

ST. NICHOLAS CHURCH, WARWICK



ANNUAL PARISH CHURCH MEETING 2021 – 2022

Minutes of the Annual Vestry Meeting held on 29th April 2021.

Present (On-line)

Rev'd Linda Duckers (chair), Jane Rogers (Treasurer), Rev'd Anita Morgan (Curate), James Bazin (Secretary) and some **29** members.

Apologies

Apologies were received from **14** persons listed on the Electoral Roll.

Opening Remarks

The meeting was opened with a Prayer.

The Chair advised that there were two meetings; the first, Annual Vestry Meeting, was where we elected the new Church Wardens and was a very short meeting. The second, the APCM, followed where we discussed reports as well the other elections.

The Chair reminded the meeting that the electorate for the annual vestry meeting was all whose names were on the Electoral Roll of the Parish as revised on 31st March 2021, and all who were registered as Local Government electors in the Parish.

Chair thanked Sarah Bazin for arranging and setting up the Zoom meeting and acting as host for both meetings.

Minutes of the Last Meeting (6th October 2020)

Claire Spivey proposed the minutes be accepted as an accurate record; this was seconded by **Sally Howells**, with all in favour.

There were no matters arising.

Election of Churchwardens for the year 2021 - 2022

Before we moved to the election of our churchwardens for the coming year, Chair wished to thank both Pam Daniel and Paul Williams for their hard work over the past 6 months. As was known from the APCM 12 months ago, Pam Daniel intended to stand down this year, having served us exceptionally well over the past four years. Chair wished to thank her for her hard work, prayer, dedication and love for St Nicholas Church which had enabled everything to run so smoothly. As all were aware, she spent a year on her own as Church Warden and also had the challenging role of steering us through the re-opening of the church after lockdown. Despite this extra pressure, Pam had been a faithful and prayerful churchwarden and we are very grateful for all she had done. God had other things for Pam right now and we prayed that she would be guided by Him to serve him in other ways. Chair stated that she deserved a round of applause!

In addition, Chair thanked all those who had supported Pam in various ways over the past 18 months. Again, she stated that all members of the congregation were very grateful for their ministry.

The meeting moved on to the elections of Church Wardens for 2021/2022.

Chair was delighted that **Paul Williams** had agreed to stand again as churchwarden for the coming year. Paul had been proposed by **Pam Daniel**. and seconded by **James Bazin**. Chair thanked Paul and advised that we were very grateful.

Chair was also delighted that we had received another nomination to join Paul as churchwarden. She reminded the meeting that **Sarah Bazin** had previously been churchwarden for 7 years and then had to step down and having had 2 years “rest” she was now willing and desiring to stand again for churchwarden, in the absence of anyone else coming forward. And so we were delighted to have received Sarah’s nomination. She had been proposed by **Diana King** and seconded by **Sally Howells**.
Chair thanked Sarah.

As no further nominations for Church Warden had been received before the meeting, Chair proposed that **Paul and Sarah** be appointed as Church Wardens for the Year 2021/2022.

A show of hands in support of this proposal was called for – unanimous with no abstentions. Chair congratulated **Paul and Sarah**, who were both duly elected.

The meeting commenced at 7.00pm and closed at 7.19pm

CHAIRMAN

DATE

Minutes of the Annual Parochial Church Meeting Held on 29th April 2021.

Present (On-Line)

Rev'd Linda Duckers (chair), Jane Rogers (Treasurer), Rev'd Anita Morgan (Curate), James Bazin (Secretary) and some **29** members.

Apologies

Apologies were received from **14** persons listed on the Electoral Roll.

Minutes of the last Meeting (6th October 2020)

Ian Lovecy proposed that the minutes be accepted as an accurate record, **Diana King** seconded and all were in favour.

Matters Arising from the Minutes

There were no matters arising.

The Reports (March 2021)

Chair opened the subject of the Reports for the year to December 2020 and hoped that all had read both the financial report and the more general Annual Report – they had been circulated by email or post to all persons listed on the Electoral Roll, in plenty of time to be read and for any queries or recommendations to be received in advance of the meeting. A lot of information was in the reports and many people had contributed – She thanked everyone for their contribution.

Chair advised that, in a few moments there would be an opportunity to discuss any of these reports and make any recommendations to the PCC before we “receive” them. Firstly...

Electoral Roll Report

This was presented in the Annual Report by Don Bull, our Electoral Roll Officer. Following the revision of the ER as at **31st March 2021**, the electoral roll stood at 103 people, which was a reduction of 1 from the roll of the previous year.

The Chair thanked Don Bull for his work in renewing and maintaining the Electoral Roll.

PCC & activities of parish generally – Chair wished to highlight three things:

Chair wished to stress that the arrival of Covid in March 2020 had resulted in a difficult year for all, but highlighted the following:

Safeguarding: The report for 2020 by Sally Howells, our Parish Safeguarding Officer, was contained in the Annual Report. No safeguarding issues were raised during the year. Chair was sure everyone would join her in thanking Sally for her hard work and commitment to keeping everyone safe. She also thanked Chris Foy for continuing to monitor and report on the “Dashboard” progress chart.

Sally Howells responded thanking all for their co-operation.

Children and Families Worker: – Chair noted that in June we would be saying farewell to Claire Reid as she takes up a Curacy in the Birmingham Diocese. Her last Sunday with us will be on **6th June 2021**, when our more formal ‘goodbye’ would be said and we should hear something about her new parish. Chair noted that we will be thanking Claire at her final service, but just wished to acknowledge at our annual meeting, the excellent work she had done with our families over the couple of years she had been with us. All wished her well for the future.

Looking ahead, Chair noted the following

New Curate – Eira Hale was due to start her full time role here at St Nicholas in July. To be Ordained Deacon 4th July, the 11th July would be her first service. Chair was sure all would warmly welcome her and her family.

New Estate – Chair noted that, if you had been along **Europa Way** recently, you would know that there are about 800 new houses – all in our parish. It was therefore a part of our ministry to reach out to these people alongside everyone else in our parish, not forgetting the Woodloes. Over the next year or so we would need to put a strategy together as to how we might do this.

New Building Project – It had been quite a few years since we had a significant building project, but we were now having to address the need for the repair of the North Elevation including the 5 pinnacles. So you should expect to hear more of this in the coming year. She thanked the Fabric Committee, chaired by Sarah Bazin and especially including Robert Perkins, for his expertise, for taking this project on!

Chair also particularly wished to express thanks for the on-going ministry of our **Reader – Fiona Trewick** and our **Curate – Anita Morgan**, especially in view of their on-going commitments in their busy day jobs. She stressed that we were very fortunate to have such gifted people serving at St Nicholas Church and were extremely grateful for the time they had given, their commitment and prayer.

Rather than go through each report individually, Chair invited any comments or questions on any of the reports - which had been in circulation over the past three weeks. (excluding Finance & Fabric & Deanery Synod)

She wished to publicly thank everyone involved in the life and work of the church – it was much appreciated.

Questions: Chair invited Questions from the members on any of the Reports other than Financial, Fabric and Deanery Synod.

Robert Perkins asked whether the Transforming Communities activities were funded by the Churches in Warwick. Chair advised that this was the case through the Henry VIII Trust – Pot money which came essentially from the St Nicholas Church funds following the closure of Christ Church, Woodloes which was in St Nicholas Parish. Additional funding and Grants from DEFRA and the County Council have supported the provision of food to families in need within the CV34 Area.

Chair invited Jane Rogers to comment on the Financial report.

Financial (Jane Rogers):

Jane Rogers highlighted the following key points from the last Financial Year, as follows:

- In year surplus of £25,721, included an increase in the value of the Lees Bequest shares of £4,173. Without this the annual surplus was £21,548.
- Year-end position (overall balances increased by £25,721):

Unrestricted/designated	Henry	Lees & FA	TOTAL
£173,191	£49,018	£82,949	£305,158
(£169,856 in 2019)	(£32,572 in 2019)	(£77,008 in 2019)	(£279,436 in 2019)

- Lees Bequest value is now £64,862 plus £17,915 accumulated interest.

Income reduced in 2020 compared to 2019, due to Covid. Main points are:

- Receipts from giving including income tax claims decreased to £51,968 (£58,510 in 2019). Collection plate and envelopes giving reduced as we had long periods without normal Sunday services due to Covid. However, some members of the congregation have contributed online, and some have started new standing orders.
- Income from church bookings reduced to only £129 (£2,629 in 2019).
- Income from weddings and funerals reduced to £936 (£3,054 in 2019). There were funerals in 2020 but mainly at the crematorium and fees for these funerals go to the Diocese.
- Other income including teas and concerts reduced to £2,912 (£7,025 in 2019).
- Furlough income for the Music Director of £1,404 was received in 2020.

Although our income reduced in 2020 compared with 2019, our expenditure in 2020 also decreased:

- There were no major building related projects. Building maintenance and running costs were £13,000 (£33,627 in 2019).
- Stig Graham retired from Myton Hospice in March 2020, so we only contributed £907 towards his salary and costs in 2020 (£3,796 in 2019).
- Lower Ministry and Messy church costs of £952 (£4,059 in 2019).
- Lower music costs compared with 2019 due to the change of Music Director in summer 2019 and then reduced services, costs of £2,987 (£3,986 in 2019). We have also been able to claim furlough income for the Music Director.

As always, my thanks go to Linda and the PCC for their support. Also, I am grateful to James Bazin for doing the weekly banking when we had services.

Questions:

- a) Diana King asked whether the Churches were still providing funding to Myton Hospice for the Chaplain, since the departure of Stig Graham.
Chair responded advising that the Chaplain's position had not been renewed after Stig's departure and that there had been changes in the structure of Myton Hospice.
- b) Sally Denga asked if we had considered return of the Furlough Monies (claimed for Chris Foy) to the Government.
Chair responded that this had not been considered but would be reviewed at the PCC. Chris Foy took the view that the large supermarkets had returned some funding, largely as they had made significantly increased profits.

There being no further Questions on Finance, Chair thanked Jane Rogers for all her hard work and expertise in so efficiently managing the Church Financial matters. We were all very grateful to her and also to Simon for his support.

Fabric:

Chair asked Sarah Bazin if there was anything further to report. Sarah responded that there had been no significant works in 2020.

Robert Perkins noted that we should be looking at a new Quinquennial (5 year Building review period) during 2021. Also that the major project for the completion of works on the North Side of the Building will be put in hand.

Chair thanked the Fabric Committee for their work and on-going maintenance of the Church building and grounds.

Deanery Synod Report and Election.

A summary of the year's events of the Deanery Synod, written by Chris Foy, was contained in the Annual Report. Chair thanked Chris Foy for his involvement as sole representative.

Questions:

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| Clare Spivey | Asked whether any other members of the congregation felt called to join Chris Foy. LD advised that elections will be next in the order of business. |
| Antoine Mitchell | Asked what was involved and felt that he would be able to contribute. LD advised that he could discuss details with Chris Foy, which Chris Foy was happy to do - but in the meantime he could be proposed and seconded. |

Elections:

The Chair advised that St Nicholas have 3 places available (ex officio of PCC) and that the involvement is 5 meetings per year.

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|-----------|---------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Standing: | Chris Foy - agreed to continue. | |
| | Proposer: Oliver Lane. | Secunder: Claire Spivey |
| | Antoine Mitchell | |
| | Proposer: Sue Chetwynd. | Secunder: Ian Lovecy |

The above were duly elected, there being one vacancy unfilled.

LD thanked Chris for his on-going involvement and noted that, if any other members of the congregation wished to stand later, they would be welcome, contact LD and CF.

Parochial Church Council for 2021-2022

Chair informed the meeting that as we had over 100 persons on the Electoral Roll, we could have up to 12 elected members on the PCC. To be elected onto the PCC you must have been on ER for minimum of 6 months. Others can be invited to attend for specific reasons (*in attendance*).

Ex-officio members. – Rev. Linda Duckers (Chair), Paul Williams (Church Warden); Sarah Bazin (Church Warden); Rev. Anita Morgan (Curate); Fiona Trewick (Reader); Chris Foy and Antoine Mitchell (Deanery Synod Reps.). Total of 7 Ex-officio members.

The following **Elected members** were willing to continue for another year: Jane Rogers (Treasurer); Anne Heaney; Roy Emmerson; Katie Jelfs; Jonathan Forbes; Robert Perkins; Ian Lovecy; James Bazin (Secretary). Total of 8 members

New members standing for election:
None.

All PCC members standing for re-election were elected unanimously by show of hands.

Once again, Chair gave her grateful thanks to all members of the PCC for their hard work and support throughout the year, when many issues had been addressed and brought to a conclusion.

Appointments

Sides Persons for 2021-2022

Chair advised that Sides People were now to be elected by the PCC.

Independent Examiner/Auditor.

Jane Rogers advised that Jonathan Cousins had indicated his willingness to continue in 2021/22. JR again reminded the meeting that he carries out a full examination of the Accounts and makes valid recommendations – he was not just an Auditor.

It was proposed that JC be re-appointed

Proposed by Oliver Lane Seconded by Jonathan Forbes.

and this was unanimously approved by show of hands. Chair advised that Jonathan Cousins was duly appointed.

Any Other Business

- 1) The Chair thanked James Bazin for his work over the past year as PCC Secretary.
- 2) The Chair advised that there would be a very short PCC Meeting on line on Tuesday 4th May at 7.30pm to appoint Officers, immediately followed by the first full PCC Meeting.
- 3) Sarah Bazin proposed a big vote of thanks, with our love and support, to Linda for her leadership and all the time and effort and pastoral care given to us unstintingly over the past year. Sarah also thanked Anita Morgan and her husband Ciaran for having introduced us to On-Line Services and Pam Daniel for her support in her role as Church Warden.

The Meeting closed with the Grace at 8.00 p.m.

CHAIRMAN

DATE

The Vicar's Report 2021

The year 2021 has been another year of enormous challenge for the world and for the church, globally and locally. The Coronavirus Pandemic sadly continued to impact on our lives and cause us to live with constant change and uncertainty. The year began with a National Lockdown on 4th January 2021 and it was not until 4th April 2021, Easter Day, that we were able to hold our first in-person church service. It was a special day for lots of reasons therefore. Obviously first and foremost we celebrated that Jesus is Alive! In addition, we held an outdoor sunrise service at 6.30am – thanks to Anita - which was very cold, but great! This was followed by our 10am Holy Communion service – again it was great to be back in church.

As the year progressed, the government and the Church of England continued to produce frequent guidelines. Constant change and uncertainty. Thankfully due to the national roll out of a vaccine programme, churches were able to start the slow process towards opening up, but this was not without difficulties as we negotiated our way trying to keep everyone safe with getting back to some sense of normality. Hand sanitiser, mask wearing, social distancing, were the new 'norms' for our lives. Singing was not always permitted. Holy Communion was given in one kind only (bread) due to the increased risks with taking wine (and as I write this, it is over 2 years since the congregation had wine at Communion. Hopefully wine will be reintroduced on Easter Day 2022, subject to a risk assessment!) From July 2021, the church building remained open for worship on Sundays (with the odd exception). We were able to hold some of our Christmas services – including an outdoor Nativity service in the rain. But what a year!

The year 2021 was also the year when the New Registration System for Weddings began. Another thing to get our heads around! More change.

It was also the year when we said farewell to Claire Reid, our Children and Families Worker. Claire left in the June to be ordained as deacon and to begin her Curacy in Birmingham. We were very grateful for her ministry, and recognise how difficult it was during the last year with lockdowns.

The year 2021 was also the year when we gained a new Curate. Rev Eira Hale was ordained as deacon on 4th July 2021 at Coventry Cathedral. We are very pleased to have Eira serving her curacy with us, and especially for her interest in the New Housing in our parish and for starting up the Toddlers Group once again.

A big thank you to our churchwardens. For the first few months of the year they were Pam Daniel and Paul Williams, then at our APCM 2021, Sarah Bazin and Paul Williams were elected. I am very grateful for the hard work and dedication of the churchwardens and those who assist them. They do a brilliant job. Thank you.

As always, I appreciate the work of the PCC and Standing Committee, both of which have continued to meet, even during lockdowns. A particular thanks to our Treasurer, Jane Rogers and our PCC Secretary, James Bazin. Also a big thank you to Robert Perkins who has taken on the North Elevation building project. Much appreciated. When open and when closed, the church building still needs looking after as does the churchyard. Thank you for the churchwardens and those involved in caring for the fabric of the building.

A big thank you to Sally Howells who has continued to do an excellent job as our Parish Safeguarding Officer. We are very grateful as there has been a lot of extra work this year. Much appreciated.

We have been fortunate over the year to have benefitted from the ministry of many different people: lay and ordained. I wish to thank everyone who has contributed to the life of the church in so many different ways, including:

- Clergy and lay colleagues who have blessed us through excellent talks/reflections/sermons as well as all who have contributed to our rich variety of worship in other ways. Thank you for those who have embraced new technology and enabled our zoom services to happen. A particular thank you to Ciaran Morgan for Live streaming some of our services.
- The musical ministry of Chris Foy, the Choir and the Bell ringers are all much appreciated. It has continued to be a challenging year, especially for the choir, during months of not being able to sing or only if wearing masks. It is wonderful that these restrictions are now lifted & we have the choir & congregation back singing! A big thank you to Ian Lovecy too for organising our Sunday afternoon concerts – it is great these are starting up once again.
- Our House Group leaders who have had to work more creatively over the year – sometimes on zoom, other times meeting in person wearing masks and sitting 2m apart. Thank you for your ministry.
- All those who have worked in children’s ministry – it has been difficult, but I am grateful for the all you have done to keep in touch with the children/families. It is wonderful to have Toddler group back and also the 9am Rise and Shine.
- Thank you to Fiona Trewick, our Reader, for her ministry in the parish and also in the wider diocese.
- Thank you to Paul Hamilton our Administrator. It has been a difficult year – working from home for some of it and then trying to get things going when many things in church life had stopped. Thank you for your hard work. Much appreciated.
- Thanks to Bishop David who at the end of the year began the important ministry of Home Communion to those unable to come to church. A very valuable ministry. And also to Rev Anita for taking Communion to Ann Deakin.
- Finally, an enormous thank you to our Curates, Rev Anita & Rev Eira, who have worked so hard, during the year and contribute so much to our church life. Anita has a full time, day job as a doctor in the NHS and yet she gives so much time and energy to St Nicholas. We are all very appreciative. Thank you both.

For many of us the year 2021 has been another tough year. It has been challenging and costly. Some have known illness or bereavement, loss of jobs or roles, loneliness, fear or pain. We have all faced uncertainty and have missed our family and friends, including our church family. But God has been with us and will continue to be with us as we go forward in 2022. Let us pray that 2022 will be a better year for us all. Let us continue to put our trust in our faithful, unchanging God.

Rev Linda Duckers
Vicar of St Nicholas Church, Warwick

Church Wardens’ Report

At the beginning of 2021 the Covid virus continued to present challenges for Worship in Church with Sunday Services going back to being held via Zoom. This continued until we all met in person, although masked, for the first time on Easter Sunday.

In spite of not meeting in person we started on a good note with Zoom sessions initiated by Rev. Dr. Anita Morgan between Christmas 2020 and Epiphany 2021 which involved different members of the Congregation leading evening reflection sessions on line.

The Guidance from the Government and Church of England continued to shape our activities as Covid cases increased, decreased and then increased again and many of our usual outreach activities – Parent and Toddler Group, Summer Teas, Sunday afternoon Concerts and general lettings were once again put on hold. Weddings and Baptisms were postponed but Funerals with restricted numbers were held. Letters were sent to members of the Tuesday group each week by Pam Daniel, Service information was emailed out each week by Rev. Linda Duckers and posted to those not on the internet by the Church Administrator.

During lockdown on line information gained a new significance and from February Anita led a group looking at the Church's Website with her husband Cieron undertaking development work.

In April the APCM was again held on line and Pam Daniel stood down as Church Warden. Many thanks to Pam for her 4 years of service eighteen months of which was as sole Warden. She undertook sterling work during the lock down with Risk Assessments and ensuring that there was a supply of masks and hand gel and all that was needed to keep those visiting the Church safe. Paul Williams and Sarah Bazin were elected as Church Wardens.

We were delighted to be joined by the Rev. Eira Hale in the role of Curate following her Ordination in July and she her husband Duncan and their girls moved into Warwick over the summer.

August saw an easing of the restrictions and two long delayed Weddings took place. At the beginning of September another Wedding and the BBQ was held on a lovely warm sunny Sunday after Church to welcome Eira and her family - thank you to Diana and Anthony King for masterminding the cooking!

Eira initiated the restart of the Parent and Toddler Group with long standing and new volunteers. It didn't take long for the numbers attending to return to near pre Covid levels.

House Groups restarted during the autumn with face to face meetings in Church. We are very grateful to Bishop David Evans for reinstating Home Communion. Grateful thanks are due to Oliver Lane and Barbara Springall who undertook this important role for so many years.

We continue to be very grateful to the King Henry V111 Endowed Trust for the payment of our Parish Share, Linda's stipend and housing costs and a grant which is restricted to use in CV34. We have been involved with the Project Pool Group discussions with representatives from St. Mary's, All Saints, St. Pauls and Budbrooke on the best use of new funds 85% for Community Projects and 15% of the income for Church Fabric – many thanks to Steve Copley a Trustee of the King Henry Trust who chairs the Project Pool Meetings.

The Church Architect, Stephen Oliver undertook the Quinquennial Inspection in October. Robert Perkins submitted a Faculty to the Diocese for the repairs to the North Side of the Church and began preparations for grant applications by sending out a questionnaire to hirers of the Church concerning their use of the Church as a valuable Community space.

In December our gas supplier went out of business and we were put with a short term emergency supplier. At the same time there was great concern that we had a gas leak but, following tests, all was found to be working normally.

Many thanks to Sally Howells who has taken us through the implementation of the new Diocesan guidance on Safer Recruitment and People Management and for all her Safeguarding work throughout the year.

Eira's special interest in making links to the residents in the new housing developments led to a small working party putting together a package and note concerning the Christmas Services which was then delivered to every occupied house.

Much to everyone's disappointment Christmas saw the cancellation of the Carol Service in Church due to a spike in Covid cases, although an online service was held. The Nativity Service led by Eira and Anita on Christmas Eve took place outside and was well attended by families in spite of the wet weather. While the Midnight Service on Christmas Eve was cancelled the Christmas Morning Service was held.

Thank you to everyone who has worked together to keep Church Community alive. Many thanks to Linda for leading us in Worship and Anita and Eira for working so hard and for having so ably picked up the reins while Linda coped with her Father's final illness.

Sarah Bazin and Paul Williams

Reader Report April 2022

I guess the last year hasn't been as 'normal' as we had hoped a year ago. We were just coming out of the third lockdown and embracing the opportunities of getting vaccinated. For many of us that has given us a much greater freedom and confidence to go out and do things. I think that freedom has also been reflected in what we have been doing at church and also in my other roles.

In the last year I have mainly continued to work from home, but am now sometimes able to go into the office which has been good. One of the things I missed were all the occasional conversations that happen as you bump into someone in the corridor or see someone while you are making your coffee. Those conversations are often the ones that touch people's lives and go deeper. So it is good to have that opportunity again.

What I do at St Nicholas has been almost much the same as usual. I've been preaching and leading services about once a month; on-line or face to face as required. I was pleased to be able to lead the first face to face 9.00 service in October. It was lovely seeing the families back in church and doing the sort of activities we have done in the past. Alongside that I have supported other activities at church. As we are blessed with so many people who are able to lead services I have also given time to St Laurence, Meriden, who have no vicar at the moment and have taken Morning Prayer there on several occasions.

My work for the Coventry Diocese Reader Committee and Reader Development Group has continued. We licensed five new Readers this year and held a large service at Coventry Cathedral in September to license them as well as re-licensing Readers from the last two years, which is about 80 people in total - Readers are re-licensed every four years. I was once again involved in training the new Readers which we continued to do on Zoom. Happily, however, we were able to hold the pre-licensing quiet day face to face, at St Nicholas. I've also organised other quiet days / evenings for Readers.

This year sees a review of the selection and training criteria for Readers, so I have been busy reviewing those and considering how we can meet the new requirements. In addition, the diocese is reviewing the training and use of lay people in leadership more generally which I have been involved in.

I continue to represent St Nicholas at the Churches Together in Warwick Prayer Breakfasts and am pleased to have been joined by Shirley Osborne. These are now held face to face and have a later start time of 8.00 on the first Saturday of the month, it would be lovely to see some of you at these too.

As I said last year, I'm looking forward to seeing what the coming year brings.

**Fiona Trewick
Reader**

Messy Church

Our Messy Church gatherings in Woodloes school were suspended due to the pandemic in 2020. Messy Church has not resumed as yet. Some of the previous helpers are not able to assist any more. Currently, we are in discussion with Thrive about support to recommence Messy Church.

- **Rev Dr Anita Morgan**

Technology at St. Nicholas

During the pandemic, St Nicholas church has invested in technology in order to provide services on line via Zoom and meet the new digital expectations of a church in pandemic in the 21st century. We have invested in the required licenses to be able to share hymns and videos as part of our on-line services. We needed to replace the desktop computer in the vestry so our church administrator Paul Hamilton could complete the tasks we asked him to do on behalf of St Nicholas Church. In October, we purchased a new desktop computer for the vestry. Thanks to Ian Lovecy and Ciaran Morgan (Anita's husband) for their work on this.

During the course of the pandemic, the church has been developing a new church website. Thanks especially to the website group: Fiona, Jane, Paul, Anita and Ciaran for their work on this. Up to date photos and content are still needed and gratefully received so that we can 'go live'.

- **Rev Dr Anita Morgan**

Uniformed Organisations

Along with the rest of us, the uniformed organizations did not meet whilst we were in lock-down at the beginning of the year. Through the year we sustained connections with The Rainbows, Brownies, Guides and Rangers and with the Sea Scouts. The Rainbows, Brownies, Guides and Rangers have gradually re-established their meetings in the Upper and Lower East End at St Nicholas Church albeit with some changes in leadership as some leaders have stepped down during the pandemic.

In September, St Nicolas received a request from the District Commissioner to support a Brownie pack from Hatton in addition to the groups from Warwick whilst their meeting place was refurbished. They met in the Lower East End for a couple of months until they were able to return.

You may recall that as a church we have given regularly to the Sea Scouts appeal to raise money for a new headquarters. On Saturday 18th. September, 2nd Warwick Sea Scouts were able to formally open their new HQ, T.S Norton in St Nicholas Park. The event was supported the High Sheriff of Warwickshire and the Mayor of Warwick, a number of local councilors and dignitaries. Ewan and Archie are members of the group. They joined the other Sea Scouts in

uniform. St Nicholas Church were invited to attend and were represented by Sarah and James Bazin and curate, Rev Dr Anita Morgan. Anita was invited to led prayers and give a blessing.



Each year since 2019, the Sea Scouts have invited our Curate, Anita, to speak to the Sea Scouts about remembrance prior to our Remembrance Sunday service. This did not take place in 2020 due to lockdown. Happily, we were invited to join them again in 2021. This year Anita was joined by Eira too as we met together with the Sea Scouts in their new HQ. The Brownies, Rainbows, Guides and Rangers and a small representation for the Sea Scouts joined us here in St Nicholas Church for our Remembrance Sunday service before they joined the parade to the war memorial.

- **Rev Dr Anita Morgan**

St Nicholas Church Toddler Group 2021 Report

The Toddler Group meets every Wednesday in term-time from 10-11.30.

Following a long break during the pandemic, the group restarted in September 2021. Many families have returned, and many new families have joined us, particularly parents of young babies. We regularly welcome 16-20 families each week.

The group is run by a dedicated team of volunteers who have all been safely recruited and are up to date with their safeguarding training. The team provide a warm welcome and support the parents to make connections and build relationships with each other, reducing the isolation that can occur as a parent of young children, especially during the pandemic. Many of the children had never been to a playgroup before, because of the lockdowns and were not used to playing with others. We have watched the children gradually becoming more confident and start to make friends. Parents say that they love coming to the group as they feel welcomed, accepted and relaxed to be themselves. We are a very diverse group with families from the UK, Romania, Russia, the Czech Republic, Brazil, Spain, Germany and India. We are very proud that we have created such a warm and inclusive environment to nurture children and their carers.

Sessions include free play with a variety of age-appropriate toys, a sensory play area, singing and refreshments. We have reintroduced story-time where we present a short bible story or other story with a Christian theme, for example kindness, fairness, sharing, caring for the environment, being loved, respecting difference. Our volunteers pray for each of the families every week and we are always ready to answer questions about faith and Jesus! In more recent weeks, some of our families have also joined us for Rise and Shine services.

I would like to thank the whole team for their dedication and hard work: Jennie Bull, Victoria Bull, Diana King, Dorothy Evans, Pam Daniel, Rachel Daniel, Liz Peters, Andrea Perkins and Gill Cousins.

Rev Eira Hale - Curate

Myton Green

Myton Green is shorthand for the new housing areas in the south of our parish, which includes Myton Green, The Priors and Beauchamp Park. So far around a third of the 1400+ new homes are occupied and a new community is beginning to form.

We are looking for different ways that we can bless the new community as it grows and be part of how it is shaped, helping to point to where God is at work and bring the gospel alive in the everyday moments of life. In the future, we are hopeful that God will lead us to create a new worshipping community there.

In the autumn I started Myton Rocks! This is a Facebook group to help build community around the hiding and finding of painted pebbles. These pebbles all have a positive and kind message. We currently have 15 members and are still growing. One member posted recently, after finding a pebble “When you’re feeling blue and find this heart rock. I feel it is sent to me to say you are gonna be alright. Big hug in a rock. Thank you to the person who popped it there.”

At Christmas a team of volunteers from St Nicholas’ Church wrapped, packed and delivered a Christmas card and gift to every occupied house on the estate. The tree decoration gifts were intended as an unconditional blessing on each household and were well received by many of the residents, some of whom came out onto the street to thank us.

We are starting to build partnerships and relationships with the local community policing team, local councillors, the district council and other churches so that we can all work together to help Myton Green become a thriving community.

In the coming year we are looking to build closer relationships with the residents of our new housing areas – starting by hosting a pebble painting party on 2nd April. We are also hoping to work with our partners to campaign for the provision of an indoor community space.

Rev Eira Hale – Curate

PCC Meetings – 2021 / 2022

The Parochial Church Council met 9 times, plus one special meeting to approve the final Accounts prior to the APCM, all on Zoom.

Minutes of the meetings have been circulated to all members and have been available for reference.

James Bazin – PCC Minutes Secretary

Electoral Roll Report – 2022

As at the 31st March 2022 the electoral roll stands at 95 people, which is a decrease of 8 from the roll at 2021. We have gained 3 new members, but 11 have been removed, through moving away, or migrating to other churches.

Don Bull - Electoral Roll Officer

Safeguarding Report for 2021

I have to repeat the words that I wrote at the beginning of my report a year ago “nobody will be surprised that little has happened relating to Safeguarding at St Nicholas in the past 12 months”. Regarding church activities, or rather the absence of them, the years 2020 and 2021 were very similar. However, it is uplifting to see the Toddler Group and Rise and Shine starting again at the beginning of this year with more activities to follow.

The renewal of DBS checks and Training Courses has continued throughout the year. Despite the absence of activities during the pandemic, I continue to be very grateful to those helpers who have agreed to maintain their cover and skills/knowledge. The on-line method of monitoring our compliance with safeguarding requirements, ‘Parish Dashboards’, is an

invaluable tool for me to use in informing the PCC where we stand and which aspects of safeguarding need to be updated or confirmed.

Towards the end of 2021, the relative calm was broken when all parishes were confronted by the House of Bishops new 'Safer Recruitment and People Management Guidance'. This Guidance sets out the minimum requirements for safe recruitment of all appointments and the management of people in all roles, including voluntary, that are identified as having 'substantial' contact with children, young people and/or vulnerable adults. The second part of the new Guidance is a new 'Safeguarding Learning and Development Pathway' which simplifies the number of training courses and the number required for each role in the church.

As you can imagine, the new Guidance has meant a lot of work. I am indebted to Sarah Bazin for helping me to work through the complexities. The first improvement that has been implemented is a new comprehensive set of Role Descriptions for each activity. These have been distributed to existing helpers and they will be used in the future as a recruitment tool.

I should like to thank Revds. Linda, Anita and Eira, our Churchwardens, Sarah and Paul, and the PCC for their support in all safeguarding matters. The St Nicholas band of volunteers need a special vote of thanks. No safeguarding concerns have been raised with me during the past year.

Sally Howells
Parish Safeguarding Officer

Fabric Report - 2021

Routine maintenance of the Church building and services has been on-going through the period with regular inspections of the Roof and Guttering and monitoring the Heating and Lighting systems. In December, following the Energy cost hike, there were concerns over a possible Gas Leak and checks were carried out by Jane and Simon Rogers, Paul Williams and James Bazin.

There were on-going meetings between the Architect and the Fabric Team (Robert Perkins, Jonathan Forbes, Sarah and James Bazin) regarding the major stonework project for the north side of the building (estimate £170,000) – this will require a full Diocesan Faculty. We are very grateful to Robert Perkins who has spent many hours of his time in preparation of the Faculty to cover this work, which was submitted in November. Also he prepared a Questionnaire which was circulated to Church users and supporters. The information received will be used in supporting Grant Applications, following receipt of Faculty approval by the Diocese.

The Quinquennial Review was due and took place in October 2021 for work to be carried out over the period 2021 – 2026.

James Bazin - April 2022

Choir Report 2021

The choir had little to do in the first half of 2021, but we did take part in two open-air services in the churchyard, on Easter Sunday and Ascension Day (the latter would normally take place on top of Guy's Tower in the castle, but the castle was not allowed to open to visitors at the time).

No services in church took place until the Easter weekend, at which point I resumed playing hymns, but nobody was allowed to sing them! Finally, towards the end of July, congregational singing was heard once again, and to me hearing it was one of the most emotional moments of the year. The choir resumed, in a cautious way, in the middle of August, with Friday practices following at the end of August. We have not felt able to use the Lower East End for our Sunday rehearsals, as it is a small space. So we have rehearsed in church. Since then, we have provided a short anthem after the Peace at communion services, and a reflective hymn during the administration of communion.

We were only needed for one wedding, in September, but it was of one of our own members, so it was a special occasion. It had been twice postponed.

The emergence of the omicron variant caused us difficulties at the end of the year. As December went on, it looked increasingly unlikely that the Carol Service could take place in church, and finally, the service moved to Zoom at three days' notice. Although we understood why this was necessary, it is only fair to record choir members' considerable disappointment at this turn of events, following several weeks of hard work in rehearsal. We hope that Christmas 2022 will see the first Carol Service in church since 2019.

At the end of December, the choir decided to take a short vacation, as there was a feeling of awkwardness about being allowed to sing unmasked while the congregation were not allowed to do so. The morale and repertoire of the choir now need some rebuilding, but we look forward to better times, and we will continue to be of service.

Chris Foy

Deanery Synod 2021

The Warwick and Leamington Deanery Synod is a meeting of the clergy and elected lay representatives of the parishes in Warwick, Leamington and the surrounding area. We normally meet four times a year, on a Monday evening.

In 2021, three meetings were held, all on Zoom. These took place in February, May and October. The February meeting agreed the membership of the Deanery Mission and Pastoral Committee, which acts on behalf of the Synod between meetings and has an important role in relaying advice to the Diocese. This Committee still has two vacancies for lay members.

I was on holiday for the May meeting, but happily I had then been joined by a second elected lay representative of St Nicholas – Antoine Mitchell. This meeting discussed the welfare of clergy, and lay leaders' responsibility to include this in their thinking.

The October meeting discussed the Deanery Vision, focussing on where local churches might need extra support from clergy.

We expect to return to our normal four meetings in 2022, and these will be in person rather than on Zoom, and will include news and mutual encouragement from all the parishes.

Assuming our electoral roll membership stays at 100 or more, we are entitled to three lay representatives on the Deanery Synod, so there is still one more place available for election at the APCM. It is not an onerous duty, and I find it quite encouraging.

Chris Foy

Bell ringers Report 2021

2021 turned out to be another unusual year for Warwick ringing and ringing in the UK in general. The first Sunday ringing at St Nicholas was on Easter Sunday with just 4 socially distanced bells rung, due to Covid restrictions. 4 bells were rung for about the next 6 weeks, with 2 bands on alternate Sundays, before we were allowed to ring 6 in mid-June, then all 8 bells by September.

Practice nights resumed at St Nicholas in June, when 6 were allowed in the belfry at any one time and by July we were able to have 8 ringers in the tower and we started our revision of call changes, plain hunting and other methods which we had been accustomed to ringing pre-Covid. Initially we were restricted to 45 minutes' practices but by August we finished when we had had enough. Before June we generally met every two weeks using Zoom, mainly for quizzes, and sometimes using software called Ringing Room. It was great to get back to ringing real bells again though! For just about all practices and Sunday service ringing we decided to wear masks and we kept the door and window open to stay well ventilated.

No peals were rung on the bells in 2021 and just two quarter peals were rung – one to celebrate Simon and Jane Rogers' Ruby Wedding and one to celebrate Chris Mew's 80th birthday. No major maintenance has been needed during the year.

It must be remembered that we are an ageing and diminishing band of ringers and could desperately do with some new blood – if any young (i.e. under 60) member of the congregation would like to know a little more about bell ringing, or knows someone else who does, then please come up the tower and see what we get up to on Sundays or Wednesday evenings. Bellringing is a wonderful hobby, also doubling as service to the church, so please feel free to come and have a look or contact me on 07498363304.

Simon Rogers

Sunday Concert Report

Most of the year we were unable to hold concerts because of COVID. We had three successful concerts in the autumn, and then COVID closed in again. I am extremely grateful to all those who have supported me in making the concerts successful, especially of course to Sarah and James Bazin, Maureen Nicholas, and Gill Cousins.

Ian Lovecy

Flower Report

Firstly, I would like to thank Pat Williams for her many years of service to St. Nicholas Church. She has organised the flower rota and flower ladies for a long time ensuring that the church has always had flowers every Sunday. Pat has also coordinated flowers for many weddings over the years, purchasing the flowers desired by the brides and performing miracles on a small budget. And of course we cannot forget Easter, Harvest, Remembrance Sunday and Christmas when the church has always had beautiful flower arrangements; thank you so much Pat. She wishes to continue with arranging flowers but asked me to take over the organisation in September 2021.

One of the first things I discovered when I took over and happened to read an article, was to understand how bad Oasis foam is for our environment. (This is the floral foam used to support the arrangements.) It is an extremely toxic plastic which never degrades. Instead, it ends up on the fields where our food is grown and also in the rivers and seas and therefore in the fish that we eat. This only came to my notice when I was investigating how to dispose of it. I have

been investigating alternative methods which has been a little challenging! The flowers at Christmas were in pots with chicken wire for support. That takes a lot of getting used to. I am trialling other methods too.

The 2022 list for sponsorship and donations is on the notice board ready for you to fill in. Thank you all in advance.

Susan Randall

Craft Group Report for 2021

As with many other groups, the Craft group report will be short for 2021.

For most of the year we didn't meet and only resumed in November. We had a request from Eira to provide some handmade Christmas decorations that could be given to children and families at the Nativity service as part of a gift from the church. We already had a few felt decorations we had made for a previous year's Christmas Tree Festival entry so added to those and managed to produce more than 60 angels, kings, shepherds and sheep which we hope were enjoyed. In December we had a Christmas afternoon tea and made some Christmas tree shaped decorations by folding and sewing some lovely Christmas fabrics.

A short report with the word Christmas appearing five times as that was the only time of year we met! No doubt 2022 will be different and we look forward to some happy crafting.

Gillian Alderman and Maureen Nicholas

Transforming Communities Together - Warwick 2021 Update

Message Bus

The Message Bus has finally arrived in Warwick and can be seen at its home in the Stagecoach Heathcote Depot and occasionally being driven around town. We appointed a Bus Manager towards the end of the year and he will begin working with churches and other organisations to deliver sessions across the town in the new year.

Schools support - Schools Team

Our schools team began working back in schools in April, as soon as restrictions were lifted, and we delivered much-needed mental health resilience courses. We continue to support our secondary schools with much needed early intervention and well-being courses. We are also exploring ways we can use the bus to meet their current most pressing needs of pupils refusing to attend school and anxiety.

School Holiday Food Hampers

We delivered between 300 -500 food hampers through thirteen local schools to families receiving free school meals and those referred to us by the schools as experiencing need, throughout the year prior to school holiday periods. We often provided an activity or colouring book for each child and at Christmas and Easter provided selection boxes/Easter Eggs and a Christian book of the story for each child and a booklet with a seasonal Christian message for adults. The parcels have had an overwhelming response with parents and school staff immensely grateful for the support. We have many opportunities to pray with parents and school staff and one lady was so thankful for the prayer she emailed the school in gratitude.

She also said her cancerous breast tissue had been healed when she next went back to the doctors.

We are also able to provide 100 single sized hampers to adults in need and care leavers in a partnership with Warwickshire County Council.

Your Farmer Meals Foodbank

The foodbank at Marys Sweet Memories Sweet Shop continues to run with mainly referrals from schools and other agencies. We are seeing need increase due to the rising cost of living but have reflected we have very few regular users of the services; it's used most as an emergency one-off help to get through a difficult period. We continued but reduced deliveries throughout the year in order to respond to the increases in families and individuals who were self-isolating and requesting food support during peak times of Covid infection.

The Your Farmer initiative is also supporting a weekly Community Shop at the New Life Church in partnership with Foodbank where those in need can purchase approx. £30 worth of food items (frozen meat, fresh veg, tinned and dried goods) for £3 per shop. It enables us to assess customers and provide wraparound support services and signposting to avoid creating dependency and help people deal with the causes of their food poverty.

Bereavement Support Groups

Our monthly Tuesday afternoon Bereavement Support Group at Chase Meadow Community Centre began again in April and have been well attended with regular referrals from local agencies. Our evening group will also resume after Easter.

Family Link Worker

We supported the successful appointment of a FLW at All Saints church working across All Saints and Emscote schools. The FLW will work as a link between parents' school and church and provide activities to support the parents and the work of the church and schools. We will continue to give advice and support for projects and initiatives and small grant applications if needed. This is a really exciting initiative and there will be ongoing evaluation of this pilot scheme to see if we can replicate the project in other school/church partnerships across the town.

Free to Be

I felt inspired by the Lord to hold a lady's event to respond to all the awful news items around women and their safety and to give the mostly women we meet during the food distributions an uplifting night out where they could experience the freedom, peace and joy of the Lord. We partnered with the Helping Hands Esther project for the homeless, addicted etc. who brought ladies they supported from the town to the event. The event featured singer Vicky Holden who has an anointing for releasing the tangible presence of God and the inevitable freedom His presence brings. We also had guest speaker Trudy Makepeace who recently released her autobiography Abused Addicted Free and has featured in The Times and on Christian Television. Each lady attending received a copy of the book and Vicki's latest CD 'Free to Be'. It was an inspiring event with many touched by the Lord and two ladies who had received school's food parcels responded to the gospel message as well as many from Esther project.

Messy Church

We were unable to restart Messy Church this year because of the ever changing Covid situation. We are working with St Nicholas and Thrive about a possible restart after Easter.

Small Grants Fund

We did not award any grants in 2021 but are currently working on applications from Graeme Russell at the Methodist church for a project engaging Christian performers and local theatres to provide events for local people. We are developing a project to support Citizen's Advice work in the town to regain its capacity to pre-Covid levels. We will also look to support the work of Eira and St Nicholas in the new estates that have been built in the parish. We are also considering a project to gift every school child in Warwick a Christian book about the life of Queen Elizabeth to commemorate her platinum jubilee.

Stacey Bains