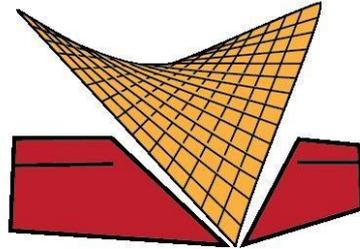




2020

St John the Baptist



ERMINE, LINCOLN



Vicar's Report

We couldn't quite have imagined, at the last APCM what the next year would have in store for us. Despite and in some cases because of the pandemic, the church has continued to grow in a number of directions.

We have continued to support our local primary school, Ermine Primary Academy. It has undergone major upheaval in the last year or so. The governing body has been suspended, changes have been made to the management structures within the school and I am the only member of the Local Academy Trust governing body to be appointed to the Interim Executive Board. Through the last year we have supported them by delivering free school meals, delivering an online Christingle, supporting families through the Community Larder, (special thanks to Sue Fleshbourne, Roy and Joy Jillings and Paul Musson) and collaborating with St Swithin's to deliver Love Christmas hampers.

A really fruitful collaboration has been with St Giles and our online children's holiday club. We have reached more than 20 families through our half-termly free craft activities and videos. The holiday club has also been an excuse to get to know local businesses in the parish as every time we create a treasure trail around St Giles and the Ermine estate for children to follow with clues placed in windows. Waitrose & Partners were particularly generous this time donating 84 Easter eggs for the children who signed up for the club. In the first lockdown we worked closely with the NHS community nurses, the Co-op pharmacy, the police and the Resilience Forum supporting vulnerable people.

Last March, our relationship with the Lincoln Castle Academy went up a gear when the sixth form delivered 1000 leaflets into homes in the parish offering support with shopping and

prescriptions. Four members of staff came to help keep the Community Larder open when the regular volunteers (all either over seventy or living with a vulnerable or shielding family member) were forced to stand down. Most recently I was called in to support staff and students after the sudden death of a student in Year 9.

The leaflets were very successful in reaching people who were isolating or vulnerable and our team of Liz Straw on the phone, Phil Betts, Hazel Barrett, Danny and Tabitha Holt were able to collect prescriptions and do shopping along with other errands (including delivering knitting needles) for people who had been advised to shield.

The weekly food bank reaches dozens of families every week and since January we have been running a drop in mental health crisis café called the Night Light Café, part of a network of cafes across the city, funded by the NHS. Within a week, six people had volunteered to help. Tracy Clark, Caroline Pratt, Sue Fleshbourne, Revd Rachel Beck, Revd Alice Jolley and Canon Jeffrey Heskins. In July, we hope to reopen the Lunch Club. It's been really important for us to become a registered 'Inclusive Church' this year too.

Perhaps the most unexpected collaboration is that with the Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust over the planting of an indigenous, wildflower meadow in the church yard. When the church hall had to close last March, a major source of income for the church, we were forced to make drastic cuts to our spending. We decided to stop paying for the grass to get cut in the churchyard. The long grass inspired us to explore the possibility of rewilding the churchyard and we now have the seeds of 59 different flowers and native grasses germinating in a border around the church. It

has been a labour of love, has been a talking point in the community and real team effort.

It has been very important for us to remain open for worship. The tradition here is catholic and sacramental and it is impossible in my view to celebrate a Eucharist or indeed any sacrament online. We have made the most of technology by live streaming our worship every Sunday and I must thank Danny Holt without whose help it would not have been possible. The Lent course ran online and was so well received that we are going to evolve it into a monthly, ongoing course exploring art and faith. We have just celebrated Easter and Holy week together for the first time and although there were some things which we were not able to do, the things that we did do together were appreciated and I have received a lot of positive feedback. I believe that what Jackie Howell, Jeff (as someone in my household with whom I did not have to keep a social distance) and I were able to offer this year was successful.

Our worship is greatly enhanced by the music provided by Ros and Terry Millward and I am indebted to them for their contribution to life here at St John's and of course, Easter Day and last Sunday's Bishop's Visitation wouldn't have been the same without the music and singing of the Quartet (variously arranged and adapted) and the singers. We are privileged to have them play for us.

The church building is Grade II* and fabulous but needs money to be invested in it. The rendering on the exterior has been completed at a cost of approximately £9800.00 which was paid for by a bequest. This has been a stressful experience to say the least because of the length of time it has taken and the unreliability of the builders. Much of the burden of responsibility fell on the churchwardens who are both exceptional and I would like to take

this opportunity to that Philip Howell and Phil Betts for all they have done to support the ministry of this church.

The windows need attention and are not watertight and several panes of coloured glass have cracks. This will be another major undertaking. Replacing the sign outside church has also been a headache: a full faculty is required and planning permission. We are currently exploring alternatives. Being locked out of buildings and attempting to worship at home has further convinced me that sacred spaces are really important. Once a month, a colleague in WDS Benefice and I sign comply together on ZOOM. We both long for a time when we can do this in a space with the right acoustics, candlelight and ambiance.

The second challenge is a much nicer one to have. We have reached more than twenty families through our online Holiday Club from this parish and even more in St Giles. We know that this is a successful bit of mission and evangelism. What does a next step for these families look like?

Thirdly, over the last year, we have not maintained contact with Ermine House, Ruckland Court or St Francis School. When we eventually emerge from the pandemic, these will be relationships that we will need to rebuild.

Finally, it's always a sensitive subject but our contribution to the Parish Share is small. Last year we paid less than a fifth of what we cost. We need to think creatively about how we can increase our contribution. If you want to know where the money goes, it pays for your vicar, her housing, her professional development, for safeguarding support, for advice on managing our building, HR support and advice, and clergy welfare amongst other things.

My prayer continues to be that God send us the people and the resources to reveal God's kingdom in this place. You are the people; this is a glimpse of God's kingdom. Be bold and confident in your won faith and share your story with others. Our faith needs to be infectious.

Revd Rachel

[Readers Report 2020](#)

2019 was a funny year but so was 2020. From January to March, we did operate as a 'normal church' and then along came the full force of Coronavirus. Rachel joined us in November 2019 and is still to do an Easter service with us in church!

However, church continued although it was in forms we probably hadn't experienced before. Services were done 'online' but not necessarily from inside the church and when we were allowed to go back into church, how different it was. Face masks, social distancing and hand sanitisers were the new norm. For me the communion wafers tasted of sanitiser and it took a few weeks to get the sanitising just right. These restrictions continue to this day. I don't know about you, but I can't wait until the restrictions are lifted and we are able to celebrate fully.

At least we will be able to celebrate in church on Easter Sunday this year. The morning of Easter Sunday 2020 was spent walking around Hartsholme Park singing Jesus Christ is Risen Today very loudly. Any wonder the squirrels ran away!

On a personal note, May and June were particularly challenging due to illness but the recovery I made was, I'm sure due in part to love of family and friends and for all who said prayers on my behalf.

I'm very grateful that I have been able to join in the Zoom 'things' that have been happening. Zooming has in many ways become the new normal.

I was able to undertake some training last year and was able to do my Safeguarding training in a non-Zoom way. I'm not sure that a day's training via Zoom would have been a pleasant experience. I did do some training on Zoom in November when I joined Revd Alex Clare-Young on their 4-week course regarding LGBT matters. This followed us making a decision to be an Inclusive Church here at St. Johns.

In September I decided, along with Rachel's blessing, to get back to preaching and I have to say that I am enjoying preaching (at the moment).

The annual Readers service in the Cathedral in October was not able to go ahead although the Readers do meet on Zoom.

I was able to have my Reader Review last year and I'm please to say that my licence has been renewed for another 5 years.

I'm confident that as we come out of the worst of the Covid pandemic, things will gradually open up in church and hopefully by the end of 2021we will be back to some sort of normality, albeit not the one we knew before. I'm looking forward to it already.

Jackie Howell.

[Churchwarden's Report](#)

Another APCM is upon us. All we can say is that 2020 has been a strange year, on the one hand, for some, it's been a very long taxing time, on the other, looking back it seems to have flashed by.

There has been, of course, the usual day to day maintenance of the church buildings that have

taken place, not as in depth as usual, for obvious reasons. Still enough to keep us busy.

We've carried out a full check of the church inventory, which allowed us to have a bit of a clear out and have identified a few items that had left us wondering. Whilst carrying out the check we discovered some squatters in the Mary and Martha room. Woodworm! Our first thoughts went to the church ceiling as there's a little wood in that. Once the 30 seconds of panic had passed, we asked Rentokill to come and assess the problem.

We were relieved to find out that the infestation was 'soft wood' woodworm (the ceiling and pews are, thankfully, hardwood). Rentokill were not able to fix the problem without making the room unusable for a couple of years and emptying our bank account. In good churchwarden style, we picked their brains and were given a quick woodworm terminator masterclass and have now carried out the work and the church is now "woodworm free".

After the grass had been cut and Rachel's church meadow project had taken hold, we finally received permission from the Diocese to commence the replacement of the outer wall render. The work started well, then the good old UK weather threw us a curve ball. It turns out you can't render in freezing temperatures. Work ceased and resumed again in March. As I write this report excellent progress is being made, hopefully by the time you read this, work will be complete.

Quotes have been sought in respect of replacing the church sign, of course we have to jump through the Diocese DAC hoops, so although the job itself is not a long one, we may have to wait a while for permission.

The church hall has been a sad empty sight over the past year, but the team have done a

sterling job keeping the larder open throughout, and we've been happy to be able to add a little bit of help to that venture.

In all there's been enough to keep us busy, but not so much as to run us ragged.

As I mention every year, churchwardens are there to ensure that works about the church estate are carried out and to support our incumbent in running the church of this parish, but we do this on your behalf and, most importantly, with your support. Please continue with that support. If you have any particular skills or talents that you think could assist the smooth running of the church, please step forward.

Many thanks for your continued support,

Phil Betts and Philip Howell

[One final footnote.](#)

I have now come to the end of my tenure as churchwarden. It's been at times fun, at times challenging, but it's always been rewarding.

Thank you to all of those that have supported me over these last few years, it has been most appreciated. I'm pleased and proud to have been able to help usher our church through what's probably been the biggest change in 20 years. I've now reached the point where I feel it's time for me to step down, and I do so in the knowledge that I leave things in very good hands. I wish my replacement all the very best and hope you give them (it doesn't have to be a man) the support you've given me. Elvis has left the building,

Phil Betts

[Church Hall](#)

What a strange and difficult year 2020 was. It started with January and February being as busy as usual, then came the lock-down. We had to close the hall to all use except for the Community Larder. We were able to provide a

base for St Swithins to enable them to continue their larder as well. This provided us with some much needed financial support.

Once we were able to open up, most of our regular uses started their sessions though not all. We were also able to help some other groups whose normal venues were not opening. It is also good to note that we now have Alcoholics Anonymous meeting once a week. At the beginning of December saw the start of the second lock-down and again most groups had to stop meeting.

The hall committee have managed one zoom meeting during the year, normally there are three, to discuss the hall facilities and how to deal with additional cleaning requirements during the year. The committee consists of Alison Seddon, Andrew Pigg and Paul Richardson, who represent the hall users. Paul Musson, Phil Betts and I represent the church.

I would like to take this opportunity to express my thanks to our hall manager Paul Musson and to our hall cleaner, Olive Musson, for all they have done over the past year to keep the hall in good repair. We have had to furlough their hall and church hours over several months in the past year. This has provided us with funds from the government furlough scheme in order to protect their jobs.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank Danny for the continued support and help with this and the hall website, it is much appreciated, thank you Danny.

There is still scope for the hall to be used during the daytime (once life returns to some sort of normality) so if anyone knows of any suitable groups looking for either a regular or one-off meeting place please could you point them to the Church website or ask them to contact me. The phone number for hall bookings is 07954 035865 and the email

address is
hall@stjohnthebaptistparishchurch.org.uk.

Liz Straw- Hall Booking Secretary

[Safeguarding report](#)

The PCC has adopted the House of Bishops Safeguarding Policies and Practice Guidance. These can be found in the Safeguarding file currently held on the shelf in the priest vestry. This file is available for everyone to read whenever they wish to.

Safeguarding is the responsibility of every member of the church, it is vigilance that will keep our members safe and free from being targeted by those who would harm them. It is important though, should you become concerned, that you do not discuss with other members of the congregation but contact Rev. Rachel, myself or the Diocesan Safeguarding Team as soon as possible. Their phone number is 01522 504081.

The Diocese had started the process of auditing each church on their safeguarding procedures but have been affected by Covid-19 in being able to visit churches. No doubt once the pandemic is over we will be advised of when they will be checking our church.

Any concerns or questions you may have regarding a safeguarding issue should be passed to Reverend Rachel or the safe guarding officer. Please do not give details identifying the individual of whom you have concerns but ask for a meeting and one will be set up as soon as is practicably possible.

After many years as Safeguarding Officer for St John's I have decided to step down from this role. I look forward to supporting whoever is appointed to take over this extremely important role.

Liz Straw - Parish Safeguarding Officer

Children's Society

Once again, our generous donors have done their best for the Children's Society box collection. We have 9 donors at present and they have raised £151.33. Other congregation members give directly to the Society and we have also received over £20 in miscellaneous donations and over £100 in the Christingle collection.

On behalf of the Society, many thanks to all the people involved in raising this total, and if anyone else would like a box, please let me know.

I should be grateful to receive this year's boxes for emptying as soon as possible, please.

Rosalind Millward

Mothers Union

The Mothers Union Branch here at St Johns would like to say Thank you to everyone who has supported us and our past members in the projects that we have been involved in over the years that we have been together.

Unfortunately, we have not been able to meet as a group since January 2020 due to Covid-19. Also due to other circumstances our Mothers Union Branch here at

St Johns decided to close in December.

Faith has been at the heart of the Mothers Union since its founding by Mary Sumner in 1876 and our Branch members, past and present, here at St Johns have been very proud to live out our Faith through action to Serve God and his world and our community.

Sue Fleshbourne

Community Larder

Over the past year we have continued to open the Larder on a weekly basis to provide food for people and Families in need who live in our Community. In March 2020, our usual

volunteers had to go into isolation because of Covid 19, Reverend Rachel, Phil and two volunteers from Castle Academy kindly stepped in and served at the Larder until it was safe for our usual volunteers to return. We would like to say a very big Thank you to them for doing this as this meant that the people in our community would continue to be helped.

We have also received very generous donations here at St Johns and from other Churches as well as generous donations from the public. We would like to say a very big thank you to everyone who has very generously donated to the Larder over the past year, this is a valuable Resource in our Community and is very much appreciated by all who are in need of help. Thank you,

Sue Fleshbourne

Lunch Club

2020 has been a very challenging year for everyone and unfortunately the Lunch club has been closed for the time being until it is safe for all hospitality venues to reopen again. I would like to say thank you to all who help at the lunch club their help is very much appreciated and hopefully we will be able to serve our community with our meals again as soon as we are able.

Sue Fleshbourne

Online Activity

As we went into the first lockdown last year, I remember the Vicar saying there would be no online services at St John's and I agreed with her arguments about why. However, a few months later Rachel was desperate to get the church's YouTube account details because she wanted to put together a special pre-recorded piece for [Ascension Day](#). It was an excellently produced video, put together by the Heskins family, with Zach putting his videography and editing skills to use.

Several more Heskins productions followed and a little later in the year I was asked if I could record the Sunday morning services. I suggested that we live stream rather than record them, as this meant the least overall work and it would mean people could view the service from home as it was taking place. After rummaging around in my box of gadgets and making some quick online purchases, I assembled a system capable of achieving this. The first service we broadcast was not great, the sound quality was awful, so we tried again, and again and again until we got it right. Thank you to all the people at home who tuned in again, each week, even though it may have gone wrong in the previous week. I still have some weeks where the gremlins creep back into the system and cause issues but mostly it works, and the sound is now much better.

I have also been able to advise St Giles on how best to achieve a similar result at their church which allowed them to successfully stream a Wedding service.

The music provided by Ros, Terry and friends really helps to bring our worship to life, and our building provides a truly wonderful and unique backdrop to the community worship which is broadcast for the world to see. Whilst the world does not tune in, streaming allows us to reach between 10 and 30 people who otherwise would not be able to attend due to a variety of reasons. I have had some lovely comments back from viewers and it really makes you think that we bring some joy and important messages to people's houses on a Sunday morning. I am grateful that the technology exists, and I have been given the gifts to put it to use.

This all being said, I am looking forward to when COVID is no longer a threat and there will be little need to stream the service and

everyone will be safe back in church to spend some real time together and experience Holy Communion with God.

Our online engagement has grown and allows the church to talk to people who it would not otherwise get to talk to. It enables us to reach families who sign up for the holiday club and allows them to feedback the enjoyment they get out of the activities that we provide. I was personally touched when I delivered some Christmas boxes to families on the estate and saw thankyou messages come back via Facebook.

The website is still up and running and provides people with the essential information they need to know about the church.

Danny Holt

[Stewardship Report](#)

We started 2020 with 12 regular envelope givers. It's difficult to know how many we ended the year with due to both Covid and our transition to the Parish Giving Scheme (PGS).

However, of those 12 givers, 9 people started the year able to gift aid their donations, but again. Again, it is difficult to assess the situation at the end of the year.

Due to Covid some envelope givers opted to continue to give by Direct Debit (DD) whilst others have changed to giving by Direct Debit and we are now seeing some people change again and give via the PGS.

At the start of the year, we had 8 people who give through monthly direct debits and again, its not easy to assess the situation at the end of the year for the previous reasons stated. However, all but one of the people who give via their bank is a gift aider.

What did we receive?

Because of all the difficulties and changes this year, I've just included the total amount of donations received for 2020.

The total income from the envelopes for gift aiders and via the bank was £9334.02. This also generated in £2333.51 being reclaimed from HMRC in the form of Gift aid.

A Further £376.60 was received by those who in either the envelope scheme or by DD who are not able to Gift Aid.

The total amount donated for 2020 therefore was £9710.62.

When you add on the Gift Aid this brings the grand total for 2020 to £12044.13

This is more than was received in 2019, £11808.29 and yes, we were able to pay the amount of Parish Share that we had agreed to pay, £10,000. However, this amount was about £9,000 less than the actual Parish Share figure.

It's unlikely then that we will be able to pay our full Parish Share again this year.

The figures above do not include any money that is received on the plate each week.

I'm sure that all of you will, by now, be aware that we have decided to join the PGS. This will be better for us as we will be able to budget more accurately but it is reliant on people actually joining the scheme. You can join whether or not you Gift Aid or not. Any donations go directly from your bank, Gift Aid is collected if due and the income is put straight into the churches bank account on a monthly basis. No need for anyone to count the money or for me to record it or reclaim the Gift Aid. It's a win win thing!

If you do give regularly to the church, please do consider doing it through the PGS. If you need information just ask. There will be no giving envelopes from this year forward.

Lastly, I would like to thank everyone who has been able to give for the work of Christ to continue in our parish. Money can sometimes be the last thing we think about when we think about church. Let me reassure you that every penny given is very well spent.

Jackie Howell

[Treasurer's Report](#)

With PROVISIONAL accounts

The year 2020 has been a very difficult year for all of us. It started on a sure footing with regular income from regular giving and hall bookings. The interregnum had finished a couple of months before and, thanks to a substantial bequest, money in the bank and plans as to how best to use it. Then came Covid.

The hall had to be closed to bookings though fortunately we were able to continue to run the community larder which has proved a lifeline to so many. We were also able to provide a space for another community larder who had to move out of their own space. This provided us with some extra income.

Our staff were put on furlough from the beginning of lockdown until July when we were able to open to some of our regular hall users. We then had to furlough them again in November when the hall was required to close again. This enabled the church to take advantage of the Job Retention Scheme set up by the government to protect jobs. Sadly, our church did not qualify for any other forms of grant aid.

Sadly, our Independent Examiner, Clive Kettley, passed away in April last year. It is proving difficult to find a replacement during the lockdown which is why the accounts attached are provisional for information only and cannot be adopted as correct.

It has also been necessary to change the accounts system used to provide the accounts. The previous one no longer worked with the latest version of Microsoft. This has meant that the whole of last year's accounts have had to be input into our new accounts package, Quickbooks, in order to produce the reports required to pass to the examiner when one is appointed. Having said that, now that this has been done the new package is much easier to use and doesn't require as much work as the old one (a real bonus).

Thank you to all regular givers who have set up to pay through the Parish Giving Scheme. This also helps to cut down the amount of work the treasurer is required to do along with giving regular income and any gift aid tax refund on a monthly basis. It is easy to set up an account and you can choose to give monthly, quarterly or annually based on your specific requirements. You can also change the amount at any time. There are leaflets in church should anyone else wish to consider joining this scheme. It doesn't cost the church or the individual anything, all the money donated is passed straight into our bank account.

Our share portfolio was reduced by the effects of Covid on the stock market. It would be prudent to expect that the dividends we receive from them will also be reduced in the next year or two.

Considering the fact that we were unable to hold any fundraising activities and have had less income from the church hall, though we also had less to pay in utility bills, and that we paid £5000 to the builders for the work to be carried out on the church walls, the amount of deficit for the year is less than the previous year. We have also managed to pay our full commitment for the Parish Share of £10000

though the plan had been to exceed this if at all possible.

Please note that the donations figure includes gift aided, planned giving and collections along with donations we have received in other ways during the year.

I would like to finish by offering my thanks to the following people for their help over the past year;

Clive Kettley for providing us with the independent examination and account for 2019

Julie Henwood of Pelican Grey who has provided us with a first class payroll service

Jackie Howell for keeping the giving records and claiming the gift aid from HMRC

Tabitha and Danny Holt for their support with the utility companies and IT

Phil Betts for all the help and support sorting out the bank accounts, the payroll service, payment of salaries and covering for me when I had the opportunity to go on holiday.

Last, but definitely not least, to each and every one of you for your continued support both financially and in your prayers for the church. Without you we could not continue to provide for the congregation and parish.

Liz Straw - Acting treasurer

**ST JOHN THE BAPTIST PAROCHIAL CHURCH
COUNCIL**

RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER

	2020		2019	
	£	£	£	£
Receipts				
Donations	13624		13,230	
Bequest	560		0	
Grants	0		4,933	
Fees	1270		16,781	
Hall bookings	9024			
Ermine Music	1138			
Fund Generation				
Fund Raising	463		1,511	
Charitable Activities	150		0	
Covid Shopping receipts	630			
Investment Income	1951		2,304	
Furlough receipts	2896			
Gift aid tax receipts	2866	34,572	2,442	41,201
Direct Expenses				
Cost of Fund Generation - Fund Raising			200	-200
		34,572		41,001
Payments				
Parish share	10008		12,490	
Support Costs				
Rent and Rates	243		503	
Heat, Light and Power	5882		4,830	
Insurance	3185		3,154	
Diocesan Fees	0		428	
Travelling expenses	0			
Printing and Stationery	40		227	
Photocopier expenses	1436		1,229	
Telephone and Computer	96		115	
Maintenance	8591		1,737	
Ermine Music	726			
Other	0			
General Expenses	1324		3,861	
Management and Administration				
Gross Wages	7351		20,324	
Professional Fees	590		425	
Other Expenditure				
Charity payment	150			
Covid shopping receipts	507			
To be repaid	623	(40752)		(49,323)
(Deficit)/Surplus of receipts over payments		(6,180)		(8,322)

Note:

The amount of Parish share due for the year ended 31 December 2019 amounted to £12,490 of which £2,490 remains unpaid at the end of the year

**ST JOHN THE BAPTIST PAROCHIAL CHURCH
COUNCIL
STATEMENT OF ASSETS AND LIABILITIES AS AT 31
DECEMBER**

	2020		2019	
	£	£	£	£
Fixed assets				
CBF investments		47,813		51,911
Current assets				
Bank accounts				
Current account	345		766	
LDTBF Deposit account	1921		1,308	
PCC Deposit account	63664		70,448	
Ermine Music	2460	68,391	2,049	74,571
		<u> </u>	<u> </u>	
Current liabilities				
Creditors: Short term		0	(2,527)	0
		<u> </u>	<u> </u>	
Long term liabilities		-		-
		<u> </u>	<u> </u>	
Total assets less total liabilities		<u>116,204</u>		<u>126,482</u>
		<u> </u>	<u> </u>	
Capital and Reserves				
Unrestricted funds				
Funds	98591		104,386	
(Deficit)/Surplus of receipts over payments for the year	(6180)	92,411	(5,795)	98,591
		<u> </u>	<u> </u>	
Accumulated gains on investments		23,793		27,891
		<u>116,204</u>		<u>126,482</u>
		<u> </u>	<u> </u>	

Note:

Creditors: Short term liabilities from 2019 has been left in to show it was in the accounts last year. Accounts will now be on a cash basis so this figure is no longer required.