metres so that a toilet and storage area could be accommodated below and also a kitchen area to the right of the Tower at the back of the church along with removing a few pews in the area to allow access to these facilities. We would also carry out the completion of the retiling of the South Roof, Porch and Tower roof. Along with this work we would undertake the work mentioned in the quinquennial report carried out in 2020.

We had chosen Taylor Bells to carry out the Bell work.

We continued with our architect Jessica Holland of David Install Architects only to find out in June 2021 that Jessica was leaving the Firm. The Building committee decided to look for a new Architect with church work credentials and chose Christian Randall of Wantage in July 2021 who had experience in work in Churches in Oxfordshire, Berkshire and Wiltshire.

The race was on to produce drawings, write findings and present to the DAC in late September (the committee advising the diocese). Following this we had a member of the committee visit St Margaret's Church to look at the proposals submitted.

We were asked to relook at the Drawing proposals to give a more contemporary look and this is where we are at this present time.

We hope if approved to be able to apply for a faculty and then look for firms to tender for the proposed work.

So far it has taken 2 years to get to this stage and we hope that this will speed up during 2022.

**Richard Pflieger**

## St Margaret's Pre-School Annual Report

St Margaret's Pre-School continues to offer affordable childcare within the heart of the Stratton community. We are based within the St Margaret's Centre and open Monday to Friday. We have spaces for children aged 3-4 years old and limited spaces for 2-year-olds. We encourage the children to enjoy a range of activities following the Birth to Five Curriculum.

We have continued to remain open during the pandemic and watched our children enjoy day to day activities which have progressed their development whilst trying to keep life as normal as possible for them!

**From All the staff at St Margaret's Pre-School.**

## Annual Report from Stratton St Margaret's Baby & Toddler Group

Stratton St Margaret's Baby and Toddler Group meet in the St Margaret's Centre, on Wednesday and Friday mornings from 10.00am until 11.30am. Providing a small meeting place for local parents and carers to socialise and bring their little ones to play, the group caters for children aged from Birth up to school age. A home corner, cars, tent and tunnel, dolls, books, puzzles and a baby corner are regularly on offer and the children have enjoyed a variety of crafts each week with activities such as play dough, painting, colouring and making cards and models.

The group has been in some form of existence for over 30 years with new parents taking over the running of the group when children start school. The children have the opportunity to socialise, learn to share and make new friendships. The parent/carers benefit too. The group can be a good way to integrate into your community.

Approximately 15 - 25 children attend each session, at the group parents/carers stay with their children, and are responsible for them at all times. We charge just £2 per family for the session; this money goes towards the cost of renting the hall, providing refreshments for the adults and, healthy snacks, crafts and toys for the children.

This past year has been very different, we have been able to open to limited numbers. The numbers had to be controlled via a booking system. The need and demand for the group has increased considerably in the last year. Added tasks of writing risk assessments and reading up to date legislation from community groups, church, education and catering.

**Georgina Martin,  
Volunteer Mum**

## Coleview Report - Sunday services at the Coleview Community Centre for 2021

As with all the churches in the Stratton Team Ministry, our Sunday services at the Coleview Community Centre have been hugely affected by Covid.

We had to suspend services when the Centre closed to the general public and our own PCC had decided to suspend all 'live' services at St. Margaret's Church as well.

Rev. Elveen Mead and Rev. Mark Tidey continued to lead us in online Morning Worship 6 days each week and an online Sunday service. These services are known as 'Church at Home' and are countable towards our annual return to the Bristol Diocese.

We have all had to get used to the new way of Church and not being able to meet our Church family face to face, or if we did, it was behind masks.

Some of our Pastoral Team kept in touch by telephone or cards with those from the Coleview Community church as some of them do not have access to a computer to watch the online services.

Sunday 26th September 2021 was the first service we held back at Coleview Community Centre and it was so lovely to see so many people there. Most of the congregation hadn't seen each other for 18 months, they had never met Elveen face to face and hadn't taken communion in all that time so it was a real blessing.

We ensured that sanitisers and masks were available inside the room. To ensure we kept to the social distancing guidelines we did not provide refreshments.

Elveen started a Celtic Communion for Coleview and services will be monthly on the fourth Sunday of each month. This helps to keep everyone safe and also ensure that we have a member of the Ministry Team available.

The service has been received very warmly and in line with the Diocesan guidelines, we only receive the wafers. To help with social distancing Elveen takes the communion to each member in their seat.

We have been privileged to have an organist even though singing was limited and behind masks initially.

During 2021 our Ministry Team, Elveen, Mark, Lisa, Alison and Dan have continued to inspire us with their love and support.

We pray that as we go forward in 2022, normality will return and we will be able to meet regularly and more openly.

We have all learnt how to get through the pandemic with God's help, so let us continue to support and be a blessing to each other and our communities.

**With many blessings -June Lewis, Church Warden**

## [Churchwarden's Report for South Marston 2021-22](#)

In April 2021 at our Annual Parochial Church Meeting, I was elected Churchwarden when Richard Sansum stood down from the post at St Mary Magdalene Church. Richard took the post over thirty years ago and has worked tirelessly looking after our beautiful village church ever since. As a Church we all owe a great deal of thanks to Richard and Pat for their dedication, which continues. Richard is an extremely hard act to follow and I would like to thank him for helping me with everything I need to know. I am on a huge learning curve at the moment and enjoying the challenge, most of the time.

I have many thank yous to say to many people who have supported me during the last year and I will do so as I make my way through our 2021-22 church story.

This last church year has been another strange year, as it included a time of lockdown during the Covid situation. This meant that we were unable to have services in the church for a while, and when they did begin again, singing was not permitted. However, things are now back to normal and we can happily sing at our services.

We opened our church for private prayer two days a week as soon as we were able, following the last lockdown in April 2021 and it is now open every day between 9.30 and 5.00.p.m.

Earlier in the year we had an Ecclesiastical Church Inspection, followed closely by the Triennial Inspection, both of which went very well.

When services began again, we celebrated a wedding in the church and at least three more are planned for this next church year.

There was one baptism this year but sadly our dear church member, Isabel Hone was buried in the churchyard and there were also two internments of ashes.

During the Interregnum and between the lockdowns we moved our services from 9.30 to 11.00 a.m. as a temporary measure. In the summer a request from the congregation was made to move them back to 9.30. However, in preparation for the time when we would only have one priest to take services, we had to cut our services from three services a month to two; one Holy Communion Service a month on the second Sunday at 9.30 and then a lay-led All Age Worship service on the first Sunday of the month, which we decided would be at 10.00 a.m. Cutting our third service meant that Coleview could have a service once a month at 11.00 a.m. We are made very welcome there too.

I would like to thank Mary Crichton and Dorinda Balchin for all the support and help they have given me with talks and activities and everything to make an All-Age Worship Service happen. I am pleased to be able to say we have a joyful congregation for our services but would like to see more young people and families joining us.

During the year we welcomed Rachel and her two children into our congregation and were delighted to welcome her new baby just in time to play the part of Jesus at Christmas. We also welcomed Michelle to our small but growing congregation.

We restarted Meeting Point in October and it is now taking place every third Saturday each month from 1000 – 1200. The numbers have gradually increased and the popularity of our bacon baps goes on together with the wonderful cakes made by Pat and Richard and Will.

PCC and Standing Committee Meetings have continued during the year, even if at times they had to be by Zoom.

We had wonderful online services throughout the Covid situation and beyond, delivered by Mark and Elveen. These attracted large numbers. Morning Worship continues online Monday to Wednesday at 9.00 a.m.

Thanks go to Alison Burston who led our Remembrance Service in the church, which was followed by a ceremony at the War Memorial for the naming of the fallen and the laying of the wreaths, at which there was a very good village attendance.

In January we said, 'farewell' to our curate, Reverend Mark Tidey, who had spent the last four and a half years with our Team, giving so much energy to our services and all those he met. We were so grateful for all he did to help us here at South Marston in that time, ensuring that we could continue to have our regular services. He enabled us to have our Carol Service as usual in church and Christingle Service which we held on the Glebe by the Christmas tree, where a happy crowd gathered, in the rain. Mark served as Ex officio Governor at South Marston School during the whole time he was here, doing a fantastic job in so many ways and keeping the links between the school and church thriving.

His place as Ex Officio Governor has been taken by Rachel Jones, a member of our church congregation. She will join Mary Crichton who is a serving Foundation Governor at the School, together with Karl Glover. We are very grateful to them for taking those roles and helping to keep the church and school together.

Unfortunately, South Marston School were not able to come into the church for their usual services and Christmas Plays for obvious reasons. Elveen and Mark continued to keep the connection with the Church and School by Zoom during the difficult times. We were thrilled though to welcome the school back for their Easter Celebration led by Elveen. The church was packed and the children gave us a wonderful service. One to remember.

Our Church Team Services at Easter were wonderful and Easter was topped for us with an 8 o'clock Holy Communion Service, when we were joined by some of our Team Choir. It was a joyful celebration and a wonderful way to celebrate Easter Day. Elveen and I were able to take Home Communion to church members in the village before Easter.

Our Home Group has not met during the last year as the circumstances have been difficult, but we hope to begin again very shortly. Do let me know if you would like to join the group.

Sadly, we are currently unable to ring our church bells, as one of the supports has a crack which could create a dangerous situation if the bells were rung. I would love to hear our bells ringing out over South Marston but sadly, because of the amount of money required to repair the support and reset them, we will be without bells for a long time.

We have a regular input to our Community News, which is now distributed every two months. All our services and functions are listed there.

My thanks to our fantastic cleaning team who keep our church polished and gleaming. Thanks also to our lovely flower ladies who do wonders to brighten up our church with their decorations, bringing floral joy. I must say thank you to Richard for our beautiful Easter Garden.

Thanks to Colin and Jenny McEwen for keeping the grass in extremely good order on the Glebe.

Thanks also to Will Hiscocks for providing music when we could not have an organist at various times through the government restrictions. Fortunately, we can now welcome back Rob and Alison to play for us, for which we are very grateful and they encourage us to sing even better.

Thanks to Dorinda for attending Standing Committee meetings, firstly on behalf of Richard and then with me in this last year. I would also like to thank Dorinda for keeping our website up to date. Thanks to Will for his duties as dedicated Treasurer and for all the additional tasks he undertakes, including maintaining our ancient boiler and getting it any treatment, it needs. We really appreciate having a warm church in the winter.

Thanks to everyone else who has been there for me, including Richard, Will, Dorinda, Mary, Tina and everyone in the congregation who are prepared to help with anything to keep our church going. I would like to thank Elveen for all the support and guidance she gives me and for being here for us. Thanks go to Alex too.

My first year as Churchwarden has been a very interesting and challenging experience for me. We would normally have two Churchwardens so if anyone feels they would like to join me, and with a view to planning for the future, there is a very warm welcome for you.

**Diane Whitford**  
**St Mary Magdalene Church Warden**

## South Marston Tower Report 2021

The bells at South Marston have remained silent due to the Covid pandemic and the tenor bell needing repair.

Just before the first Covid-19 lockdown, the bells were inspected by the local bell ringing association.

The tenor bell is mounted on a wooden block, the other five bells being mounted on a metal frame. The wooden block has a split/crack in it (which has been present for the last 20 years). Due to health and safety, we were advised not to ring the bell, until a more comprehensive inspection had been made by a bell expert.

Covid hit, which has basically prohibited the use and inspection of the bells.

The cost to repair the bell would be in the region of £15k. However further work has been identified which would need to be done in the long run. It would be beneficial for all works to be carried out at the same time, which would be in the region of £35-£40k in total.

It is hoped that, now society is opening up once again, further inspections may result in allowing the bells to be rung again, without the need for immediate repairs.

Finding the money for the full repairs is daunting, especially as the church own finances are in such a dire state.

**William Hiscocks**

## Treasurer's Report – St Margaret's Church

A big thank you to everyone who has continued to support St Margaret's Church financially during 2021.

We almost managed to meet our pledge for the Parish Share this year but we were £1,000 in the end.

With things returning to normal in 2022 we hope to meet our commitment.

The Parish Giving Scheme is by far the best way to give to the Church as it cuts down on our bank charges and provides a regular source of income. Please ask if you would like to join this scheme so that the work in St Margaret's can continue.

**Mark Whitfield**

## Treasurer's Report - St Mary Magdalene Church

The final accounts are being prepared at the time of writing this report, but will show a fall in income of just over £400 for the year. A small amount over the year, but in contrast some £4200 from 2019 and nearly £6000 from 2018. This resulted in an overall loss of £907.

Covid has had a major hit to our finances over the last 2 years. The church having been closed for long spells and the use of the church for weddings and funerals, receipts for church activities are virtually non-existent.

To try and counter this we stopped paying the diocesan quota in September, 'saving' over £3700 of outgoing payments. To continue payment would have made us insolvent.

With the support of Elveen and David Horne, we have agreed a quota of £4000 with the diocese for 2022. This is only a temporary fix; the church has to pay its fair share if it's to remain viable.

My thanks go to the small number of people who give regularly to the church, either on a monthly, weekly or yearly basis. Although small in number, it is you who allow this church to remain open. There are always increased financial pressures on any organisation, the church is no different.

This is the first year since I have been treasurer, that the quota has not been paid in full. However, with people moving away, people passing on, less services, it was only a matter of time that we had to give less. Where does this leave us in the future?

2022 will be a challenge to meet all our fiscal demands, as with all business and personal finances. Costs are increasing in all sectors and the church is not immune. The church is only kept open by volunteers and the generosity of its community. Support it or lose it, is the bottom line. The church may not be there when you need it the most.

Please hold St Mary's in your prayers for the challenges that lay ahead this year.

**William Hiscocks**  
**Treasurer**

# The Parish of Stratton Saint Margaret with South Marston

## Financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2021

### General Funds Receipts & Payments Account

	Notes	2021 £	2020 £
<b>Receipts</b>			
Voluntary receipts	1	74,015	74,015
Receipts from activities for generating funds	2	2,252	830
Receipts from Church activities - fees		<u>4,065</u>	<u>2,239</u>
		81,058	77,084
<b>Payments</b>			
Grants	3	1,058	472
Church activities		76,630	82,432
Church management and administration		<u>5,661</u>	<u>9,013</u>
		83,349	91,917
<b>Excess of Payments over Receipts</b>		2,291	14,833
<b>Bank current and deposit accounts 1 January</b>		<u>12,924</u>	<u>27,757</u>
<b>Bank current and deposit accounts 31 December</b>		<u>10,633</u>	<u>12,924</u>

## The Parish of Stratton Saint Margaret with South Marston

Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2021

### Designated & Restricted Funds

St. Margaret's Church

	Designated Funds		Restricted Funds				Choir Fund	Organ Fund	John Cornwell Legacy	Totals
	Rector's Discretion Fund	Building Fund	Sound System	Day Window	Restoration Fund	Flower Fund				
Interest	0	0	0	0	20	0	0	0	123	143
Receipts	0	0	11	0	19	10	0	0	0	40
	0	0	11	0	39	10	0	0	123	183
Payments	0	0	0	0	0	252	0	0	2,275	2,527
	0	0	11	0	39	-242	0	0	-2,152	-2,344
Balance 1 January 2021	200	5,408	2,822	286	36,013	1,246	2,390	7,940	230,859	287,164
Balance 31 December 2021	200	5,408	2,833	286	36,052	1,004	2,390	7,940	228,707	284,820

St. Mary Magdalene Church

	Restricted Funds		Totals
	Fabric Fund	Bell Fund	
Interest	1	0	1
Receipts	5,000	0	5,000
	5,001	0	5,001
Payments	375	10	385
	4,626	-10	4,616
Balance 1 January 2020	730	3,082	3,812
Balance 31 December 2020	5,356	3,072	3,428

# The Parish of Stratton Saint Margaret with South Marston

## Financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2021

Statement of Assets and Liabilities at 31 December 2021

### Monetary Assets

				Totals	Totals
				2021	2020
				£	£
	General	Designated Restricted			
	Funds	Funds	Funds		
	£	£	£		
Bank current accounts	10,546	5,608	10,142	26,296	26,472
Bank deposit accounts			2,669	2,669	2,668
Central Board of Finance			274,829	274,829	274,685
Cash in Hand	87			87	75
	<u>10,633</u>	<u>5,608</u>	<u>285,368</u>	<u>303,881</u>	<u>303,900</u>

### Debtors

income Tax reclaim	3,400	5,150
Team expenses	225	225
Advertising in magazine	90	90
Fees	236	146
Value Added Tax	0	1,432
Gas	1,027	721
	<u>4,978</u>	<u>7,764</u>

### Creditors

Door mat hire	227	216
	117	0
Hire of village hall	56	0
Electricity	75	15
Water	15	65
Lightning Conductor	150	0
	<u>640</u>	<u>296</u>
Stocks	168	168

The financial statements include £0 (£5,502 in 2020) paid to Mrs Pat England the Parish Administrator who is a member of the PCC.

The financial statements of the PCC have been prepared in accordance with the Church Accounting Regulations 2006 using the Receipts and Payments basis.

Approved by the Parochial Church Council on 8th March 2022 and signed on its behalf by

  
 Rev'd Eileen Mead

  
 Diane Whitford

  
 Richard Pflieger

# The Parish of Stratton Saint Margaret with South Marston

## Financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2021

### Notes to the General Fund Receipts & Payments Account

	2021	2020
<b>1) Voluntary receipts</b>		
Gift Aid planned giving	45,874	44,831
Non-Gift Aid planned giving	10,011	8,957
Collections & other giving	3,914	3,072
Income Tax recovered	11,750	14,681
Thursday Coffee Mornings	543	1,025
Sundry donations	2,649	1,449
	<u>74,741</u>	<u>74,015</u>
<b>2) Receipts from activities for generating funds</b>		
Fund raising activities	2,073	639
Sale of magazines	179	191
	<u>2,252</u>	<u>830</u>
<b>3) Grants</b>		
Church overseas	0	282
Home missions	1,008	180
Secular charities	50	10
	<u>1,058</u>	<u>472</u>
<b>4) Church activities</b>		
Diocesan parish share	61,901	66,680
Church running expenses	4,147	4,603
Church maintenance	1,912	958
Insurance	4,044	3,920
Cost of services	1,185	1,163
Young families work	28	77
Team expenses	3,013	4,711
Fund raising & publicity	400	320
	<u>76,630</u>	<u>82,432</u>

**INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT**  
**TO THE TRUSTEES OF STRATTON SAINT MARGARET WITH SOUTH MARSTON**  
**PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL**

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of Stratton Saint Margaret with South Marston Parochial Church Council (the PCC) for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> December 2021.

**Responsibilities and Basis of Report**

As the charity trustees of the PCC you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ('the Act').

I report in respect of my examination of the PCC's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

**Independent Examiner's Statement**

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe that in any material respect :

- (1) accounting records were not kept in respect of the PCC as required by section 130 of the Act ; or
- (2) the accounts do not accord with those records.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this respect in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.



Paul J Crowley FCA  
Derrick Newman Limited  
29 Bath Road  
Swindon  
SN1 4AS

11 March 2022

## Diocesan Synod Annual Report

The Diocesan Synod, which is the primary, elected representative body drawn from across the Diocese of Bristol, met four times in 2021: in March, June and then following the elections for a new Synod in September and November. As well as hearing about and discussing a wide range of areas of the Church's work, it helps formulate and approve policy and the diocesan budget and debates important local and national issues affecting the Church.

### **Transforming Church Together**

A large part of the Synods work during 2021 was focussed on Transforming Church Together. In March the Synod took part in the consultation and engagement process that took place right across the Diocese. At its June meeting the early findings of that consultation process were shared with the Synod and members had the opportunity to reflect on these, feeding back their ideas which led into the development of the Vision, Purpose and Values. In November the Archdeacons led an activity introducing the Synod to the emerging strategic priorities.

### **Diocesan finances**

The Synod's role approving the financial plans of the Diocesan Board of Finance was part of both the June and November meetings. In June Andrew Lucas, Chair of the Diocesan Board of Finance, presented the 2020 Annual Report and Financial Statements and updated the Synod about the performance of the organisation in strategic as well as financial terms. In November, he presented the 2022 Budget for approval and Synod members participated in round table discussions to follow up any clarifying points and share views on the proposed budget. Andrew reflected on the impact of the pandemic on the DBF's finances, long-term issues of affordability for the Diocese, the future impact of the new strategy and the strength of the DBF's balance sheet. He also highlighted the tension between the desire to balance the budget and the need to invest in future ministry, with a large part of the projected deficit of £681k in 2022 being due our continuing commitment to investing in future ministry. With prayerful consideration, the Synod approved budgeted expenditure of £9.712m in 2022.

### **Other reports and discussions included:**

The **Annual Safeguarding Report** in June, presented by Andy Wills, Independent Chair who spoke to synod about the considerable developments by the National Safeguarding Team following the publication of the report of the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse (IICSA), and media attention on a number of issues.

As the **Creating Connections** strategy came to the end of its active period during the year and the Synod heard reports from some of the initiatives and projects which had been started to support it.

Bishop Lee recapped that **investing in curacies** was one of the main strategic choices under Creating Connections, which committed the Diocese to growing

vocations to ordained ministry by 50%. This was in line with a national Church of England initiative in the light of the gap between ordinations and retirements. A 50% increase would largely meet overall stipendiary clergy deployment plans nationwide.

The Synod heard from Liz Townend (Diocesan Director of Education), who gave a presentation on education work in the Diocese and specifically the growth of **new church schools**.

Two years after Diocesan Synod declared a **climate emergency** in November 2019, Clare Fussell (Diocesan Environmental Officer) gave an update report to Diocesan Synod members on progress