

**St Michael & All Angels, Bishop's Cleeve
with
The Ascension, Southam**



**Annual Parochial Church Meeting
Sunday 27th June 2021**

**3.00pm
*in St Michael's Church***

Reports & Financial Statement



St Michael and All Angels at Bishop's Cleeve with the Church of the Ascension at Southam

Agenda for the Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM) 27th June 2021 3pm in St Michael's church

Opening Prayers and Welcome

A register will be taken of those present, and apologies will be noted.

VESTRY MEETING

Re-election of our Churchwardens for the coming year.

ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING

1. Approval of 2020 Minutes
The minutes of the APCM on 17 October 2020 to be approved and signed. (see draft minutes in separate document)
2. Matters Arising

Reports

Church members please note that we have been asked to keep our APCM as short as possible this year, to limit the time spent together in Church. Please note therefore that reports will not be read out at the meeting. All reports are included in the APCM booklet and are published on the website. Any questions for clarity or discussion should be sent in advance of the APCM by email to PCC Secretary Zoe Homes zhomes@stmichaelsbishopsclleeve.co.uk by midday on Saturday 26 June if possible, please.

3. Electoral Role (page 3)
4. PCC Secretary's Report (page 3-4)
5. Audited Accounts and Financial Report (page 5-7)
6. Church Warden's Report on the Fabric, Goods and Ornaments of the Parish (page 8-12)
7. Deanery Synod Report (page 12-13)
8. Safeguarding Report (page 13-14)

Additional reports on the life of the Church over the last year can be found on the St Michael's website.

Elections

9. Elections to the PCC

Participation

10. Pre-submitted Questions

Closing Prayers



Electoral Roll

At the APCM last year we had 235 members listed. Our main month for adding new members is April, and this was difficult this year due to social distancing in Church and the office being closed. The roll now stands at 233. Six names have been removed and four new members added.

If you have not filled in an application yet but would like to be on the Electoral Roll as a member of our Church family, forms are available online, and from me. Please let me know if you would like to be included in the roll.

Ro Hunt

PCC Secretary's Report 2020-21

Please note: This report covers the period between the 2020 APCM, held in October 2020, and this APCM, in June 2021.

PCC have met five times in this period, in December, January, February, April and June. All meetings have been conducted online, via Zoom to begin with, and more recently via Teams as part of the Church's Digital Transformation Project.

PCC members also met for an extraordinary meeting in February 2021 specifically to discuss the Church's plans to return to corporate worship. This provided the Church with a framework to restart in-Church services when we felt comfortable and sensible, and which meant that a quick decision to run services for Easter 2021 was possible.

PCC business has very much been aligned with the mission of our Church in this period, and PCC members have been very much behind the desire to bring health and wellbeing issues and its relationship with faith to the heart of teaching and action. As part of this, PCC met (online) on two occasions for fellowship and ministry, considering our own personal wellbeing, how we can best serve our Church and the Lord, and bringing PCC business to God in prayer.

More recently, PCC have been discussing what we as a Church can do to better look after our environment, and have agreed to sign up to Eco Church, a project to bring action in being good stewards of God's Kingdom. This will be one of the strands of focus for us over the next set of PCC meetings, and we will be inviting all Church members to get involved in related teaching and activities on this topic over the coming months.

Over this period, PCC has:

- Supported Church Leadership Team on the introduction of a strong wellbeing theme to Church teaching and activities.
- Continued to support leaders of all our Parish Churches in their delivery of online services and activities on Facebook and Zoom, as well as supporting engagement with those in our Parish who have been unable to join online services.
- Kept a close eye on and gave prayerful consideration to the Church's financial situation, and as such, made shrewd decisions on monies spent. This has included making an application for funds to the COVID Recovery Scheme, negotiating fees where possible, and closing old investment accounts so that money can be used.
- Approved the Financial Handbook as the framework for managing PCC finances moving forward, and worked with our Treasurer through the Financial Action Plan.
- Discussed and developed the framework to restart in-person worship when it was safe and sensible to do so, which was enacted in time for our Easter services.
- Completed the required Safeguarding training run by the Diocese.
- Worked with the Church Wardens to ensure proper stewardship and use of our Church facilities.



- Approved the creation of a new Church Memorial Book, and put forward a number of Church members to be the first to be included.
- Approved the Church's Digital Transformation Project, which included providing Church Employees with new laptops, and moving to an online Microsoft working environment for Church matters.
- Restarted conversations with the Diocese regarding the Glebe Land housing project, and committed to working with them further on the Coming Home Report.
- Signed up to Eco Church, a project to focus our minds on looking after our environment as individuals and as a community.
- Approved the repair of the Clock chimes – we all look forward to hearing the chimes once again once the work has been completed.

We have especially enjoyed speaking at length about and celebrating the many activities and projects being run in and round our Church, which both build faith and offer service. The pandemic has brought its challenges, there is no doubt about that, but we have seen the work of God continue on regardless in our community.

In everything we have done and every topic we have discussed over the last seven months, we have done our best to always look to Heaven for guidance, use our gifts to serve God as both individuals and as a group, been graceful in our discussions, and prayerful in our decision making. The year ahead will no doubt continue to present its challenges, but we hope and pray it will bring continued and new developments in our mission to bring Jesus to those around us.

Finally, my thanks to all PCC Members, and especially those who sit on Standing Committee, for their guidance and patience as I took on the role of PCC Secretary. May God bless you and the work that you do at St Michael's.

Prepared by Zoe Homes, PCC Secretary, June 2021

Minutes of PCC meetings are available on request to the PCC Secretary by email.



APCM Report – Finance

The Statement of Financial Activities shows that the income for 2020 dropped dramatically and expenditure remained broadly the same as last year resulting in a **deficit of £47,350**.

Income

The 2020 Parish Giving Scheme income was broadly the same as 2019 but the restrictions imposed due to COVID 19 resulted in a significant drop to income from in-service collections which was compounded by the absence of a gift day event in 2020. Although extensive use of the Job Retention Scheme (furlough) created £19k of alternative income, the **overall loss of income totalled £44,144**.

Expenditure

The headline expenditure remained consistent with 2019 figures at £279k but the running costs did drop as opportunity efficiencies were made in many areas. The top three expenses in 2020 were:

1. The continued commitment to pay 100% of our Parish Share to the Diocese. This amount rose from £99,164 to **£107,105** for 2020 including the Southam contribution of £11,120.
2. The commitment to pay our employees 100% of their salaries whilst furloughed. Salaries were 2% higher than the previous year at **£69,592** and the accounts now show the salaries of all employees together whereas CFM salaries were previously fragmented across the accounts.
3. The opportunity to undertake large elements of the Phase 2A development work was seized. The lighting for the triptych, the custom designed wooden storage in the south transept, and the Audio-Visual equipment were all installed at a cost of **£37,289**. These funds were predominantly restricted and could not be re-purposed for any other activity.

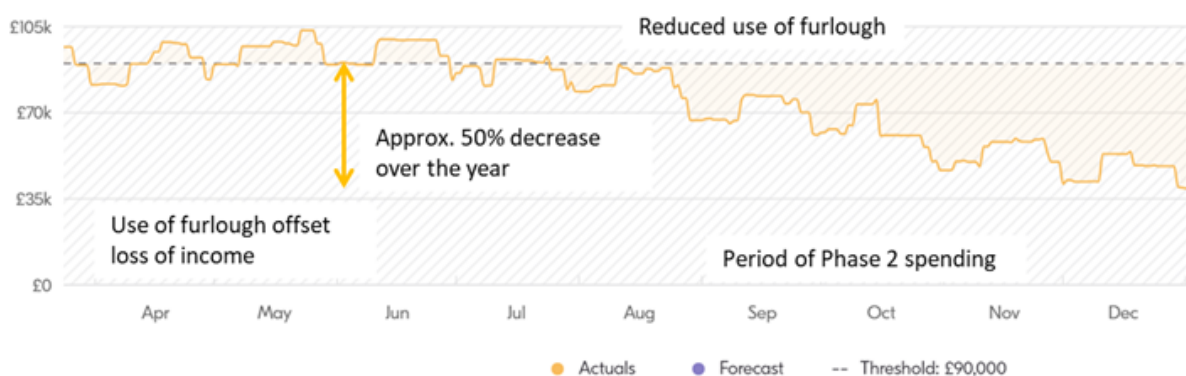
Statement of Financial Activities

The Parochial Church Council of the Ecclesiastical Parish of Bishops Cleeve For the year ended 31 December 2020

	NOTES	UNRESTRICTED	RESTRICTED	2020 TOTAL	2019 TOTAL
Incoming resources					
Incoming resources from donations, legacies and similar					
Gift aided income	1	145,257	430	145,687	146,945
Collections and donations	2	11,792	-	11,792	58,827
Legacies and similar	3	-	-	-	6,000
Incoming resources from operating activities					
Investment income	4	481	-	481	1,067
Other incoming resources	5	43,439	30,639	74,078	63,344
Total Incoming resources		200,969	31,069	232,039	276,183
Resources expended					
Other expenditure					
Direct costs		114,583	2,181	116,764	150,312
Administration		16,012	935	16,948	18,438
Clergy expenditure		3,900	-	3,900	6,132
Salaries		63,092	6,500	69,592	51,698
Repairs and maintenance		16,124	42,711	58,835	29,907
Utilities		13,350	-	13,350	22,653
Total Other expenditure		227,061	52,327	279,389	279,140
Transfer of Funds		23,014	(23,014)	-	-
Total Resources expended		250,075	29,313	279,389	279,140
Net surplus (deficit) for the year		(49,106)	1,756	(47,350)	(2,957)



The financial profile for 2020 is represented below:



Reviewing the Balance Sheet, the total funds (including Southam) stood at **£112,563** on 31 December 2020; a drop of £47,350 from the previous year. The breakdown between restricted and unrestricted funds is shown in the table.

The 2019 annual report highlighted that the PCC had met the Diocese guidance which recommended 3-months of general expenditure is held in reserve. During 2020, this reserve fulfilled its purpose of helping to manage ‘unforeseen financial shocks’ and was heavily depleted by the year end.

Balance Sheet

The Parochial Church Council of the Ecclesiastical Parish of Bishops Cleeve As at 31 December 2020

	NOTES	31 DEC 2020	31 DEC 2019
Fixed Assets			
Tangible Fixed Assets	2	2,140	2,928
Investments (Savings Bonds)		5,000	5,000
Total Fixed Assets		7,140	7,928
Current Assets			
Debtors and prepayments	4	3,746	-
Cash at bank and in hand	5	110,751	158,970
Total Current Assets		114,496	158,970
Liabilities: amounts falling due within one year			
Other creditors and accruals	6	5,729	3,458
Rounding		-	-
Net Current Assets		108,767	155,512
Total Assets		115,907	163,440
Funds			
Restricted Funds	7	24,352	22,596
Unrestricted Funds	8	88,211	137,317
Total Funds		112,563	159,913
Unmapped Accounts			
Accruals		994	1,527
Income in Advance		2,350	2,000
Total Unmapped Accounts		3,344	3,527

A full set of accounts has been published to the Church website: www.stmichaelsbishopsclleeve.co.uk.



Looking ahead to 2021

The financial consequences of the 2020 COVID-19 restrictions were already significant for both churches. At St Michaels, the prospect that income could be around £180k whilst expenditure could be around £255k which made the potential £75k deficit untenable. This assessment was made before the 2021 COVID-19 restrictions were imposed shortly after New Year's Day.

The re-publication of the PCC financial handbook (also available on the Church website) included a four-step approach that was implemented as the framework to restore financial balance:

1. **Reduce expenditure.** A line-by-line review of all costs was conducted, and projected expenditure was **reduced by £43k** from £255k to £212k.
2. **Restore income.** Reasonable estimates about our ability to raise funds were made which showed how the £32k in-year deficit could be reduced to around £5k. The financial effect of the 2021 COVID-19 restrictions will have an impact on these estimates.
3. **Prioritise spending.** The PCC agreed the broad priorities for spending and the business case process is actively used to assess financial decisions. There are projects that have been de-prioritised until financial balance has been returned.
4. **Set ambition and seize opportunity.** The fundraising ambition was detailed alongside a plan to improve the digital mission offered through the church.

The financial outlook for 2021 is challenging but closely monitored with accurate financial data available to the PCC for every meeting. We are in the best possible position to weather the storm and make informed decisions about our mission and ministry.

Prepared by Dan Snape, Bishop's Cleeve PCC Treasurer



Report from Churchwardens - Andrew Young & Ann Jessop for St Michael's and John Donovan Deputy Churchwarden for Southam

Andrew says this -

The year 2020 will linger long in our memories for many of us, sadly for many due to difficult and trying times and changes to our ways of living that many have struggled with. Given the events of 2020 for me on a personal note, I am thankful to God for seeing me through the challenges to date and I am recovering from my time in hospital whilst trying to build up my stamina and resilience. As I get stronger each day, I am looking to increase what I am doing in this role.

As I took on the role of Church Life Warden in October 2020 it was with a clear understanding that things had changed and that through these changes God could be calling us to respond differently in how we are His church, how we meet, how we reach out, how we worship and fellowship. During the past few months, I have met with Malc and the rest of the Church Leadership Team and been part of discussions about the impact of the pandemic on the activities undertaken by the Church as well as looking at the planned ministry and activities going forwards.

Towards the end of 2020 I attended a virtual seminar with Malc which was sponsored by the Diocese as we looked again at the basic 'why' and vision of our individual Church giving us clearer purpose and drive as the body of Christ within the villages we serve.

As we move deeper into 2021, I am looking forward to seeing how we as a Church can be there for and be relevant to the growing villages around us, the Church family we already know as well as working closely with Ann to understand the challenges, issues, and opportunities in the work she is focusing on.

Ann says this -

The Churchwardens

This report covers the year 2020. For most of that year the churchwardens were Rich Jobbins and Nigel Bennett, and we wish to thank them for everything they did. Andrew Young and Ann Jessop were elected as churchwardens at the APCM on 17th October 2020, a very late APCM because of Covid 19. Both will stand again at the 2021 APCM on 27th April 2021.

The Law

The Representation Rules require that the churchwardens bring to the APCM *a report upon the fabric, goods and ornaments of the church or churches of the parish, under section 51 of the Care of Churches and Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction Measure 1991*. Therefore, much of this report is about the buildings and contents. The inventory is available to view at this meeting. The quinquennial report is also on view. The building and contents are an inheritance which we have a duty to care for and to hand down to future generations. The 1991 Measure also says *Any person or body carrying out functions of care and conservation under this Measure or under any other enactment or rule of law relating to churches shall have due regard to the role of a church as a local centre of worship and mission*. So, the churchwardens and those assisting them are directly concerned in the main aims of the church and share the vocation to live the Christian life. We are all one body.

Fabric in 2020 St Michael's compiled by Ann Jessop

- We are constantly aware of the cost of maintaining such an important building and we mitigate the expenses by reclaiming the VAT, by applying for grants from outside sources for special projects, by regular and determined work by our volunteers wherever possible.
- Our longstanding and trusted contractor for buildings work, Thomas Lee, left us in October 2020 and we are now finding and using new companies to meet our needs.



- The usual maintenance of our roofs and gutters and drains has taken place. Our new contractor, Rob Forrester, has taken photographs of inaccessible places and advised us of future maintenance needs, including improved pigeon deterrence, attention to crack on south aisle roof, moss on north roof, tile on porch roof.
- MT Roofing has carried out a repair to the chancel roof.
- There was extensive woodworm at the West end of the church and this has been treated by Thomas Lee.
- The porch room roof, the boiler roof and the boiler doors were repaired by Thomas Lee.
- As advised by our surveyor and by DAC we contracted Rex Bishop and Co to carry out a complete professional asbestos check on the church. Only one area was detected. This is the composite material which secures the boiler room roof. We are advised to leave it alone, undisturbed, and mark it with a sticker. Should we ever in the future wish to demolish the boiler room, we should engage Bishop's for safe disposal. Subsequently, electricians found an obsolete socket that contains asbestos and Rex Bishop advised that it should be clearly marked and left alone. Should we ever wish to dismantle and remove it, the whole item has to go to Bishop's for safe disposal.
- Our electrical installations have to be professionally inspected every five years and in 2020 Mitchells carried out this work and made their report. Subsequently we had to take some remedial action because regulations had changed and what was compliant last time was not compliant this time. We are now confident that all is in good order for future use.
- Routine checks, tests and servicing on electrics, boiler, mower, lightning conduction, fire provision, clock, bells, heating, organ etc are all up to date.
- The chancel radiator has been repaired.
- The parquet floor was treated.
- The limed oak throughout the church was treated by John Donovan.
- The clock chiming mechanism broke down in December 2019. A clock hammer cable needed replacing. The great wheel from the quarter train needed to be restored. The cost of this specialist work was met by a generous grant of £890 from the Local Parish Council. The repair was carried out by Smiths of Derby in August 2020. Unfortunately, two weeks after this repair, the chiming mechanism failed and this was found to be caused by the failure of the three motors which drive the auto-winding system. These are 47 years old. We have three quotes for this work, which will cost about £7,000. We have applied for various grants to pay for replacing the obsolete motors, and, so far, have raised £1,500 in this way.
- The bells could not be rung during the pandemic but the bellringers have kept them in good order, with regular maintenance and thorough cleaning inside the tower.
- Three smoke alarms in the tower were behaving erratically and these are now being examined by the manufacturer. The church is well covered in the meantime by the remaining alarms.
- Sadly, the church suffers from vandalism from time to time, and we have had to replace a broken window pane. We need a working party shortly to repair damage on the North side of the church.
- The quinquennial report of 2019 directed us to the urgent work which was done in 2019 and 2020. Ahead of us we now need to take on the less urgent tasks which include some joinery, attention to plasterwork, minor repairs.
- Our cleaning/dusting teams are not deployed during the pandemic, and our contractor cleaner Andy Fallon is reduced to three hours per week instead of six. However, it is more important than ever to be clean, and so we strive to maintain standards as best we can.



Fabric in 2020 Southam Church, compiled by John Donovan

- We are up to date with the required routine tests and checks, including fire extinguishers, electricity etc.
- Oxenton Builders have recently cleared our gutters and gullies. They also repaired the lead by the dormer window in the South transept.
- The very special and unusual painting of the Veronica legend was showing signs of deterioration. A faculty was obtained allowing us to restore the picture and this work will be carried out by conservator Jo Winson as soon as Covid conditions allow her to come here.
- The Painting issue brought to our attention an ingress of water. A repair has been made to the roof and to the tubular conduit of the bell rope.
- We are addressing a potential problem of humidity in church by purchasing a monitoring device. We shall take regular readings and then adjust the heating and/or the ventilation of the church as needed.
- We have obtained estimates for renewing our heating and lighting systems but have decided not to proceed with these large expenses for the time being.

Other St Michael's matters

Covid 19

Like everyone else, our team has been severely challenged by Covid 19. From March in 2020, the church was shut down altogether and we had no services or events. Eventually we were allowed to bring in contractors, for important works, but they needed special management for Covid safety. Finally, in August, we tentatively opened up for Private Prayer and Sunday worship. All this required meticulous planning with Risk Assessments, special training, sanitising, track and trace recording, basic PPE, social distancing. Angie Seddon was a powerful ally as we set everything up. The clergy were kind and careful as we worked out together how to do this. Fran Rawlinson gave us great support with communications, rotas, notices, purchases. The churchwardens are immensely grateful to those new stewards who stepped forward to help us make some public worship possible. We are open for Private Prayer, three times a week, and we are greatly indebted to our specially trained stewards who make this possible. At the time of writing this we are in lockdown again and a local decision was taken by the PCC to suspend Public Worship. By the time you read this, we hope to be in a more normal situation but the future might not be like the past. Thank you for being with us, being careful, being caring.

The Catholics

For 38 years the churchwardens and their assistants have given a warm welcome and practical assistance to our Catholic friends who have had the use of our church all these years. Bishop Declan of the RC Diocese informed us that as from 1st January 2021, the Catholics would no longer have Mass here and our Sharing Agreement is terminated. It was our last and sad duty to help the Catholics remove all their property from St Michael's. We wish them well and hope not to lose touch.

Phase 2A Development

Simon Roper led a team to deliver the new screen and AV system which is reported elsewhere. This is almost finished. The churchwarden team concentrated on the next stage which is the provision of a row of bespoke oak cupboards in the South transept, for the use of the choir and the children's crèche. Gloucestershire Historic Churches Trust granted us £3,500 for this work. Allchurches Trust gave us £5,200. A further £9000 has been received in gifts. Richard Basnett, our surveyor, led this project. Contractor Avon Decorating made and installed the new cupboards which are a splendid enhancement to the South Transept, providing a much-needed store and freeing up floor space for the children to play.



Heritage

In 2020 we were unable to hold any heritage events, tours or open days. There is still work to be done in sorting and cataloguing our interesting collection of documents and other items in the porch room.

Heating and Lighting

We use the Parish Basket scheme to purchase our gas and electricity, as recommended by the Church of England. This scheme finds the best deal for us every year. The 2020 accounts show that we have already made significant reductions in our fuel costs.

Safety Training

To avoid unnecessary meeting and mixing during the pandemic, we have suspended all live training courses in Safeguarding, First Aid, Food Hygiene, Fire safety. Some of these can be covered by online training. However, our focus is on reducing the spread of Covid 19, and we support Government and Church of England guidance.

Churchyard

Ours is a closed churchyard which means there can be no new burials. (The exception is that existing plots can be opened to receive the remains of another family member, if there is room.) The Closed Churchyard became the responsibility of Tewkesbury Council in 1990. Subsequently, the church wished to provide better maintenance than the Borough was delivering, so they took on themselves some maintenance work in return for an annual grant from the Borough. In September 2019 we entered into a formal contract with the Borough, defining the level of the annual payments to us (£6,000, index linked) and the extent of our duties, which include care of lawns, gates, walls, trees, paths, graves. The Borough still will have ultimate responsibility.

This is a space which is so important to the whole community. A new committee has taken over the grass-cutting, with a view to economical management and respect for the environment. The Churchwarden Team is still responsible for headstones, trees, paths, boundaries, benches. We recently tested the safety of the headstones and found several that were unstable. A notice to this effect has been published to alert families and eventually we will have to take steps to make them safe.

The Garden of Remembrance, continues to be lovingly cared for by Keith and Annie Hawkes.

A memorial stone has been set in the churchyard on the West side, near the Memorial garden, to commemorate those who have made a significant contribution to church life. Those persons who are honoured in this way will have their names and stories included in a loose-leaf book to be kept in church.

The Churchwardens' Team: the Ethos

The churchwardens are supported by a team whose Ethos Statement is as follows.

Ethos and Mission Statement of the Churchwardens and Team.

1. With our church leaders and all church members we strive to uphold the Diocese Mission Statement, the St Michael's Mission Statement and the St Michael's PCC Code of Practice.
2. As a Team with special responsibilities, we describe our ethos as follows:
 - We maintain our faith, hope and love in all that we do for this church.
 - God is in all that we do.
 - To labour is to pray.

We assist the churchwardens as needed in all their duties.



The Churchwardens' Team: the People

For most of 2020, Michael Bayliss and Harry Dunsford were on the team, making a skilful and important contribution to our tasks in maintenance, stewarding, liturgical matters, outdoor work. We now miss their experience and we offer our thanks and best wishes for the future. In the current team, Tony Dixon works hard with Ann at training stewards, who serve and welcome at all our services, which is particularly challenging during the pandemic. Tony mostly manages outdoor work and maintenance work. Nick Watson works closely with Tony and is responsible for the flag. We are grateful to have the continued support of John Donovan who finds time to complete skilled building and joinery tasks in St Michael's as well as carrying out his duties at Southam. Sandy Meade and Jenny Waller are our leading stewards and have taken on some routine safety tasks and liturgical duties. All members take part in planning, gardening, working parties, meeting contractors, taking care of our congregations. Two of the team are trustees of St Michael's Centre. Two have previously been churchwardens. Two have previously been PCC Secretaries. One has previously been a PCC Treasurer. All are experienced and tactful in church work and are committed to the Christian life. The two churchwardens and two team members recently attended a Zoom workshop which covered mainly insurance and safety matters. Members are also variously involved in children's work, ecumenical work, Transitional Cleeve, Hospital chaplaincy, First Aid, and other activities. This is a very gifted and effective team.

There is also a much wider Team of workers who are dusters, polishers, launderers, flower arrangers, church-watchers, caterers, gardeners, stewards, welcomers, servers, First Aiders. They have worked as needed in 2020 but, during the pandemic, some of these teams have been laid off, so that we are not constantly meeting and risking spreading the virus. In happier times, we shall need our workers to return and we shall need new people to help them.

End of churchwardens' report

Tewkesbury & Winchcombe Deanery Synod Report 2021

Whilst the challenge of connecting with one another in the life of the local church has been considerable over the last year, this has been even more the case across our diverse deanery. Holding elections to deanery synod and to the committees that enable our deanery to function has not been easy when faced with such a dispersed context.

As we all know the decline in church attendance and income across the Church of England over successive decades has been greatly accelerated by the impact of the pandemic on many worshipping communities. Those that rely on giving from the Sunday collection and the income from weddings and hall lettings have seen their finances badly affected by the closure of church buildings for much of the past year resulting in an inability for many parishes to pay their full Parish Share.

Across the Church of England there is a recognition that change to traditional structures of ministry is inevitable and needs to be implemented sooner rather than later. The need to identify, train and release non ordained lay people into leadership roles in the local context is taking on a new urgency so as to reduce dependency on ordained stipendiary clergy.

With this in mind, our deanery along with every other deanery in the Diocese has been asked to formulate a Strategic plan in response to the following mission statement:

'Working together, we aim to reshape the mission and ministry of this deanery to be more focussed on our shared mission priorities whilst at the same time reducing our dependence on stipendiary ordained ministry to a level that is sustainable for the long term'.



Reshaping Mission across our Deanery

This Deanery planning process is about releasing the whole people of God for the whole mission of God and restructuring ordained leadership to help make us more collaborative and mission focussed. It recognises that financial realities also suggest that the level and shape of ordained stipendiary ministry cannot continue in its inherited model and needs fresh imagination.

Within our deanery, as in all the other deaneries within our diocese there is a consultation process under way which will enable the deanery to identify strategic priorities for sustainable ministry in every community in the future.

Whilst there is a recognition of considerable challenges around maintenance of ancient rural church buildings, ageing congregations, declining income, there is also an excitement about new missional possibilities that have emerged as we have been forced to embrace technology and operate outside the walls of our church buildings in new and imaginative ways. So, the two words that sum up the work of our deanery at this time are: *Challenge & Opportunity*

Stephen Walker
Area Dean: Tewkesbury with Winchcombe

Safeguarding Report covering the period October 2020 to June 2021

St Michael's continues to have a duty of care to both church members and visitors alike. In order to ensure that we follow legal requirements to protect children and vulnerable adults, we have a safeguarding policy in place, approved by the Diocese. This requires that people who, on behalf of our churches, are involved in various kinds of church and/or community work should apply for appropriate clearance. This is commonly known as a DBS certificate. Our safeguarding policy is reviewed and approved every year by the PCC and can be found in the red folder in church. Should anyone have any safeguarding concerns about a young person or a vulnerable adult in connection with any of our activities and wish to speak to someone in confidence, then the relevant Safeguarding contact details are in that folder and also detailed on the website.

A DBS certificate currently lasts for five years but can be registered online now in order to make it transferrable. This means it can then also be used for any organisation, other than just the one who has provided it initially. The Leader of any group or activity (either in church or elsewhere, when representing the church) where young people or vulnerable adults are present have a duty to ensure that they, and anyone helping in their team who will be responsible for supervising a group or activity, has been through the application process for a DBS Certificate. If you are a group or activity leader and wish to check if your team are all registered, please contact the parishchurchoffice@gmail.com asap. There is work to do to update the renewals following the pandemic but we have systems in place to know who to contact to ensure DBS renewal where appropriate.

The leader or organiser of any activity, where people (of any age) are invited to take part, must undertake a Risk Assessment and complete the relevant and simple form – template forms are available from the Church Office (parishchurchoffice@gmail.com). These forms are then kept by the leader/organiser, together with Registers of attendance (if applicable).

Links to online training via the Diocesan website have been sent out to relevant individuals and, where individuals have informed us, we keep a record of relevant training which will be made available to PCC annually. Clergy safeguarding training is managed directly by the Diocese but parishes are responsible for ensuring lay ministers undertake the requisite training. We request that anyone who has undertaken any form of safeguarding training, inform Angie on admin.stmichael@gmail.com so that



our records can be kept up to date. For best practice, we would also like to hear from anyone who has undertaken ANY training in connection with the work in their ministry with us, so that it can be entered on our Training Register. Undoubtedly, as we open up more of our activities, it will be necessary for more individuals to undertake the online training (which is not onerous) and we will be pursuing this in the coming months.

Relevant training during the year

Leadership Level 2		
Mumford	Sallie	28/4/21

Safeguarding Foundations 2021		
Andrews	Carol	21/04/21
Jessop	Ann	11/03/2021
Meadows	Emma	27/02/2021
Shaw	Malcolm	17/04/21

Basic Awareness V2020		
Blakey	Susan	09/04/2021
Dyer	Doreen	10/03/2021
Hall	Linda	19/03/21
Homes	Zoe	09/03/2021
Hunt	Ro	13/03/2021
Jessop	Ann	03/03/2021
Meade	Sandy	20/03/2021
Shaw	Malcolm	17/04/21
Waller	Jenny	25/3/21

Safeguarding concerns during the year

During the year we had one occasion where we involved the diocesan Safeguarding team who gave advice on next steps, which we followed and this is ongoing. There was also one safeguarding case which, as police were already involved, no further action was taken on our part other than to note it for our records.

Going forward

The diocese recognises the onerous task that becoming compliant and staying compliant is for PCCs and have made more tools available on their website to help churches in this regard and will be adding more tools as they become available. To become fully compliant is still a work in progress in our case, as with many other churches in our Deanery. We plan to assess what is still to do and produce checklists and processes to make this as streamlined as possible. We will update the PCC on progress at future PCC meetings as part of the standing Agenda.

Angie Seddon June 2021



Additional Reports on the life of the Church

- Churchyard Group
- Digital Communications Report
- Life Groups at St Michael's
- New Initiatives
- Rector's Emergency Fund
- Staying Connected - Pastoral Assistants

Churchyard Report

Over the last two years the churchyard team have been working towards making the churchyard a place of peace and beauty, a refuge for our native wildlife of all varieties – plants, mammals, invertebrates, reptiles, whilst ensuring it remains a respectful and tranquil place for those visiting graves of loved ones.

A Wildlife, Biodiversity and Management Report was prepared showing the wealth of plants and wildlife in our churchyard. To further our hope of rewilding areas and caring for God's Acre we have added Bug Hotels, wood stacks and stone piles to unused areas and have further plans for wild flowers in small patches.

In May we held a community afternoon to help with grass raking, which proved to be a great success and a fun afternoon for all involved. We hope to organise similar events throughout the summer.

If you would like to be involved in helping to care for our churchyard, we would love to hear from you.

Ro Hunt



Digital Communications Report - March 2020 to May 2021

prepared for the APCM 2021 by Kelly Owen

The aim of St Michael's Digital Communications is to:

- provide ongoing opportunities for church members and the local public to hear our sermons and learn more about the faith-based events, support and activities we offer as Church;
- reach and minister to a wider pool of people who are on the fringes of faith in our community, guiding them to engage with our church and discover the transformative love of Christ;
- maintain connections with our church family members and provide ways for them to connect with others in our church, keep updated with church news, and grow their personal relationships with Jesus Christ.

The Digital Communications team is led by Kelly Owen, Malc Allen and Kathryn Lea. Throughout the year, particularly between March to September, the team met regularly via Zoom to plan and review our online content. What was achieved was done so within the tight restrictions of the pandemic, technical limitations and working around work and family commitments.

St Michael's Digital Communications overview

Throughout the past year, the focus of our online ministry was spread across:

Website

Link: [St Michael & All Angels Church \(stmichaelsbishopsleeve.co.uk\)](http://stmichaelsbishopsleeve.co.uk)

Facebook

Link: [St Michael's Church Bishop's Cleeve Group | Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/stmichaelsbishopsleeve)

A Church Near You

Link: [St Michael's - A Church Near You](https://www.achurchnearyou.com/church/st-michael-s-church-bishop-s-cleeve)

YouTube channel

Link: [St Michael's Church Bishop's Cleeve, Cheltenham - YouTube](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCv8v8v8v8v8v8v8v8v8v8v8)

Anchor Podcast

Link: [St Michael's Bishop's Cleeve Podcast • A podcast on Anchor](https://www.anchor.fm/stmichaelsbishopsleeve)

Website

Design

The structure and navigation of our website needed to be redesigned in response to the changes in how we could function during lockdown, to appeal to those new to the church and to help those looking for online church.

The [Home](#) page and [Services pages](#) were adapted and now focus on our core services and activities to help people from within and outside the church quickly find out about what we were offering.

Content

Throughout the year, each Sunday, Malc's Facebook Live Talk was published on the website on a [newly created page](#) which enabled visitors to listen to the Talk from wherever they were. This also now offers an open archive of all our Talks.

Due to the nature of the lockdowns, with opening and closing church and the COVID restrictions, the website content had to be changed frequently to keep it up to date.



Blog

The [blog](#), previously rarely used, became an important tool to share church news. Key activities and news are now shared on the blog and this ties in with our posts on Facebook.

QUICK STATS FOR THE LAST YEAR (1st March 2020 to 31st May 2021)

How many people have visited our website?	How do people find our website?	Where are our website visitors from?
Page views – 38,297 (across PC, mobile and tablet) A 5% increase on the previous year 36,526 (for same period the previous year, 1 st March 2019 – 8 th June 2021) <i>Page views = A page view is a count of how many times a page has been viewed on a website within the chosen period. All page views are counted no matter how many times a user has visited the website in the chosen period.</i>	42% of visitors find our website via Google	72% of visitors to the website are from the UK
Site visits – 17,012 (across PC, mobile and tablet) 16,612 (for same period previous year 1 st March 2019 – 8 th June 2021) <i>Site visits = A visit is defined as a series of page requests from the same uniquely identified visitor with a time of no more than 30 minutes between each page request.</i>	41% of visitors find our website by typing the web address directly	23% of visitors to the website are from the US
Average weekly page views – 500 per week	7.5% of visitors find our website via Facebook	The rest come from India, Ireland, Australia, Ukraine, Belgium and Greece!

The website has seen a small but steady increase in new visitors, considering we are reaching those who already know us and new people. We know we have a loyal following of church members who have moved away over the years, those who have a link with the area and also distant family members who would otherwise not come to church, accessing our online talks. Most of the engagement is seen in our Facebook Group (see below), whereas the website is, at present, only able to be a 'brochure' of what we offer.

Facebook Group

At the start of the pandemic, Facebook became our primary channel to reach our online members of our church and the wider community (and indeed many others further afield). The number of Group members has **trebled** since the beginning of 2020. This rapid increase in members was a direct result of the COVID-19 pandemic lockdown and us opening our Group to the public (it was previously a private church family Group). The increase was noticed by the National Church Press! On 8th June 2020, they published this article: [How a village church has trebled its 'congregation' online](#)

How many members are in our Facebook Group?	
At May 2020 – 663 members In January 2020 – 225 members	Views on our Live Talks have reached 7,500 for one video and often were in the early 1,000s, watched by people across the UK not only in Bishop's Cleeve, and mostly those who don't attend our church



Strategy

At the start of lockdown 2020, the Digital Communications team created a three-month strategy which set out a structure of posts throughout the week contributed to by members of our admin and wider ministry teams – from Thought of the Day (daily scripture and reflection) to Weekly Prayer Points, Worship Music and sharing links to family-friendly online worship and Bible stories for children and families.

Facebook has proven a fantastic communication tool to reach people within and outside our church community. Much of what we have done would not have been possible to advertise easily and generate support without our posts on Facebook. We are now advertising our Wellbeing activity offerings under our 'Living Well in Body, Mind & Spirit' series, which includes a Mindfulness course to be held in church, 'Mummy and Me' fitness class held on church grounds, 'More Than Pilates' faith-based fitness, held via Zoom, as well as our regular Oasis parent group, Praise & Play, Alpha courses and Monthly Prayer Days.

Sunday Live Talks

Sunday Live Talks became our regular feature with Malc delivering a 35-minute talk from home each week (with a few pre-recorded) on a variety of topics centring around mental health and faith.

This was our most consistent feature and attracted high views each week. Live views of Talks were around 120 households at the first lockdown and this reduced to a steady 50 household live views per video (mostly regular church family) and around 150 overall views (those watching later). One of our Talks reached 7,500 viewers (this figure is taken for anyone who watches the video for 3 seconds or more) and during the lockdowns we saw regular weekly figures in the thousands.

The Live feed was monitored during the recording and those watching were engaged with using the posts' Comments feature – saying hello, links to our Giving page, Zoom Coffee and other relevant resources were posted in the Comments during the Talks, enabling members to donate easily via a link, or click through to the coffee chat afterwards.

Silence & Solitude

Malc also delivered a daily 10-minute morning live reflection for 12 weeks on Facebook, between January and March 2021.

Bishop's Cleeve Noticeboard Facebook Group

We have admin permission (to post without approval) on the Bishop's Cleeve Noticeboard Facebook Group, which has 11,400 members. Throughout lockdown, Malc posted a short video every Saturday lunchtime inviting the community to watch his Live Talk on the Sunday and we saw regular engagement from that. We also posted some of our wider church news and activities, such as Praise & Play, Oasis, and Alpha.

More recently, we published our first fundraiser (due to public request on the Bishop's Cleeve Noticeboard) to raise money to cover the costs of repairing the church clock chime, something the community were missing hearing. The target was achieved in just two weeks thanks to the regular posting on Facebook and our website blog – with people donating from far and wide. We contacted a journalist at the local newspaper, *Gloucestershire Live*, and set up an interview with Churchwarden Ann Jessop and provided information to write up an article. On 17th May 2021, this was featured online and shared locally: [Village rejoices after saving broken church clock that hasn't chimed in over a year - Gloucestershire Live](#)



Facebook highlights

- Delivered a weekly **Sunday Live Talk** throughout 2020 and up to Easter 2021, reaching people in their homes not just on Sunday but throughout the week
- Delivered 12 weeks of daily **Silence & Solitude** wellbeing prayer reflections
- Posted weekly **Zoom Coffee meetings**, led by Malc and others to provide space to 'catch-up' and see faces
- Shared a daily **Advent reflection** during December 2020 from resident prophetic artist Sally Snape
- **Raised £3,500** towards our church clock repair, which has enabled us to book the repair
- Advertised our **Christmas activities** – Pebbles of Hope, Christmas Tree Decorating, Christmas services
- Supported various local and national causes including individuals through Acts365, vaccine donation programmes, Foodbank requests, House of Prayer, Church of England National Day of Prayer Initiative, Thy Kingdom Come, Christian Aid Week, and more...

A Church Near You

We have a micro-site (a small website on a hosting web directory) on this popular Church of England portal. This is mostly accessed by people new to the area looking for a church or for general enquires about the church. This has been kept up to date throughout the year, various services and groups have been added and removed as and when needed, and events have been created when we have held in-church services.

Stats (as at 31st May 2021)

We get around 4,500 views every 6 months (so approx. 9,000 views in the past 12 months)

YouTube Channel

The YouTube Channel was created at the start of 2020 to enable us to store and feature our Sunday Talks and other videos from the church.

Stats for the past 365 days (as at 31st May 2021)

The St Michael's YouTube channel has 28 subscribers – *this figure does not reflect the number of people who watch our videos only those who have chosen to be notified of new videos*

1,800 video views
257 watch hours

Peak views were between July and December 2020.

Anchor Podcast

The Podcast was set up in October 2020 to offer another way to listen to Malc's weekly Talks on the go. Each week (up to Easter 2021), the recording of Malc's Live Talk was uploaded to Anchor and this can then be searched and listened to via most podcast apps (Spotify etc). We have 26 podcast files listed. Listens are relatively low – with an average of 5-6 listens per episode.

Stats (as at 31st May 2021)

194 audio listens in total
across our 26 podcast files

85% of our listeners are from the US
11% are from the UK
the rest are from Germany and Australia



What's next for 2021?

With the gradual opening up of the country and especially since May 2021, we have seen a natural reduction in daily engagement online, partly down to lack of resources, although we are still accepting members to our Facebook Group and posting regular updates. There is scope to increase visitors to our website and using it more dynamically to encourage regular visits.

Since Easter, we have encouraged our online community to attend our 11am Sunday in-church Service (although space is limited and there are those who can't make church for various reasons), or watch one of our archived Talks on YouTube, or an amateur recording of the in-church service posted after the service.

While we continue to post on Facebook and our Blog about events and services, going forward, it is important our online community is not forgotten and our way of 'doing and being church' includes them.

We are in the process of reviewing how we can best utilise and develop all these channels to support St Michael's ministry.

Kelly Owen

Life Groups at St Michael's 2020

This report must begin with a tribute to Jill Muir who died in December. Her commitment to small groups, with a desire to see people grow in fellowship and discipleship, meant that by the start of 2020 there were 12 Life Groups with 120 members at St Michael's. She supported the leaders continually and provided exciting material to follow as well as writing some courses herself. She is greatly missed but we continue her work as a tribute to her devotion to the Lord and her real love for individuals.

The year began with a study of Practising the Way of Jesus: Silence and Solitude based on the teachings of John Mark Comer. Little did we know that there would be a lot of solitude to come for many of us with lockdown. The Lent Course written by Jill and Sue Blakey was begun but adapting to not being able to meet physically meant that most groups could not complete it.

The challenge of how to continue running the groups was met admirably by many of the leaders as we learnt how to use Zoom. It proved to be a valuable tool to provide support and fellowship as members logged on from their own homes. Many groups found that the desire to study was superseded by the need to share and pray, but this has resulted in a stronger bond between members.

Groups which couldn't cope with Zoom tried studies over the phone with individuals and when restrictions permitted, meeting in gardens. Unfortunately, one group has folded since the start of lockdown.

The year ended with a 5 part study of the carol 'O come, O come Emmanuel' written by Sue Blakey. Plans were in place to begin a study entitled *Lifting the Lid* as a whole church approach to understand and support people with mental health issues.

It has been a challenging year but Zoom has meant that Life groups could continue and provide the fellowship that we missed by not being able to meet as a church family. We are aware that there is a need to provide space for new members from Alpha courses to move into as well as to train new leaders so that there is enough provision for anyone wanting to join a Life Group.

Ephesians 2 v 22 : In Christ Jesus you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by His Spirit.

Sue Blakey and Harry Goodchild



New Initiatives

'It has been wonderful to start my training at St Michael's and begin supporting new initiatives alongside others in the Church.

In January we committed to supporting our community in Living Well in Mind, Body and Spirit through this year and hopefully beyond. This has included working through the Lifting the Lid course as a Church and within the wider community through Facebook live and in an online small group setting for past Alpha participants. We trialled a PSALM initiative called Pilates and More online and are hoping to work with the facilitator of this, Jon Taylor, for future opportunities.

Recently we launched a Mummy and Me postnatal fitness class on Wednesday mornings with Christian organisation Fresh Hope Fitness. We hope to build this group into not only a fitness class, but a supportive and pastoral space for new mums as well.

We have just begun hosting a Mindfulness Course with Dr Jo Powell, from Parachute Mindfulness which we can already see being a very blessed experience for the 14 participants. We are looking for ways to grow and develop this wellness ministry as well as learn from what we have already been doing.'

Lucy Barbour

Rector's Emergency Fund

The **Rector's Emergency Fund** was formally established to provide the Rector access to limited funds, without recourse to formal approval, to assist people in immediate need. Over 2020, a total of £466 was committed across three demands. Twice to help those undergoing eviction from their homes; skips were hired to facilitate the clearance of the home and smooth a challenging transition. Once to fund urgent counselling with Christian approved counsellors. This fund is held at a limit of £500 each year and can be topped up as required.

The mechanisms to support to our local **ACTS435** have helped people who need support through managed appeals. A request for help is reviewed and approved by an ACTS435 representative which is released for crowd sourced donations. The arrangements mean the funds transition through the PCC accounts to the approved sponsor (who is a member of our parish) and then onto the person in need. In 2020, £240 was processed through the PCC accounts.

The formalisation of the **Mission Partners** and the agreed fund-raising approach allowed funds raised in 2019 to be passed on to the three charities in 2020. A total of £2,520 was evenly split between the North Cotswolds Foodbank, the Rwanda Appeal, and Mission Macedonia.

The restrictions imposed through COVID-19 and the immediate impact to the economy placed ever more pressure on households with low incomes. A **new mission initiative** was established in spring 2020 to support families known to the church through our Children and Families Ministry. One pre-cooked meal a week was offered to every member of the 6 families over the first lockdown. In total, £550 was spent on this initiative.



Staying Connected - Pastoral Assistants

During 2020, technology was a wonderful lifeline for many people. However, it also opened up a gap. Those who did not have email, Zoom, Facebook, etc etc did not have that same feeling of being anchored to the rest of the church. A variety of systems were put in place to try to help. Rev John and Maggie Sharpe held communion every Sunday and prayed for people by name. We had a wonderful team of people who printed out and delivered the wonderful array of communications that had been emailed out, or made phone calls to keep people up to date. But there was still a sense of not being “fed” in the way as those who could watch the live talks or access links to various resources. Over the summer we developed a new monthly communication, called “Staying Connected”.

This is posted or delivered to approximately 45 church members who have no access to technology. It includes a pastoral letter from one of the clergy team, the readings for the coming month, prayer points, inspirational thoughts, key dates and contact details for the church office and the pastoral team.

This ministry is for those who would otherwise not have that personal connection with our services, either because they are unable to come to the church building or do not have technology to keep in touch. It has been very well received and we are delighted that we have been able to create something special for those who cannot access the connections that so many of us take for granted.

If you, or someone you know, needs pastoral support contact us via pastoral.stmichael@gmail.com or by ringing the church office 07485 261782.

