

APCM 2021 – Paper 1

St. Mary's churchwardens' report

Annual Report for St Mary's 2020 - 2021

The major building works were completed during the summer of 2020, leaving St Mary's full of light and space, and even more welcoming. The new lighting system is excellent, with amazing special effects. Cupboards, safe and carpet have now been fitted into the new meeting room, offering a space, for example, to the Street Angels, who are delighted to have their new base at St Mary's.

The other outstanding development of this pandemic year has been the hugely successful Zoom Sunday services. Hosted by Nigel and Andrea Campion-Smith, and technically operated by James Hedgecock, they have drawn many people from other local Methodist churches, and even further afield. From 20th September to Christmas these were 'blended services', with an average of 19 people in church, and 40 or more watching from home, enjoying screened photos of the church.

St Mary's choir, led by Helen Lee and accompanied by Chris Nott, has provided some recorded music for services, while for Tom's first communion on October 18th, the Holy Trinity Girls' Choir came to sing in person.

Several other regular activities managed to continue, such as Chit Chat and Common Ground meetings, thanks to Zoom.

Meanwhile the church was available for private prayer when possible throughout November and December. We also opened up for occasional events, including Heritage Open Day, the visit of the Mayor, and the Good Grief exhibition, that attracted well over 200 visitors. Three Advent Reflections took place on-line. After the Christmas services, the church had to be closed again. However, services continue via Zoom, with an average attendance of 60-65.

Jenny Nockolds and Mary Howard
Churchwardens

Holy Trinity Church Wardens' Report 2020

2020 has been a very unusual year due to the Covid 19 Pandemic.

The wardens would like to thank the clergy, ably led by Robert Cotton, for rising to the challenge and quickly gaining new skills to ensure that worship and the community flourished.

To ensure that the community remained supported and linked a contact telephone tree was devised so that everyone was spoken to on a regular basis and needs were met, working alongside and complementing the work of the Pastoral Care Group. This strategy was reviewed regularly. Many thanks must go to all those who were part of this network to support each other.

Initially, churches were closed and the clergy learned new skills so that worship carried on via Zoom from their homes and later from Holy Trinity.

When churches were allowed to open the wardens ensured that the congregation and clergy were safe by ensuring that all seating was 2 metres distanced and cleaning was effective. Thanks must be extended to the office staff, cleaners and our Property Manager.

The whole church was used every week including the gallery to increase seating opportunities. New roles were created: "Welcomers", to ensure that the congregation was safe, that masks were worn by those who could and people guided to their seats. All other roles of Sacristans, Readers, Intercessors, carried on. Contributions came from people at home through Zoom and in Holy Trinity church, creating a blended service, ensuring the parish was still worshipping as one even though they were in different places. Many thanks must go to all the parishioners who adapted and supported these changes.

The practice of Lenten Reflections was extended in time through to the summer, creating a regular mid-week Reflection that was filmed and up-loaded onto the website. Many thanks to James Hedgecock who was instrumental in using his technical skills to transfer effectively recordings of these and the main services to the website.

A new sound and visual system was installed in Autumn 2020 at Holy Trinity with two graceful speakers hung either side of the front of the nave, other speakers were installed in the: Choir, St. Luke's, under the gallery, both vestries and the Trinity Centre. Cameras were also installed. A technical station was placed under the gallery. A group of people from the parish used their skills and developed more to become a technical team ensuring that both cameras and sound worked effectively each week to deliver prayerful services.

Thanks too must be given to all those in the Church Sitters group who enabled solace to visitors when the churches were allowed to be opened for individual prayer.

Careful consideration was given to all these activities by the wardens to ensure they were "Covid safe" and for Safeguarding. Risk assessments were completed.

Christmas brought more concerns as in the past our congregations could be over 500. To ameliorate the situation it was decided to ask our congregation to stay at home and to have many Christmas services from Carol services to 5 services between Christmas Eve and Christmas Day. This meant that in Church at services the congregations were around 50 ensuring there was not a Christmas crush and all were kept as safe as could be.

A key part of worship at Holy Trinity has been the contributions of our choirs. The girls, boys and adult choirs have risen to the challenge of 2020. Practices carried on via Zoom and when allowed, the choirs enhanced our services. A choir and whole congregational hymn was created for Mothering Sunday while the girls' choir created their own Christmas anthem. Much praise and thanks must be extended to Martin Holford and Nick Graham for their direction, creativity and skills in leading these initiatives and choirs.

Looking after our children, young families and youth was admirably performed by Pippa Mitchell, ensuring young families were supported with regular contact. Café Club meetings transferred to Zoom with creativity and companionship for our young people in a time when face to face and group contact was not allowed. The youth also regularly contributed to services, many thanks to Pippa and their families.

Another highlight of the year was our curate's ordination. Normally held in the Cathedral, as large group gatherings were banned, Holy Trinity Church hosted an ordination service for four ordinands on Saturday 10th October. It was a glorious occasion, despite the constraints, live-streamed so families, friends and congregation could celebrate too.

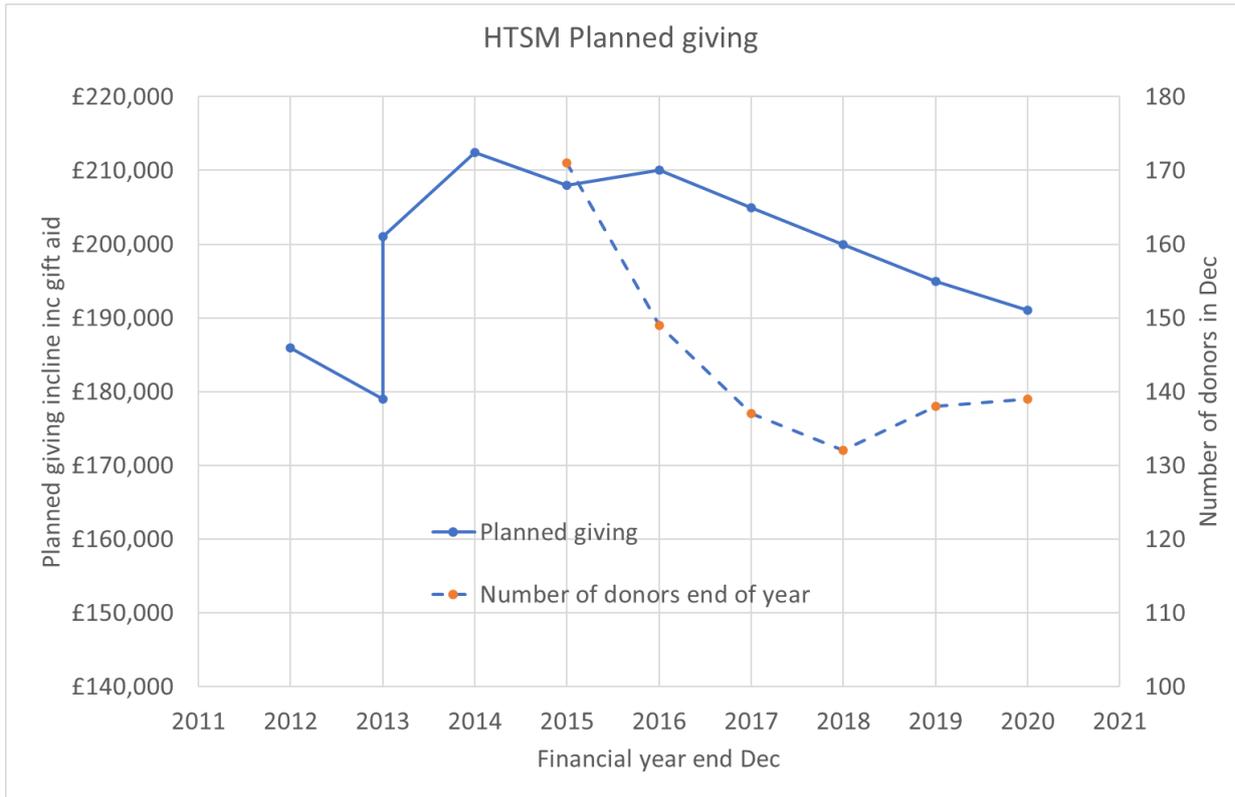
Covid 19, brought constraints but doors have been opened to new ways of working and worshipping.

Tricia McIntosh and Helen Parkinson

PARISH OF HOLY TRINITY & ST MARY'S, GUILDFORD
PLANNED GIVING REPORT for FY to Dec 2020

During the FY to end Dec 2020:

1. HTSM Planned Giving decreased by 2½% to £191,000 in 2020, from £195,000 in 2019 (both including gift aid reclaimed from HMRC). This continues the trend shown below.
2. The year finished with about 139 parishioners contributing through planned giving in December, with all but 15 being gift aid eligible. There were 143 contributing in the year. There were five new starters and four withdrew from the scheme, through death, moving away or a change in personal circumstances.
3. There was an appeal in October for donations to make good shortfalls in funding from lettings etc due to Covid, and 29 donors (28% of donors) increased their pledge, whilst the remainder remained unchanged. Those who increased their donations were very generous with an overall increase of 28% on those donations, most of these taking effect in the period November to January 2021. There were also generous one-off lumps sums to the general fund by a further nine parishioners on the PG list, and also three not in the PG scheme
4. It is clear that the numbers in the church remain strong, but that some regular givers do not always increase their donations for inflation. It is hoped both that those in the Planned Giving scheme will review the amount of donations annually and where practicable increase for inflation, plus that new members will join to replace those leaving each year.



Alan Brown

Planned Giving Recorder. 30 January 2020

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