

St Stephen's, Canonbury
17 Canonbury Road, London, N1 2DF
Registered Charity Number: 1131839

Exploring Faith – Sharing Hope – Growing in Love

Annual Report and Financial Summary 2020

Annual report and financial statements of the Parochial Church Council of St Stephen's Church, Canonbury, for the year ending 31st December 2020.

Introduction and administrative information

St Stephen's is a Church of England Church in the London Borough of Islington in the Stepney Episcopal Area of the Diocese of London. The correspondence address is 17 Canonbury Road, London, N1 2DF. The Parochial Church Council (PCC) is registered with the Charity Commission, registered Charity No. 1131839. The method of appointment of PCC members and all issues of governance are set out in the Church Representation rules. All regular attendees are encouraged to register on the Church Electoral Roll and stand for election to the PCC.

In 2018 PCC members have been:

Rev. John Beauchamp – Vicar and chairman
Janice Emslie - Church Warden (until September 2020)
Susan Rice – Churchwarden (from September 2020)
Fola Faleti – Deanery Synod member (until September 2020)
David Ainger – Deanery Synod member (until September 2020)
Anna Shepherd – Deanery Synod member (from September 2020)
Lindsay Dixon – General Synod member
Suzanne Roberts – elected member and deputy chair (until September 2020)
Ralph Dunham – Treasurer and elected representative (re-elected September 2020)
Timothy Muller - elected representative and deputy chair (from September 2020)
Elizabeth Ainger – elected representative (re-elected September 2020)
Elizabeth Evans – elected representative
Sarah Strang – elected representative
Len Chalkley – elected representative
Katie Melville – - elected representative (until September 2020)
Natalie Beauchamp – elected representative
Mary Thomas – elected representative
Joy Faulkner-Mpeho – elected representative
Rachel Woolf – elected representative and PCC secretary

Due to the Coronavirus pandemic the APCM could not take place in April as planned. Under amended regulations this took place in September when new PCC members and officers were elected. We thank the previous PCC and warden for continuing beyond their term and ensuring that business was conducted appropriately throughout the pandemic.

Activities and objectives

The PCC has the responsibility of co-operating with the incumbent to promote in the ecclesiastical parish the whole mission of the church, pastoral, social, evangelistic and ecumenical. It also has maintenance responsibility for the Church building and halls. When planning our worship and activities the PCC and incumbent take into account the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit, specifically the guidance for the advancement of religion.

The PCC takes seriously its duty to safeguard children and vulnerable adults within all activities and to report any suspected or disclosed abuse appropriately. The PCC complies with its duties under section 5 of the 'Clergy Discipline Measure 2016' in relation to having due regard to House of Bishops guidance for the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults. The PCC strives to make the church a 'safe' and inclusive environment for all. The safeguarding officer is Suzanne Roberts.

There were 97 members on the Electoral Roll at the time of the 2020 annual meeting. Average attendance is difficult to report this year as households have accessed recorded and live stream worship together. Pre-pandemic average morning attendance was 45 adults and 15 children with 12 adults at evening services. During the pandemic the average total accessing recordings or attending via Zoom or in person was 44 with 12 listening to children's content. Only a few mid-week Communion services were conducted with an average attendance of 5. We also welcome children for baptism, read the banns of marriage for couples from the parish and, when invited, conduct the funerals and marriages of parishioners and those with a connection to St Stephen's.

At the start of 2020 Joy Faulkner-Mpeho and Rachel Woolf were sharing PCC secretary responsibilities. During the year Rachel Woolf became the sole secretary. The PCC met 7 times during the year and the Standing Committee met 10 times. Agenda items have included:

The pandemic and providing worship and pastoral care, risk assessments and H & S; A response to 'Black lives matter'; Church weekend away at High Leigh; Mission Action Plan; Building issues – tower repairs and live streaming; Diocesan vision 2020-2030; The church maisonette; Staffing issues, appointments and salaries.

As regular items on the agenda we have received:

Quarterly management accounts and approved a budget for 2021; Reports from Manna and Urban Hope Management Committees; Reports from Deanery Synod representatives; Health and Safety updates; Safeguarding reports; Reports from other sub-committees – Mission Giving, Staffing, Buildings; Reports from Vicar and Church Wardens.

Minutes of all meetings are taken and approved. The PCC appoints members to its sub-committees, both from within the PCC and the wider congregation, and requires them to report regularly to the full PCC. Terms of reference are set out for sub-committees. The PCC offers its grateful thanks to Janice Emslie for serving as sole church warden until September and to Susan Rice for taking over at the APCM.

Vicar's report

When I concluded my annual report last year with an invitation for us to explore together what it might mean to be 'a radical, counter-cultural community where strength is made perfect in weakness and value recognised in what others would call worthless,' I had no idea that 2020 would be a year that would be shaped by things beyond our control. Before the year had hardly started our hopes and aspirations had been overwhelmed by the growing pandemic and by the middle of March we were in a state of lockdown that has continued to varying degrees throughout the year. As much of our 'normal' way of life and our 'normal' function as a church had to come to a stop, we had to quickly reimagine what it means to be a church that cannot meet and how we could best continue to be a worshipping community and serve the local community through Manna and Urban Hope. It is often said that the Church of England generally moves somewhat slower than a snail, but I have to say that this myth was solidly blown out of the water as within just a few weeks we had, along with churches across London and the UK, developed new patterns of worship and new ways of keeping community support alive in lockdown. So this annual report is not a review of all the things we have done, tried to do or failed to do in the normal round of church life but rather a review of how we have adapted and changed in the face of an unprecedented public health emergency.

The reports from Manna and Urban Hope tell the story of how our projects have navigated a landscape of ever changing restrictions, advice and guidance. Staff and management committees have spent many hours carrying out risk assessments and developing protocols for working safely while still offering valuable services and support to vulnerable and homeless adults and young people. Adapted and extended Manna sessions have helped many people to cling onto some sort of stability even in the worst depths of the pandemic. Home deliveries, online sessions, work in schools and socially distanced activities with Urban Hope have supported families and given young people a space to share both their fears and laughter together. The reimagining of the projects has been challenging but it has also served to help focus some of the more urgent priorities in these client groups. Much has been learned and some of this learning will inform longer-term strategy and planning beyond the pandemic. On behalf of us all I thank the Manna staff, Kaaren Morris, Kate Moore, Kemi Buraimoh and Anne Cartwright and the dedicated team of volunteers who have given tirelessly of their time and energy this year. Also the Urban Hope staff, Mat Barber, K'Journ Johnson, Anna Harrold and Toyin Ayedun-Alase along with the Urban Hope volunteers and sessional workers, who have also worked tirelessly this year.

With the closure of schools, Urban Hope made use of the furlough scheme with K'Journ and Anna being furloughed in April. Anna returned to Hungry and decided in the summer that she could not return to London so resigned her post. In the Autumn we were able to interview and welcomed Toyin to continue Urban Hope's work with young women.

We have had to learn how to adapt our worship to make it accessible at home as well as, when we can meet, in the Church. The digital world has enabled us to continue to offer weekly worship either as recordings or as live streamed services from the Church. Thanks to funding from the Cloudesley Charity we have been able to install a new camera in the Church to make it easier to live stream both pictures and sound. Many of us had to quickly learn how to make recordings on smart phones and tablets and email these for recorded services and it has been good to continue to include different voices in our worship each week. We also supplemented online worship with a recorded phone line for those who are not digitally connected. By ringing 02080501091 the weekly service can be heard along with daily prayers and content for children. I would like to give special thanks to Len Chalkley who has managed the posting of recordings online and on the phone as well as recording and editing services held in the Church.

It has been good to be able to make use of digital communications and in particular to discover the world of 'Zoom.' This has become a valuable means of contact for meetings, prayer and sharing. Being able to meet together from our own homes has made it possible for many of us to participate in new things that we would not necessarily have joined with in person. I am certain that Zoom will remain part of our church life beyond this time.

As we locked down in March, Sunday School and Dreams were no longer able to meet. Dreams has now restarted on Zoom with a few socially distanced face to face meetings as well. My thanks to Mat and to Joy who joined him to support this group. Because of different commitments and life changes, the Sunday School team that were running our provision for young children are no longer able to do this work. My thanks to those who have been part of this team – Margaret Evans, Joy Faulkner-Mpeho, Daniel Gleadall, John Woolf, Arezu Nasvollahi and Sarah Strang. Since March our provision for primary aged children has been a 'Podcast for Kids' issued each week with thoughts, prayers and a 'Billy adventure.' As we come out of the pandemic we will need to rebuild this ministry and find new volunteers.

When we eventually returned to services in the Church in the summer we had to follow strict guidelines. With the Church arranged for social distancing, face coverings worn throughout services and no congregational singing allowed, our services have been very different from what we would usually offer. Despite this being difficult it has I think also been an opportunity for us to discover what is really important about our worship and to realise that even in this simple form we can still meet with God in word and worship. With the second lockdown in November, December and Christmas were very quiet and as the second wave of the pandemic really took hold at the end of December we decided to suspend services again.

In all of this being able to connect digitally and to get in touch by phone has been vital. I have spent many hours on the phone to church members and issued twice weekly news bulletins by email. We have also been writing to those who we know are not digitally connected in an attempt to ensure that everyone has felt included.

Inevitably though this has been a difficult time. Many people have felt it was right not to attend services even when the Church has been open and opportunities for visitors or newcomers to explore St Stephen's have been very limited. Some newcomers have joined our live streams and listened to recorded services and we will need to work out how we can continue to maintain and build a supportive online community as part of St Stephen's going forward. But as we come out of the pandemic later in 2021 it will be necessary to work to re-establish our worship and our life as a community of faith, hope and love, something that our new Mission Action Plan will need to reflect.

We did welcome one new arrival this year though with the birth of Miriam to Joy and Rufin. As we shared in the joy of their wedding so we share as a church family in their joy at becoming parents and look forward to watching Miriam grow up amongst us.

During the year Rich and Libby Senez with Juno and Stanley relocated to Canada, Abi Ronan moved to New York and Rachel Lindley moved to York. We are grateful for all they brought to the life of the church and wish them well in their new homes. We also said farewell to both Val Bull and Joy Maitland as their funerals were held in St Stephen's. Both Val and Joy were long-standing members of St Stephen's who contributed richly to the life of the church over many years. Susan Daphe also died after a long illness. We commend them into God's care and rejoice in the new life they now enjoy.

With the restrictions on meeting, the annual meetings had to be postponed from the spring to the autumn. I am grateful to all who served an additional 6 months as PCC members and officers during this time. Thank you to all those who have worked to keep the church functioning during this year. Janice Emslie as church warden until September and Susan Rice elected at the APCM. The Standing committee who worked hard to make sense of guidance and decide how we could operate safely as lockdown was imposed. The PCC who have continued to meet on Zoom and deal with particular issues and routine business. Ralph Dunham as treasurer and Rose Mwsigwa as administrator keeping our finances monitored and on track. Suzanne Roberts as PCC deputy chair, safeguarding officer and health and safety officer whose wisdom has been particularly valuable in keeping our activities Covid safe and in accordance with the latest guidance. Rachel Woolf as PCC secretary who has efficiently organised meetings and produced minutes. Also all who have been involved in our worship, both recorded and live – Margaret and Stuart Evans, Suzanne Roberts, Fola Faleti, Joy Faulkner-Mpeho, Lois Gallagher, Timothy Muller and all who have led prayers and read the Bible readings. And finally thank you to all of you for your prayers during this year. We have prayed for each other, our local community, the church and the world and it is very much our unity in prayer that has kept us united as a church family.

There have been some significant things that we could not do this year. We had hoped to reconstitute the elders group through nominations from across the congregation. We were planning to develop our new Mission Action Plan with congregational and community consultation. We were also due to enjoy a church

weekend away at High Leigh in October. I hope the elders group and MAP can be tackled in 2021. However, we decided to postpone the weekend away until 2022 to make as sure as possible that we could go ahead without restrictions. What we have all missed though is our face to face contact and interaction. The social dynamic of the church that is so important to welcoming and supporting people has suffered and we will need to find ways of rebuilding this and getting to know each other once again when restrictions are lifted.

What we need to remember as 2021 begins is that the pandemic and all its struggles are only as a small 'blip' in comparison to God's overarching plan for us, his church and the world. Yes, in the middle of restrictions and lockdown it can seem like Coronavirus has taken over the world and our destiny, but we need to hang on to a wider perspective.

Jeremiah 29 and verse 11 is much quoted:

'For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.'

But we don't often include the next few verses.

'Then you will call upon me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you. You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart. I will be found by you," declares the LORD, "and will bring you back from captivity.'

The coronavirus has in a very real way held us captive during 2020. These verses though tell us very clearly how we should escape from its grip, and that is of course with prayer. 'Call upon me and pray to me and I will listen to you. Seek me and you will find me,' says God.

As the foundations of our world, based on wealth creation at the expense of so many who remain trapped in poverty, are shaken, we are challenged to revalue many things. The Coronavirus has exposed injustice and inequality. It has laid bare how fragile our lives are and all we seek to build for ourselves. It has proved that many things we thought were dependable and unshakable are in fact paper thin and can collapse under even the slightest pressure. Coming out of the pandemic with the idea that things could 'go back to normal' is futile. Instead we need to emerge from this time seeking a new way forward, looking for a new reality. And, as people of faith in the living God, we believe that this new reality is found when we seek God 'with all of our heart.' Many feel like we will come out of the pandemic on our knees. On our knees from exhaustion and stress as we feel broken and destroyed. As Christians we need to come out of this time on our knees in prayer. In prayer to the God who promises to hear us when we call to him and to make himself known to us when we seek him. The God who 'knows the plans he has for us. Plans to prosper us and not to harm us. Plans to give us hope and a future.' I pray that, post pandemic, we at St Stephen's, the church across our diocese and our land and the church across the world, will be united in prayer as we cry out to and seek the God who longs for us to find him.

John Beauchamp

Urban Hope

The last year has been challenging for everybody across the board. This has also been the case for Urban hope. It has given us time to reflect on our work and what is important and look at how we can continue to support young people in Islington. At the start of the pandemic (as schools and clubs closed) we had to furlough members of the Urban Hope team but we are thankful that a number of Volunteers were around to support us in maintaining contact with young people via zoom or helping us deliver care packages to young people. Without the volunteers we would not have been able to do a lot of this work and would not have been able to offer the level of support we did to young people.

Throughout April, May and June, we remained in contact with young people in a number of different ways. We were able to run weekly zoom sessions. During the sessions we ran quizzes, which young people also led. We played bingo and created a space for young people to share how they were feeling.

We also decided to send baking, arts & craft packs home to young people, as well as specific packs for young women. We made over 45 deliveries to 35 young people over this time. We were also able to reach young people and families. Some of the young people and families were nominated by other local charities to receive the packs. This was across the whole of Islington. We were able to deliver these packs in person with the help of a volunteer.

The home deliveries helped us to keep in contact with young people, meet some of their family, and get to know where they live. It also gave space for the young person or their parent to be honest about how things were going.

In July we were able to run face-to-face youth work and bring Urban Hope staff back off furlough. There were a number of restrictions placed on this work. Including reduced numbers and young people having to wear face masks.

On the whole young people were responsive to the changes. We were able to build the groups back up and run a great summer programme. This included playing footgolf, going to an escape room, eating out and going paddle boarding. We also ran sessions on the Marquees estate and got to meet new young people and their families.

This also helped us to build up the numbers for our Junior club.

We were able to end the year with a Christmas party where we were able to serve young people and some of their family members a cooked Christmas dinner.

From April until September we had to put our schools work on hold. In September The City of London Academy Highbury Grove (COLAHG) invited us back in to run mentoring and group work sessions. Along with XLP we were able to place at least 1 youth worker in the school 5 days a week. With at least one day a week where there were 3 youth workers offering support. This work has been crucial to offering support to young people who have been impacted by the pandemic. It has helped us to get a better understanding of the impact on young people including increased levels of anxiety and negative impacts on mental health.

Over the next year we will look at continuing to offer support to COLAHG, as we see this as a priority area where we can be best placed to support vulnerable young people. We have seen first-hand the needs in school for youth workers to stand alongside young people and teachers and offer additional support.

We will continue to remain in contact with young people in the community and send packs home where we can. As things start to ease we will start to rebuild the drop in youth clubs and work to invite young people from the school to access the clubs.

We would also like to take this opportunity to thank everybody that has supported the work of Urban Hope from our volunteers to all who have supported us financially over the last year. Without the support we would not have been able to achieve all that we have. We would like to thank Cripplegate, Breadsticks, Children In Need, and the Jones day Foundation for their continued financial support.

Mat Barber – Urban Hope Director

Manna

The Manna is St. Stephen's project for local homeless and excluded people. We normally offer three drop-in sessions a week (providing food, showers, laundry, postal service, one to one advice, storage, and social and creative groups) and an outing every Thursday. We began in 2020 with our full range of services, as per 2019, but we could not have anticipated the scenario about to unfold which would affect everything we do and the lives of our clients.

The first Coronavirus Lockdown in March 2020 and the subsequent government restrictions and guidance impacted our clients in several ways; giving some a speedy move off the streets into hotel beds, in strict Lockdown due to the Everyone In Directive. Others unable to take up the offer, due to social and psychological issues, were left bereft of any support for several weeks - as we were directed to stop all day centre services by Islington council.

This three week cessation of day centre services in April was very troubling for us as a team, knowing that rough sleepers 'out of the loop' were forced to walk miles to find public toilets, access drinking water and food, as the vast majority of homeless services and charities withdrew to phone support, including almost all of the bigger, established charities. We persevered as a team to provide phone support, emergency food parcels at the door (including drinking water!) and background keywork. It was intense and shocking for us all. After these 3 desperate weeks we and our clients celebrated when the 'moratorium'; was lifted and we were allowed to provide showers. We were shocked to become one of only three day centres in London offering showers and were soon inundated by people desperate to maintain their hygiene. We responded by increasing our opening hours from 6 to 30 per week and found we had a new cohort of clients wanting to wash, stabilize, and get into work, which many of them did.

We are also the only open door access to computers and our laptops are well used by those trying to sustain UC claims and look for work. Nearly a year on, the Manna has settled into a positive community of rough sleepers, and precariously housed people keen to contribute to the Manna which they see as 'their project' and willing to help with cleaning, maintenance and organising our services.

As guidance has shifted, we have also been required to shift, creating uncertainty and at times, understandable distress for our clients, as we move from rough sleepers and disabled 'flatties' to rough sleepers only.

Key Work – Welfare Rights. This work has continued but our vulnerable settled people, have become less connected and some are now disconnected from our community. Keywork is mainly centred around rough sleepers using the service currently and vulnerable / disabled clients who are still in contact with us, by appointment.

EUSS applications continue to be a crucial intervention, opening up housing and employment options and giving access to welfare rights for European clients. During 2020, we have noticed a softening of approach with many Universal Credit applications however much of our keywork hours has involved advocacy by phone as Job Centres closed and advice services such as CAB retreated to mostly limited phone support, requiring the least able to wait up to 2 hours to speak to an adviser. We continue to attend Benefit Tribunal hearings by phone, supporting clients in a social distanced space, to cope with the process of a court hearing.

Everyone in accommodation has been positive, as despite the challenges of self isolating in one room, after weeks or months in the open air, it has opened further doors for a good number of clients and circumvented entrenchment. We know of no Covid deaths in our Manna cohort, both settled or homeless, most of whom have significant co morbidities. The Manna casualties of this Pandemic are isolated centre users, and client volunteers, who have suffered and continue to suffer increased anxiety, suicidal ideation and desperate loneliness. We have spent many hours as a team liaising with social workers, hospital staff and care workers, collaborating to safeguard individuals shattered by LOCKDOWN, and the changes Covid has brought to their lives.

Manna Partnerships – Our collaboration with partners has changed shape, and in some cases stopped e.g. CARIS Islington did not operate a Night Shelter in Winter 2020/2021, Shelter from the Storm were able to accept referrals from us after an uncertain summer in which they were closed operationally. St. Mungo's Outreach continue to collaborate with us for the benefit of our shared clients. Better Lives operate phone support and online counselling and have not been able to outreach at the Manna.

We are grateful to all our funders: Cloudesley, Cripplegate, Islington Giving, Charities Aid Foundation, Asda foundation, Screwfix Foundation, Tesco Bags of Help, Pret Foundation, Brown Dog, Allen Charitable trust, Waitrose Community Fund, and CRASH (new washing machine).whose confidence in the Manna services and the impact upon our clients is crucial to ensure our work continues. In addition, we receive from individuals and from St Stephens which strengthen our budget and the important relationships we have with our parish church and committed individual donors who support us.

We would like to thank the MMC (with special thanks to Tim Elliott for taking the chairmanship of the committee this year), the PCC, our partners, staff team and volunteers for another year at The Manna and for all the support given to us as a project. We are grateful to the Parish and all hall users for the shared use of the building which continues in a spirit of tolerance and grace.

The Manna staff team

Sunday School

The Sunday School team started the year by continuing to use the 'Diddi Disciples' material to create sessions for primary aged children on 2 or 3 Sundays each month. Only a few weeks into the year though the sessions had to stop as we entered lockdown. As services went online John began to create short podcasts for the primary age range with a Bible story, some prayers and thoughts and a 'Billy adventure' each week. It has been good to know that not only younger children have been listening but a few adults as well. With continuing restrictions it was not possible to restart Sunday School activities so the podcast has continued throughout the year.

The Sunday School team was Margaret Evans, Joy Faulkner-Mpeho, Arezou Nasrollahi, Sarah Strang, Daniel Gleadall and John Woolf. However, changes in personal circumstances and commitments during the year has meant that the team can no longer facilitate Sunday School. We thank each of them for their work over previous years. When we begin to emerge from the pandemic during 2021 we will need to prioritise rebuilding this ministry and welcoming back our primary aged children. It would be good to hear from anyone who is interested in exploring involvement in this important ministry.

John Beauchamp

Dreams

During the pandemic it was a real challenge to run Dreams and stay connected with the young people. Unfortunately, we were not able to offer continued support throughout most of last year, which we do regret.

Towards the end of the year Joy Faulkner-Mpeho kindly offered her support and we were able to bring Dreams back regularly over zoom and able to meet in person at the church twice before the end of the year. In November and December, we ran a session in the church on the first Sunday of the month and every other week we ran sessions over zoom.

We started to look at the Psalms and then explored advent. The young people that were able to join over zoom had some great reflections on the passages we explored and have a desire to know more and delve deeper.

Moving forward into this we are looking at how we can explore the Bible more, explore the timeline of the bible and how things fit together and are related. Young people will be able to ask questions about the Bible and how faith and life intersect. While we are still in lockdown we will be sending the young people a Youth Bible that will help explore some of their questions and have activities to nurture their faith. We will also be sending home other resources that young people can use throughout the week. Even if young people are not able to attend the zoom and church (when we can meet in person again) they will have resources they can look at each week and still be connected to what we are exploring and share their thoughts or questions in other ways.

We want to thank Joy for volunteering to support Dreams and the young people. This has enabled us to provide a space to explore faith with young people once again.

Mat Barber and Joy Faulkner-Mpeho

Mission Support Group

Members of the MSG this year have been: John Beauchamp; Elizabeth Ainger; Mary Thomas; Anna Shepherd; Rufin Batota-Mpeho.

The MSG has continued to make recommendations to the PCC for the distribution of our mission support fund and our 3 annual appeals.

We Continued our support of Geoff and Caroline Shave and their work in South Africa by making a donation of £2,000. We also continued to support Tim and Rachel Green and their work in Kuala Lumpur and across south east Asia with a donation of £2,000. We had hoped to share more news and information from our mission partners during 2020 but the effects of the pandemic mean that this has not happened. We will share more in 2021.

Our appeals in 2020 were:

Lent – ALMA 'Wheels for climate change' - £312.50

Harvest – Water Aid - £437.50

Christmas – Manna and Urban Hope - £1,280

We claim Gift Aid on donations and add this to the total that we send on.

We particularly thank Nina and Sara White who made and sold bespoke Christmas masks and scrunchies to support the Christmas appeal for Manna and Urban Hope. They raised a total of £150.

Thank you for your support of our appeals. We aim to support local, national and international charities/mission organisations each year. If you have ideas about who we might support in 2021 please contact John on vicar@ststephenscanonbury.org.uk.

The Mission Support Group.

Safeguarding

As Church Safeguarding Officer I continue to be grateful for the Diocese of London Safeguarding Policy which gives a clear framework and direction for this work and to the PCC for being supportive of the implementation of the good safeguarding practices. Throughout the year St Stephen's has continued to support vulnerable children and adults in the church, through The Manna and through Urban Hope as well as within the worshipping community and we have ensured appropriate procedures are being followed and records kept.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic challenges the PCC of 2019/20 continued through to September 2020 however in June 2020 the PCC adopted the Diocesan parish safeguarding policy as its own, with a copy of the statement on display on the church and hall's noticeboards, and re-appointed the Church Safeguarding Officer (Suzanne Roberts) and Children's Champions (Joy Faulkner, Lois Gallagher).

In April 2020 we responded to the Church of England request to all parishes as it undertook a Safeguarding Past Case Review.

The Diocesan annual Parish audit was completed in June 2020 and the action plan adopted by the PCC in July 2020. As part of this action plan in the autumn we focused on PCC safeguarding training and, recognising the increased concerns relating to domestic violence during the COVID pandemic, put posters in both the women's and men's toilets giving information on locally available help.

Suzanne Roberts, St Stephen's Safeguarding Officer

Staffing Committee

The Staffing Committee and the PCC are deeply appreciative of the tireless work done on behalf of all of us by our staff members. They keep the day-to-day life of St Stephen's, with the Manna and Urban Hope (guided by their respective Management Committees) on track. During 2020 the Covid19 pandemic has meant huge changes for all our staff - often at very short notice. On behalf of our St Stephen's community, I wish to record our special thanks for what they have each been doing for us and for those they serve on our behalf in the local community.

At the close of 2020, the PCC employed 7 paid members of staff (3 full-time, 4 part-time), as follows:

Administration: Rose Mwesigwa (Administrator - Finance and Buildings Management)

The Manna: Kaaren Morris (Manna Project worker), Kate Moore (Manna Project Worker),

Kemi Buraimoh (Manna Catering Co-ordinator)

Urban Hope: Mat Barber (Director, Urban Hope), Toyin Ayedun-Alase (Youth and Community Worker - female), K'Journ Johnson (Youth and Community Worker).

Staffing changes during 2020:

Urban Hope: Anna Herold returned home to Hungary at the start of lock-down in March, and the PCC put her on furlough from 20 April. In July she decided not to return to the UK, giving notice, and leaving Urban Hope on 14 August. She was furloughed from 20 April until 14 August.

Toyin Ayedun-Alase joined Urban Hope on 26 October 2020.

Implications of the Covid19 pandemic on our staff:

Urban Hope: During the first pandemic lock-down, Urban Hope was unable to work in schools or to open Youth clubs, so face-to-face youth work was curtailed. The PCC used the Government Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme to furlough Anna Herold and K'Journ Johnson from 20 April, while Mat Barber continued to administrate Urban Hope and to work with the young people, connecting remotely and in outdoor situations. Anna Herold was furloughed full-time from 20 April to 14 August (see above) and K'Journ Johnson was furloughed full-time from 20 April to 30 June, and then part-time (working 16 hrs/week and furloughed 24hrs/week) from 1 - 14 July, before returning to work full-time. During the November lock-down, Urban Hope was able to continue work, as schools remained open, and some work was done from home.

The Manna: The Manna has remained open throughout the pandemic, thanks to remarkable commitment from each member of staff and a number of wonderful volunteers. Supported by the MMC (chaired now by Tim Elliott), with agreement of the PCC and the Standing committee, negotiations with Islington Council allowed the project to adapt methods of working and times of opening to be Covid-safe. The Manna has been one of the few day centres in London to remain open, offering the homeless community food, showers and laundry facilities, together with key-work support to help people into accommodation as well as other issues.

Administration: Rose has been working from home when possible, coming in to the office when required to supervise cleaning, order materials, and oversee building repairs etc. We are grateful for her willingness to adapt, and work odd hours when necessary.

The PCC approved post of (Administrator - Communications and Lettings) remains vacant, as funding is not available.

Cleaning of the church and the halls has been done on a contract basis since February 2018. During 2020, John Woolf did the cleaning, working 10 hours/week from January. During the first lock-down, hall and church hire organisations cancelled their bookings, but cleaning continued for 6-8 hrs/week to support the work of The Manna. John ceased his cleaning role at the end of October, and the contract was taken up by Simone Silva dos Santos. She is currently doing 8 hrs/week.

Caretaking duties are shared on an informal basis by the occupants of the maisonette.

Staff salaries are paid through either

- a) the PCC General Fund (administration, and contribution to costs at both the Manna and Urban Hope)
- b) funding through grants and from other organisations
- c) giving from supporters or
- d) fundraising activities.

In addition to our paid staff, our Volunteers are the lifeblood of St. Stephen's and our outreach projects. Many hours of unpaid work is done by some church members (despite a number of our "elderly and Covid-vulnerable" volunteers having had to stand down in 2020) and other local people, supporting Urban Hope and the Manna in particular.

On behalf of all church members, I would like to say a huge thank you to our staff, and all those who do so much on a voluntary basis, for their continuing commitment and hard work.

Katie Melville

Chair, Staffing Committee (whose members are John Beauchamp (vicar), Lizzie Evans, and Susan Ekpe-Rice)

Buildings Committee

Following the 2016 Quinquennial inspection which highlighted many areas of the church building in need of repair, most of the recommended works were carried out under the guidance of the church architects, Carden and Godfrey during 2018/19.

One section of the Quinquennial report referred to cracks in the masonry supporting the spire requiring further investigation. We successfully applied for funding for expert investigation which recommended that repair was necessary. Carden & Godfrey prepared the plans, specifications for tender and conducted the tendering process. Using the recommended contractor on whose tender submission the project costs have been based, the total cost, including VAT, is estimated at £84,139. We applied to Cloudesley for funding and in November were granted £60,000 towards the project. Other grants have been applied for that we hope will substantially meet the cost of this work, along with local fundraising, donations and a contribution from our general fund. We anticipate beginning this work in mid-April so it can be completed during the summer.

Building activities during 2020:

1. There were two drain overflows in the halls which were dealt with
2. We purchased and installed equipment to enable live streaming of the services this was financed by a grant from Cloudesley.
3. A central heating service was carried out which highlighted work needed. Not all of the works were addressed in 2020, the remedial work is still ongoing.
4. A 5 year fixed wiring test was carried out showing that work will be required in 2021.
5. The roof over the halls has continued to be a problem. A solution will be worked out, and acted upon as soon as conditions allow.

Other works we had hoped to complete in 2020 were delayed due to the pandemic.

The buildings committee would like to thank Richard Senez for chairing the group and for his knowledgeable guidance ; Richard and family are now in Canada. Since both Richard and Stuart Evans are no longer members, we are in urgent need of support. If you would like to serve, or know anyone who would like to serve, on the committee, please let us know

Mike Dana

Health and Safety

Rose has maintained a general oversight of Health and Safety for our buildings with the Church Warden and Welcome Team continuing this during services and church events. From a Health & Safety point of view the focus has been on ensuring we have provided a safe worship and community space, and a safe work environment for staff and volunteers, despite the COVID-19 pandemic; and that we have remained compliant with government legislation and recommendations throughout.

We have ensured that COVID risk assessments are in place and followed for all key activities i.e., Services of worship on Sundays, Occasional Offices (Marriages and Funerals), and Urban Hope and Manna work; and that these have been reviewed, and where necessary, updated as we have come out of lock down, changed Tier, or gone into lock down.

There have been no St Stephen's attributable COVID-19 outbreaks and no other significant health and safety incidents to report

Of a more routine nature, the annual H&S inspection was completed in January 2019 and the need to log incidents was reminded to staff at the January 2019 staff meeting. The fire alarm was inspected and serviced in October 2020 and fire alarm testing continues at least monthly.

Throughout the year general maintenance has been carried out to keep our buildings fit and safe for purpose and the kitchen undergoes a deep clean, as a minimum, every 6 months and we have maintained the 5-star food hygiene rating.

In the autumn there were signs of mouse activity in the halls and this was addressed with advice from professional Pest Control inspection.

In December we cleaned the church steps to reduce the risk of slips from build-up of moss and algae.

We had hoped that we would improve our external bin storage area in 2020 but this has not proved possible however it has undergone high pressure water cleaning.

Thank you everyone for keeping a level of safety awareness and reporting any concerns to keep St Stephen's a safe place to work and worship.

Rose Mwesigwa H & S officer; Suzanne Roberts PCC H&S representative

Churchwarden's report

2020 was an unusual year to start the role as church warden. I have not been given the opportunity to fully get to grips with the role due to all the restrictions and lockdowns. However, I would like to say that it has been a smooth transition into the role through the guidance and support from Suzanne Roberts, John Beauchamp and Janice Emslie. Suzanne's knowledge of health and safety helped ensure that we meet the specific Covid restrictions and guidelines when we were able to resume services.

Due to the restrictions most of our services were recorded online, there were podcasts for our younger members too. Many Thanks to John Beauchamp and all who contribute to these services. We also had live weekly Zoom calls for the church community to keep in touch even if we can't worship together. Thanks to Rachel Woolf, Timothy Muller and Mat Barber for chairing the zoom calls. I am also grateful to everyone in the welcoming team.

Thinking ahead for 2021, I hope we manage to appoint a second church warden. The support will be greatly appreciated as we plan to open for services and look forward to the end of the lockdown and restrictions.

Susan Rice, Church Warden

Deanery Synod

The Islington Deanery Synod meetings in 2020 were severely disrupted by the Coronavirus pandemic. Synod managed to meet 3 times in the year. In February at St Clement's and in April and December on Zoom.

In February Synod met at St Clement's and spent time discussing the Stepney area plan to be submitted as part of the 2020-2030 diocesan vision process. The Area Dean provided feedback from Bishop's staff meetings and views gained from consulting with young people at churches in Islington. The discussions provided a wide range of views and ideas about the possible future shape of ministry across Islington churches.

In April Synod was joined on Zoom by Bishop Joanne to discuss ideas for the 2020-2030 Diocesan vision strategy. We heard about the Bishop of London's vision that 'Every Londoner should encounter the love of God in Christ..' The broad themes of the strategy were outlined as becoming more confident disciples and compassionate communities and finding ways of encouraging creative growth in churches and congregations. Key priorities are that we should become younger, safer and more racially just. After a short presentation there was a general discussion about how our current resources might be used towards these aims and what new resources and initiatives we would need to develop to grow in these areas.

In December the new Synod met for the first time following elections at APCMs earlier in the year. The Area Dean began by describing the purpose and role of the Synod and giving all representatives and clergy a chance to introduce themselves. Synod officers were elected: Jill Courtneil as lay chair, John Mackenzie as treasurer (on the retirement of Fola Faleti), and Fiona Alty agreed to be acting secretary. There was a discussion of how churches have been maintaining ministry during lockdown and general notices and information.

At the APCM in September Fola Faleti and David Ainger both stepped down from being Deanery Synod representatives after many years of service. We are immensely grateful to both David and Fola for their faithful representation of St Stephen's at these meetings over many years. Anna Shepherd was elected as a representative and there is one current vacancy. It would be wonderful to fill the vacancy and have our full representation on Synod so if anyone would like to offer to do this please do get in touch.

John Beauchamp

Finance report

The total income for the year 2020 was £411,338. This income was made up of restricted funds of £249,218; this includes £137,496 of donations and grants to support the work of the Manna and Manna Welfare and £102,336 to support the work of Urban Hope. Grants were also received for a survey for the Church Tower, £2,046, and for live streaming equipment, £5,000. Unrestricted funds incoming amounted to £162,121 principally Church Giving and fees earned from property and Church activities. Contributions from Church members including gift aid amounted to £92,744, comparable to income of £91,269 in the previous year, however, income from premises hire was severely impacted by the Pandemic and fell from £43,493 in 2019 to only £7,760.

Expenditure for the year 2020 amounted to £376,268. Spending was £213,375 of restricted funds and £162,893 of unrestricted funds. The financial position at year end was £277,590 (2019: £242,469) made up of £207,700 (2019: £154,457) of restricted funds and £69,890 (2019: £88,012) of unrestricted funds.

The Manna (including Welfare), Urban Hope and the General Church fund are all in excess of their stated reserves policy of 3 months expenditure; with the General fund holding at year end 6 months reserves, Manna 8 months and Urban Hope 10 months.

Budgets have been approved for 2021 by the PCC and management committees of each of the ministries. Manna raised grant income in line with budget and posted a surplus of £43,373. Note that this surplus contains grant income that is allocated for activities in 2020 and also 2021. Urban Hope continue to raise sufficient grant income to cover their activities and posted a surplus of £5,593 in 2020 and remain in a strong financial position.

Covid has clearly had a dramatic effect on the finances of the Church by limiting the ability to raise income at services and through premises letting. Costs have been saved where possible, including the use of government furlough schemes. Finance committee, Standing Committee and PCC continue to monitor the ongoing financial situation closely and are able to implement further cost savings if the financial situation deteriorates to critical levels.

The finance team is myself, John Beauchamp, Timothy Muller and David Coffey (Gift Aid). We saw the departure of Will Smart and Libby Senez from the finance team last year and I would like to thank them for their help. I would also like to thank the remaining team for their help and support over the last year and for the coming year. The Church Finance team is always looking for volunteers and if you think this is something that interests you please do get in touch. The rest of the support team within the Church comprises Rose Mwesigwa (Church Administrator and Bookkeeper), Anne Cartwright (Manna Treasurer), Kate Durkin (Urban Hope Treasurer), Matt Barber (Urban Hope Operations Manager) and Katie Melville (Staff). Thank you so much for all your work this year.

Ralph Dunham – Treasurer

For the Year Ended 31 December 2020

	Note	Restrict ed £	Unrestrict ed £	2020 Total £	2019 Total £
Incoming resources					
Voluntary Income				-	132,372
General		2,350	92,744	95,094	
Manna		20,222		20,222	
Urban Hope		10,905		10,905	
Activities & Grant Income					
General		7,036	69,377	76,413	180,487
Manna		111,839	-	111,839	84,726
Manna Welfare		5,435	-	5,435	5,200
Urban Hope		91,432	-	91,432	48,689
Total incoming resources	2	249,218	162,121	411,339	451,475
Resources Expended					
<i>Church Activities</i>					
Missionary & charitable giving		(1,408)	(4,000)	(5,408)	(5,854)
Manna		(97,388)	-	(97,388)	(93,621)
Manna Welfare		(6,812)	-	(6,812)	(5,800)
Urban Hope		(105,443)	-	(105,443)	(115,145)
Other mission		-	(10,121)	(10,121)	(12,129)
Diocese of London		-	(75,000)	(75,000)	(70,000)
Building works		(2,324)	-	(2,324)	(37,946)
High Leigh Weekend		-	-	-	(1,010)
Premises running		-	(73,773)	(73,773)	(126,350)
Total resources expended	3	(213,375)	(162,893)	(376,268)	(467,855)
Net incoming/(outgoing) resources		35,843	(772)	35,071	(16,380)
Transfers		17,400	(17,349)	-	0
Net movement in funds		53,243	(18,121)	35,071	(16,380)
Funds at 1 January 2020		154,457	88,012	242,469	258,849
Funds at 31 December 2020	8	207,700	69,890	277,590	242,469

St Stephen's Church, Canonbury

Balance Sheet

As at 31 December 2020

		2020	2019
	Note	£	£
Current assets			
Debtors	5	2,803	8,890
Cash at bank		<u>269,587</u>	225,713
		272,390	234,603
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	6	5,200	2,866
Creditors: amounts falling due within two year	7		5,000
Net assets	8	<u>277,590</u>	<u>242,469</u>
Funds			
Restricted funds		207,700	154,457
Unrestricted funds		69,890	88,012
Total funds	9	<u>277,590</u>	<u>242,469</u>