



St Leonard's Church

Chesham Bois

Annual General Meeting

To include Vestry meeting and
Annual Parochial Church Meeting 2022

The Parish Centre, Glebe Way, Chesham Bois, HP6 5ND



Agenda & Minutes

Reports from Parish Organisations
For the Year Ended 31st December 2021

Rev'd Laurie Clow

Choi Mei van Rest – Cathy Baldwin – Katie Flory

Registered Charity Number 1134113





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VESTRY MEETING AGENDA

1. Welcome and Opening Worship
2. Apologies
3. Confirmation of 2021 Vestry Minutes
4. Election of Church Wardens: Choi Mei van Rest and Cathy Baldwin

MINUTES OF THE VESTRY MEETING HELD ON 12th APRIL 2021

Present: Laurie Clow
45 members on the electoral roll

Apologies: Liz & Lance Hale, Jonny Somervell, Judy Silley, Diney Crabtree, Sylvia Dollemore

- 1. Welcome and Opening Worship:** Reading from 2 Cor 10.3-6 (Message).
The world is unprincipled. We don't fight our battles that way!
We have a new nature being born again, fitting into our life shaped by Christ. We need reminding that we have done things as a church in a radical way, and that we are called to be courageous and prophetic.
Laurie mentioned two prophetic words that he had been given. "Feed my sheep" and even before he joined St. Leonard's "the roar of the lion"!
- 2. Present and Apologies:** as above
- 3. Minutes of Vestry Meeting held on 21st September 2020 (Zoom Meeting):** Taken as read and approved
Proposed: Jenny Robinson **Seconded:** Denise Kolb **Unanimous**
Abstentions: 8 out of 45 as not present last year
- 4. Election of Church Wardens:**

Nominee	Proposed by	Seconded by
Cathy Baldwin	Alice Somervell	Owen Melville-Thomas
Choi Mei van Rest	Ruth Leach	Alice Somervell

Choi Mei and Cathy were elected by **unanimous** decision to serve as Church Wardens for the next 12 months.
- 5. Thanks to the Church Wardens:** Laurie thanked Jonathan, Cathy and Choi, and particularly thanked Jonathan for doing an extra 5 months up until September with Cathy alongside. He said Cathy and Choi had been a huge support in a very difficult year. Chris Clare agreed and thanked them as well.
Choi had given Laurie and Wendy a gift earlier in the day, which was much appreciated.
- 6.** The vestry meeting was closed



ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING AGENDA

1. Apologies
2. Confirmation of 2021 APCM minutes
3. Correspondence
4. PCC reports:
Wardens' Report and presentation of Log Book of Fabric and Ornaments
5. Reception of Independently Examined Accounts
 - 5.1 Honorary Treasurer's report, as attached
 - 5.2 Present accounts as an accurate record of PCC activity
 - 5.3 Appointment of Independent Examiner for 2022
6. PCC Elections for 2022
 - 6.1 Electoral Roll Officer's Report and Election of Electoral Roll Officer for 2022
 - 6.2 Election of PCC members in addition to ex officio members and church wardens
Following to continue:
Katie Flory, Adrian Dunn, Jenny Robinson, Alison Greenhalgh, Edoardo Cavallo, Malcolm Hafner, Sam McEwen, Marion Campbell-Brown
In line with APCM 2015 resolution, Peter Flory and Jackie Lambert act as ex-officio posts for qualified LLM's
To be elected for 3 years: 1 person: Alan Lewis
To be elected for 1 year: 1 Person (Youth Rep)
7. Reception of Reports from Parish Organisations, as attached
8. Any other business of general Parish interest to be submitted to the Churchwardens or the PCC Secretary before **Sunday 27th March 2022**

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING HELD ON 12th APRIL 2021

1. **Present and Apologies:** as above
2. **Minutes of APCM held on 21st September 2020:** Taken as read and approved
Proposed: Denise Kolb **Seconded:** Jackie Lambert **Unanimous**
Abstentions: 8 abstentions as not present last year
3. **Correspondence:** None had been received
4. **Parochial Church Council Reports**
Reports from the PCC and its various sub-committees were reported in the TAR.
5. **Presentation of the Independently Examined Accounts**
 - 5.1. Katie Flory reported that the PCC have accepted the accounts which have been fully audited, and Katie presented them to all present
 - 5.2. Katie officially presented the independently examined accounts.
 - 5.3. Katie proposed Nicola Anderson as the Independent Examiner for 2021.
Proposed: Katie Flory **Seconded:** Alison Greenhalgh **Unanimous**
 - 5.4. Laurie gave a huge thank you to Katie and to Peter saying the accounts were always accurate and on time and Katie was always aware of roughly where the finances stood. She puts faith over finances as is great to have alongside.



6. PCC Elections for 2021

6.1. Electoral Roll and Electoral Roll Officer

The updated Electoral Roll listed 173 members at April 2021.

Marian Chiappetti (helped by Ruth Leach) was thanked for carrying out her role and agreed to continue in this capacity. Marian also thanked Ruth for her support.

Proposed: Ruth Leach **Seconded:** Cathy Baldwin **Unanimous**

6.2 PCC Nominations

Laurie thanked Monica Bartlett for her 6 years of serving PCC and for being a Deanery Synod Representative. In addition, he thanked Yvette Speakman and Staurt McLachlan for their terms on PCC but who were now coming off due to family and work commitments.

Nominee	Proposed by	Seconded by
Sam McEwen	Alice Somervell	Martyn Burton
Marion Campbell-Brown	Martyn Burton	Jonny Somervell
Malcolm Hafner	Choi Mei van Rest	Cathy Baldwin
Andrew Pimenta	Jonny Somervell	Alice Somervell

Malcolm was standing for his second 3 year term and Andrew Pimenta (Youth Representative) for 1 year by **unanimous** decision and there were no abstentions.

Laurie thanked those who have been on PCC in the past, and encouraged members of the church to speak to PCC members to get updates on the life of St. Leonard's.

7. Reception of the reports from Parish Organisations

Laurie encouraged everyone to read the reports on the activities that have taken place in 2020.

Laurie read two quotes from church members:

"I hope we are encouraged. We have an awesome church community" and "I am so very grateful to be part of such an amazing church at St. Leonards".

8. Deanery Synod

Nothing to report

9. Any Other Business

Cathy Baldwin thanked Laurie for his words of friendship and sense of humour. We have done so much despite the pandemic, and he has led with compassion and wisdom. Thank you!

10. In Conclusion

Laurie gave thanks to Chris Clare who has been a tremendous support throughout the year. Chris closed the meeting in prayer, thanking God for other members of our community too.



RECTOR'S REPORT

Well, we thought 2020 was a strange year; I think 2021 has been more up and down and disorientating than the previous year. Not if we are or aren't coming out of lockdown or going back, masks, no masks, music, no music - aagghh!!!! I want to thank you all for continuing to stand for the truths of our faith: we are safe in Christ, we are overcomers, we are loved and we long to bless our community.

Worship has been marked by flexibility and a tenacious desire to be together and to praise God. Online, in church, at Restore Hope, wherever we have been able we have got stuck in - thank you. The huge gain through the year was the sense of unity; all of us online together or in the open air together. This is one lesson from these strange times - we need to worship together (Psalm 133), let's not lose that as we go forward from here. Let's not return to religious and divided ways. Thank you to Jonny, musicians, tech team and all who have made the different forms of worship possible. You have all been awesome.

We have continued to walk in our original design as a resourcing church supporting many ministries at home and overseas. We have participated in a number of events online but two highlights for me were Easter worship in the field and Celebrate in September. At the first we were defiantly declaring the truth of the Resurrection to all the community and at the second we were drawing many together to pray for our land and to call revival over us. We are designed to host the reality of revival - the costly, life-giving transforming and manifest presence of the Kingdom of Jesus. We are a courageous body of people. We are a prophetic community. We will see the Kingdom come on earth as in heaven.

Homegroups have been a huge support to so many this year. Thank you to the group leaders who have given so much to support and enable these groups to happen. Groups have especially given support to those who have lost loved ones this last year. Again let's kick on from here with the groups and see how important they are to the lifeblood of the fellowship.

Do read the rest of these reports - we are a vibrant church. Visitors to us recently were shocked and the breadth of ages worshipping together at the Beacon. We are genuinely an All Age community.

We have a superb leadership team here at St Leonard's - paid staff, eldership, standing committee and PCC. All have worked tirelessly to make church happen and for it to appear so effortless and relaxed. Choi & Cathy have been themselves all year!!! Fun, astute in their questions, committed with their time and prayer. Katie and Peter continue to be Katie and Peter and thank God for them! Ade, Jackie, Denise, Di, Martyn, Ali C and Wendy have all been invaluable this last year. In September we welcomed Bekki to be our Children's Pastor and Paul to be a tech intern. They are great additions to the team. Jonny continues to lead us in the Lord's presence with humility, great skill and an anointing that we must not take for granted - we are mightily blessed to have him and Alice with us. They have encouraged so many by starting a young adults group. Ruth continues to keep me in check and on the straight and narrow. She might get over excited about Churchsuite and the Leadership Handbook but so much wouldn't happen without her skill and application in admin.



Chris continues to defy the passing years and is an amazing support to me personally and to so many of all ages -as long as there is coffee or cheese available to be shared!

As we move into 2022, we are waiting on a number of things: results from the planning appeal, revelation about our final worship patterns, complete release from Covid regulations and for each of us so much more. I want to finish with the words that Phil Parkinson said to me just before he passed into glory - You have got to do what the Lord is telling you to do! They won't all like it but it is the only way!

I promise you I will be taking Phil's words to heart and we will see faith expressed through love in all we do - Galatians 5.6.

Laurie Clow – Rector

RESPONSE FROM THE WARDENS

St Leonard's really displayed their zest for Jesus in 2021 as we met as church in numerous ways. Sunday services were on-line, live with on-line streaming as we were allowed to gather in limited numbers and monthly at Restore Hope so we were outdoors but able to meet as a whole church family. Laurie's, Chris' and Denise's dedication to working out how we could meet, the administration team's patience and hard work in ensuring that we were Covid safe when we did meet and the tech team's flexibility allowing us to meet in all sorts of locations with music and on-line streaming, all point to a fabulous team who worked tirelessly to satisfy a hunger for gathering to worship Jesus in unity. A HUGE thank you to all who made these services possible.

We were blessed with a glorious day as the Easter service was held in the field just outside the church building. BYO chairs didn't put people off from attending and it was awesome to have worship ringing out through Chesham Bois on such an important day. Volunteers from the church community also delivered Easter gifts and eggs to every family at St Leonard's. Thank you to the team who organised the gifts and to the volunteers who delivered them to the church family. The gifts really touched many hearts, especially those who were not able to connect with church during the year.

In September we hosted Celebrate again at Restore Hope. It was a fabulous day of 18 churches gathering to worship and learn together and pray for the nation. Thank you to Alice Somervell who did a brilliant job of organising the event and the volunteers who helped out with set up, prayer teams, set down and everything else in between.

Leonard the Lion acquired a new friend in Marianne the Duck this year and said goodbye to Mr Monkey who went across the Pond to another land. This highly amusing duo are much loved by all at St Leonard's and we have all enjoyed and benefited from the humorous lessons they have taught us.

Our deepest thanks go to our Treasurer Katie Flory who does an excellent job of managing our church finances. With Holy Spirit's guidance, Katie has navigated the financial uncertainties of yet another unpredictable year with much wisdom and grace and St Leonard's is truly blessed to have Katie helping us steward our finances. Our thanks also go to Adrian Dunn, our PCC secretary who



minutes our PCC meetings meticulously, helps us prepare for the APCM and plays bass regularly during worship too. Our awesome administration team Ruth Leach and Alice Somervell do a fantastic job in keeping us organised and well informed about everything that is going on in church. A massive thank you to you both. We also thank our Leadership team, PCC and all the volunteers in our church family who give up their time to love and help our fellowship.

Our deepest thanks go to Laurie Clow. Laurie has led us through a year of unpredictability and yet more changes with flexibility in approach but a steadfastness on the Truth. He leads us by example - seeking Spirit's guidance on all matters and doing as called by Holy Spirit and his leadership in these turbulent times have taught us to anchor ourselves in Christ. Thank you so much Laurie for your dedication in teaching, encouraging, growing and loving us so very well.

Choi Mei van Rest and Cathy Baldwin – Churchwardens

WARDENS' REPORT ON THE FABRIC AND CHURCH PROPERTIES

Annual servicing for the church clock and organ took place this year and the projector had a bulb replaced and was serviced. A new sound desk was installed in December and has presets which allows for easier sound operation to suit our varying needs with streaming and live services.

At the Parish Centre security lights and the gatepost to the front of the hall were replaced, potholes were filled and a new boiler was installed at the end of the year.

The church continues to use 19 Stubbs End Close (Amersham) under Licence from the Chiltern Christain Trust.

Thank you to the Property Committee for overseeing these property matters.

Choi Mei van Rest and Cathy Baldwin – Churchwardens

PCC TREASURER'S REPORT

In 2021 both income and expenditure in the General Fund decreased, resulting in a net surplus in the General Fund. The giving to our Mission partners has been sustained and we have met all our costs.

In 2021 we paid our Parish Share to the Diocese based on our current clergy.

We have received a substantial legacy and have been able to take on new staff.

We have paid less rent, for the Beacon and the use of Restore Hope.

In 2021 the PCC spent £18,224.20 on the Parish Centre development project and received gifts of £1,500 for the project.



Our Lord and Father has been generous to us and many within the church family have continued to reflect that generosity in their giving. The budget for 2022 shows a deficit which we need to address as we go through the coming year.

Simplified accounts for the General Fund, the Parish Centre Development funds, Maryland, Mission and the Parish Centre are available as a separate appendix to this document.

Thank you to those who support me in my role, especially John Ogle, Ruth Leach, Alice Sommervell and Peter Flory.

Katie Flory – Treasurer

ELECTORAL ROLL REPORT

The Electoral Roll at the end of March 2021 stands at 164 members.

The changes are made up of the following:

16 members removed from the roll due to:

- 0 worshipping elsewhere
- 13 moved away
- 0 not worshipping anywhere
- 3 deaths

7 new members have been added to the roll.

Marian Chiappetti – Church Electoral Roll Officer

WORSHIP AT ST LEONARD'S

2021 was another challenging year for the worshipping life of St Leonard's, as we grappled with the continuing pandemic and ever-changing restrictions on gathering as a church.

Slightly more lenient guidelines than the previous year meant that in January we were able to stream Sunday services live from church, with a limited number of congregants attending in-person. The fact that the core team and a small congregation could gather to worship together was a positive start to the year, bearing in mind the much stricter restrictions in place in 2020. The smaller gatherings in-person also gave the opportunity to involve youth in the worship band who were perhaps reluctant to play in front of a larger congregation. Although it was very challenging to accommodate the church as a whole whilst only holding one main service, it was encouraging to see church members of differing ages engaging in worship both online and in-person.

A highlight of the year was being able to meet as a whole church family in the church field for worship on Easter Sunday. There was an overwhelming feeling of joy as the church family was united again and worshipped as one - our worship could be heard down in the Chess Valley that morning! As the year progressed and restrictions began to be lifted, we met for our Sunday service at Restore Hope once a month - building on that sense of family and unity from Easter Sunday. Furthermore, in September we were able to host Celebrate at Restore Hope. It was really encouraging to see so many



people not just from our church family but from the other Jesus Ministry churches and beyond with such a heart for God and His people. The times of sung worship that day are some of my most treasured memories of the year.

In August, one of our worship leaders left us to begin attending Bethel's School of Supernatural Ministry in Redding, California. Whilst it was sad to see her leave, it was also very heartening to see her take her next step on her journey with God. Earlier in the year we were able to release her own song, Pursue My King, with Homegrown Worship and it was amazing to hear how so many people had engaged with God whilst listening to it. Having helped her to record some worship for an audition in the summer, we heard later in the year that she had been selected to lead worship with one of the bands in the School of Supernatural Ministry. It's fantastic to hear how God is continuing to use her to lead His people in worship so powerfully.

Jonny Somervell – Worship Pastor

FREEDOM PRAYER AT ST LEONARD'S

Despite the varying restrictions over the last year, the prayer team have been very active. This has included:

- around 68 individual prayer appointments (Original Design for a person or role, Freedom Prayer, healing prayer, either in person or online)
- Original Design by email for a church and it's leader
- Original Design by email for 13 people (1 for baby about to be born)
- 3 sets of Original Design by email for St Jude's Southsea (14, 5 & 20 people)
- Revelation by email for a local organisation
- 2 Original Design sessions for Restore Hope Leadership Academy in March and November
- Original Design and Freedom prayer sessions for Living in Freedom May-June

In addition, I have been meeting with Captains and Listeners to 'check in' and to answer any queries they might have. We also met together as a prayer team training at the end of September to encourage and inspire each other and to worship together.

Thank you to everyone on Prayer Team for your time, flexibility and commitment to seeing people set free and walking in who they are made to be, you are all amazing.

If you would like to book a prayer appointment at a time that suits you or discuss Freedom Prayer, then please contact me at prayer@stleonardscb.org.uk.

Ruth Leach – Prayer Team Coordinator

We offer other forms of Prayer Ministry as and when required



CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

January - September 2022

We were in lockdown again from January until Easter and without a junior pastor team as Jen and Colin had moved away. In that time we started recordings with Leonard the lion and then eventually live in Church with his friend Marianne the duck to offer family friendly services. Starting September we welcomed Bekki Hadley to our team to head up Junior Church.

September - December

Junior Church

From September we have been able to meet back at the Beacon and have Junior Church. We have had 7 children attend Junior Church regularly. In the first term we focused on people of faith from the Old Testament during Junior Church. This was to help the children to learn about different people in the bible before Jesus was physically on earth and what they did and the impact they had. Each week during Junior church the children enjoy sharing news about their week, engaging in the bible teaching which is done in a more fun and engaging way appropriate for the age of the children, doing a creative prayer craft which helps the children to learn different ways that they can pray and playing fun games. Junior church is led by Bekki and a team of 4 volunteers.

Creche

We have 3 children who are under the age of 5 who attend creche regularly. During creche sessions the children enjoy free play, craft which is connected to the bible teaching, an age appropriate bible story and a snack. We have 4 volunteers and Bekki who lead creche.

In both Junior and Creche we have 2 youth volunteers one who helps in creche and one who helps in Junior Church who have both been great additions to our team they have been helping on creche and Junior Church as part of their Duke of Edinburgh Award.

Half term Junior Church Events

In October Half Term we did a light party where 15 children attended with their families. This included some families who do currently attend church so it was a great opportunity to connect with our church children and families and also to connect with families outside our church community. This event focused on Jesus being the light of the world. During this event the families had fun doing crafts, a quiz, receiving teaching in an engaging way and having cake.

We had a Christmas party in December where 8 children and their families attended. This was a fun afternoon where we were able to play fun games, eat together as a family and be reminded of the reason we celebrate Christmas in a fun and engaging way.

Bekki Hadley – Families & Children's Worker



OPEN THE BOOK MINISTRY

2021 was a very challenging year for the OTB team because we were not able to go into the schools on a regular basis and perform the Bible Stories with the children.

Due to Covid we were only engaging with three of our schools on a regular basis, St George's, St Mary's and Chesham Bois CE. We provided the schools with termly plans which included video links to the Bible Society website. These videos are made by OTB teams from other areas and often included children taking part, so for our schools it was 'nearly normal'. Our own Amersham Team in fact produced four videos which are now included on the Bible Society website for others to use.

At Chesham Bois school we also included a member of our own OTB team taking part in the school's Zoom assembly. This meant that we were able to keep up the contact with the children, read a Bible Story each week and interact with the different classes. The children were just as enthusiastic to answer questions and participate as if we were in school with them.

We pray that in 2022 we will be able to return to schools and interact with the children as we share the Good News, but in the meantime we will continue to share with the resources available to us and keep in touch with the schools and pray for them during these difficult times.

Jackie Lambert – Open the Book Coordinator

YOUTH MINISTRY

We began 2021 with the midweek youth groups taking place on zoom. This comprised of Thursday nights (school years 10-13) and Friday nights (school years 7-9). Having established a structure to youth sessions on zoom from the 1st lockdown, these video calls had become a sustainable substitute. For in-person youth groups. The reliance on games and quizzes on zoom had decreased, and time for discussion and bible study had become more of an established segment of these hour-long sessions. As the young people had increasingly become more used to zoom calls for clubs and school, engagement in youth activities on zoom also increased, a contrast to our original attempts. The youth team at this time was David, Chris, Jonny, Alice and Owen, with each taking turns to lead various Thursday and Friday sessions.

After Easter, restrictions allowed us to begin meeting in person again. Thursday night older youth met in the church and Friday night younger youth met in the PC. Numbers for both groups were slow to build up, however as we approached half term, we began to see more steady attendance through the weeks. On Thursdays we started a series on Acts, and with this, what does it look like to live everyday through the Holy Spirit. It wasn't a chronological exegesis into Acts, rather, each week a leader would choose a part of Acts that they felt had something to speak into this theme. This gave a healthy balance of biblical input and practical ways to carry this out. On Fridays, we began the theme of 'belief', exploring what it means and how we can understand our own beliefs more. Through creative sessions, a variety of stories and the chance to get outside increasing, Owen and David lead



the group through different branches of belief and how we can allow this to impact our faith. A highlight from the summer term was screening England v Scotland in church, for an altogether youth watch along. This was an opportunity to be altogether as a youth group, from years 7 through to 13, which had been a rare event since the 1st lockdown. In light of this, we took this chance to make a youth party around the football match with pizza, decorations, balloons, banners, flags, toys, snacks and drinks. Though the game ended in a disappointing 0-0, this time spent together in church created a fun, joyful atmosphere altogether, and made space for a few young people in the church to attend, who wouldn't normally have joined a weekly youth session. This time was important for a sense of togetherness in youth, something that has always been held as a core objective of the ministry.

September saw the move back to the original format of the younger small group meeting on Tuesday at the PC, followed by an altogether youth social, and Thursday nights moving to Jonny and Alice's house. A slight shift of staffing of the youth team also occurred, in terms of personnel and members of the team stepping back from immediate leading. However, the team still comprised of Owen, Alice, Jonny, Chris and David, with the addition of Paul helping on Tuesday nights as well. During our small group times with both Tuesday and Thursday groups, we explored the Beautiful Disciplines outlined by Martin Saunders. These are different disciplines of the Christian faith that help us to move closer to God, amongst the business of everyday life. Examples of the disciplines we looked at are prayer, worship, simplicity, solitude, celebration, service and fasting. Each one gave us an avenue to look at how we could incorporate it into our daily activities, as well as giving us a chance to recognise in what ways we most relate to God. Saunders lays out clear and engaging session plans to follow and the young people responded well to the content which stirred up some insightful discussions.

The family celebration service in December was another highlight of the year, with the young people and those in Junior Church taking the helm. It was a great success with young people involved with leading from the front, being part of the worship team, helping on sound and visuals, welcoming on the gate, leading a Christmas quiz and planning the overall structure of the service. This reinforced how the young people have a voice and a role in the church family and can contribute to church life as much as anyone else. It also gave them the chance to take ownership over the preparation and delivery of the service, that they took seriously and carried out very professionally. This was the last youth event of the year, as we had a Christmas party in the week leading up to the service, so was a great way to end the year on an encouraging and uplifting note.

2021 felt like a gradual move away from Covid restrictions and zoom, towards a settling back into the routine of meeting in person. A year that started with much uncertainty, evolved into one that saw new year 7's join, with one young person joining for the first time on a zoom call. We hope we are in a place where in person youth will not be halted again, however having now experienced leading the youth group in the time of lockdown, social media and videos have given us a new avenue of which to deliver our ministry in the future. As we look to 2022, a good number of year 13's are moving on to work or university therefore, a focus on preparing them for this next stage is a priority as we move into the new year. Church visits are one way we plan to get them thinking about different churches they may come across, and how to potentially integrate themselves into a new church community as a young adult. We also look forward to planning all-youth residentials, something that was restricted



in 2021. This year has provided stability for the youth ministry and we have seen God move and speak through the young people in different, yet all incredible, ways.

Owen Melville-Thomas – Youth Placement

MAD (MAKE A DIFFERENCE) ABOUT FRIDAY'S CHILDREN'S CLUB AND YOUTH CAFE

MAD about Fridays started up again in September 2021 at Woodside school. The school had started lettings up again towards the end of the summer term but kept Friday evenings free for us which was very generous. Sadly by then Andrew and Judy Silley had moved to Oxfordshire but we managed to keep going, thanks to our amazing young leaders. Bekki Hadley also rearranged her day off so that she could come and help out, which has been such an encouragement and inspiration to us as she has been able to get alongside some of the children and befriend them. She has also encouraged them to attend other events at St Leonard's for children.

We met for 10 weeks across the Autumn term, playing games and listening to a Bible story with an associated craft activity. We focused on Heroes of Faith, featuring people such as Noah, Abraham and Moses. We also held a Light Party just before October half term, and donated the subs (£1 per child per week) from our Children in Need evening to the BBC Children in Need charity. Two sets of parents also made additional donations that week, raising our total donation to £26.00. We finished the term on 10th December with a Christmas party.

About 20-25 children regularly attended, although one week there were 33 children, with a large proportion of them coming from Year 6. Numbers did fluctuate, particularly when there were outbreaks of Covid 19 in the school, but the club has been really valued by the children's families.

Before the pandemic, we had been allowed to use Cafe Africa as a location for Youth Cafe, a separate event for the young helpers. This was no longer available so we started Youth Cafe at the Parish Centre.

Please pray for the children at Woodside School. Although they are not in our parish, it has been a privilege to serve them in the midst of their sometimes very messy lives. We know that God will not let them go. Please also pray for the school itself, which has been very generous to us over the years.

Cathy and Neil Baldwin – MAD Leaders

TRANSFORMING LIVES FOR GOOD (TLG)

St Leonard's has been working with the charity TLG Early Intervention since 2019.
<https://www.tlg.org.uk/your-church/early-intervention>

We have had three coaches continuing contact with their coached child through 2022 virtually or face to face in school. Two coaches have worked in secondary schools where TLG has been hugely welcomed. All three coaches worked towards an ending with the children once they were confident that it was time for the coaching relationship to finish.



Due to various circumstances all three coaches have now stepped back. I thank them wholeheartedly for their dedication and love for those children.

At the moment we no longer have any TLG coaches within the St Leonard's body. I remain aware of the great need in our community to support children and families. If you feel called to coach a child, please contact me (denise@stleonardscb.org.uk) to hear more and find out if this might be right for you.

Denise Kolb – TLG Coordinator

HOMEGROUPS

The last year has been dominated by you know what, which meant that we met in our home group on Zoom during the lockdown last winter. It is not ideal meeting this way, but we are very grateful that we were able to do so. It challenges us all to make the group work with some who find the technology tricky, but on the whole the meetings worked pretty well and it was great the way that different people led the group online so we got different styles of leading. We also enjoyed seeing people in their homes with occasional sightings of children and pets during the evening!

At Easter Laurie asked us if we would move to another group that needed some extra support. It was not easy to start off trying to get to know people online but we were warmly welcomed and have really enjoyed our new group. As things opened up we were able to have a number of meetings in church and then in people's homes which has been so lovely after the winter months of staying at home. Although there have been a number of challenges adapting to different ways of meeting, it has still been very encouraging to see a relatively new group come together to share, pray, challenge and support each other, study God's word, and also for social events such as drinks in our garden in the summer and a meal together at Christmas. We have got to know each other better and it has been great to support each other through the pandemic. If anybody is not currently in a home group we would thoroughly recommend joining one.

Steve & Juliet Brown – Homegroup Leaders

SENIORS' MINISTRY

Covid 19 continued to affect our events this year and prevented us from meeting at Easter so we posted Easter cards together with palm-sized palm cross to our regular guests. These small crosses proved popular, placed in a vase and as an aid to prayer.

The team (Andrea Hayers, Angela Standing, Jill Hale and ourselves) met through the year, and each member kept in touch with guests as they were able and led.

We were all delighted and encouraged when we were finally able to meet in the summer for a reunion tea party. At Christmas we held our traditional service of Readings and Carols followed by refreshments. Both events were well attended. We were glad that Laurie was able to share a message of hope on each occasion.

Jo Jennings and Barbara Williams – Seniors' Leaders



KINGDOM PARTNERS

The Mission committee continues to be responsible for recommending to the PCC how to distribute the funds (10% of income) that we as a Church give to mission work. This past year we have also been able to offer extra support to some of our partners, especially Restore Hope, as the PCC has made available some of the funds released whilst we were not paying for the Beacon.

The committee is also charged with fostering the wider involvement of the Church in Mission work. The list of our Kingdom Partners has remained stable this year. For reference these are listed below - but I hope all reading this will know them, and will be praying for, at least, some of them:

Kingdom Partners	
Horizons	Jack & Claire Bonham-Cozens
Horizons	Jonathan and Helen Mason
CMS 1	Tom and Verity Clare (Uganda)
CMS 2	Steve Poulson (Honduras)
Tree of Life	Pete & Sarah Portal (South Africa)
Lunchbowl network	Working in Kibera slum (Kenya)
Oak Church	Adam Prior (Stevenage)
Restore Hope	

Over the past year, and for a variety of reasons, Jack and Claire, Tom and Verity, Steve, and Jonathan and Helen have all been in the UK, and along with Adam it has been good to see them in person. Mission Sunday was a highlight, with Jack and Steve there in person, and I had the privilege of preaching at Steve's UK wedding blessing. Adam also came over to preach at the Beacon in November.

Our current range of Kingdom partners has been stable for a while now, but we have a review of a couple of these links coming up next year, so do continue to pray for our partners, and also for wisdom and revelation for the committee. There is always more need than we are able to meet! This coming year we plan also to restart the on-line prayer meetings that were successful in the early days of lockdown.

Chris Clare – Chair Mission Committee

MARYLAND PRE SCHOOL NURSERY

After the difficulties of 2020 Maryland opened at the beginning of January like all other early year's settings, whereas all schools closed! Another difficult year loomed.

Fairly soon into term we had a case of Covid and had to close, following all the Government measures and our contingency plan, written just a few months earlier. By the 20th of January we were back and despite quite low pupil numbers, staff maintained their usual high standards of learning and nurturing. Low numbers, of course, led to some financial concerns and we made cuts in staff



hours to mitigate this loss. We were able to obtain some funding from County as well, thanks to Pam and Katie.

Given low numbers and predictions for the next academic year, staff and the committee worked hard to increase Maryland's profile in the community and on line. Many thanks to Jane and to Lucy for their IT expertise with Instagram, Facebook and Margaret for her skills and enthusiasm. Our brilliant Daniel produced a virtual tour of the setting which is running on the website. As a result of these efforts, we were very nearly full for some sessions after Easter and a healthy 27 children on the books. Even a response from a poster outside the Flory back gate!

Covid restrictions continued to alter the scope of some of our usual activities around Easter, but the children still enjoyed a World Book Day dressing up, an Easter egg hunt with eggs kindly donated by Tesco and the Spring term culminating in a lovely Easter story service; no church and no audience but beautifully orchestrated by Henny and Daniel yet again producing a moving video for the website for parents and carers to treasure.

In March, Pam, our manager, told us of her intention to retire and move back to her home county of Nottinghamshire. In a similar scenario to last year the chair and committee advertised and interviewed for the post. Interviews were face to face unlike last year! Thanks to the Rector for his time and input! We were delighted to appoint Rebecca Flory as our new manager and she has brought her many skills, experience and her deep Christian beliefs to our setting. This then meant we needed a new deputy! Jane Pepler had been doing her level 3 qualification during much of the pandemic and was close to finishing. We are just thrilled that she felt confident to apply for the position and that County and her tutors supported this decision. She brings her very fresh training and knowledge to the post, and she and Bekki are a formidable team. Praise the Lord! The Spring/Summer term heralded the return of Forest school and gardening but events like the Chesham Bois fete were cancelled and our own Sports day and leavers event had to be more muted than usual.

Financially we were pleased that our actions during the previous months meant that we broke even! Unfortunately, 21 of our pupils moved on to Primary School leaving just 6 on the books for September. On again with more advertising!

Autumn term began with few children but with new initiatives and displays. Also a new gate and gate posts and areas of tarmac made safe; many thanks to Ruth and Mandy for this! Sadly, Coralie, one of our excellent staff had decided to accept a job elsewhere and we also lost a member of our committee Karen Wylie for family reasons. The remaining staff were able to pick up Coralie's hours and Orfana was on hand as supply.

More pupils joined and we had 14 on roll with 4/5 on the waiting list for January. Despite this we found ourselves in a much more precarious financial situation. County have been helpful and after a sustainability meeting in November we are in the process of applying for an extra grant to help out.

Forest school and a new Early Year's framework have kept us on our toes and the staff were delighted with new tablets to enhance the assessing of the children via Tapestry. A broken boiler in



the coldest part of term added to our challenges and again we have to thank Mandy and Bekki for quick action to avoid too many lost days.

Yet again the staff were able to prepare a wonderful nativity and this time in Church on December 16th December. Numbers were limited and some pews sealed off and no refreshments, but parents and carers enjoyed a joyful celebration and Daniel produced some stunning stills for the website.

As last year, our families donated items for the families in need in the community and identified by Jo Clare at Restore Hope.

It has been another challenging year for us all but with many definite highs! This is an excellent pre-school with talented and dedicated staff and wonderful children. Do please mention us far and wide and continue with your prayers.

Andrea Hayers – Chair Maryland Committee

CHESHAM BOIS CHURCH OF ENGLAND SCHOOL

“Believing, Achieving and Caring Together

As a Church of England School we place the child at the centre of all we do. We welcome children and families of all faiths and of none. Our work is motivated and inspired by our core Christian values (love, thankfulness, faith, integrity, respect, and resilience) which are lived out on a daily basis by children and adults in the school. We provide a caring, nurturing learning environment in which all children can achieve and grow together.”

2021 saw another tumultuous time for the education world and Chesham Bois school was not exempt. As we planned to re-open in January we were hit by a complete boiler failure so ended up delaying the start until the 11th January whilst a temporary boiler was brought into service. Ironically the over 40 year old boiler was due to be replaced by two boilers and that work was successfully completed in the Spring term.

Once again we saw agile and dynamic management by leaders and staff at the school in response to the upturn in Covid infections. The successful remote education used in 2020 was redeployed to great effect.

Class bubbles were introduced with staggered arrival and departure times for each class after Spring half term and we were delighted that Year 6 got their River Dart activity this year. Sadly the closure of bubbles impacted the end of the year, with many Christmas activities virtualised or cancelled.

We had three reviews by the ODBST (Oxford Diocesan Bucks Schools Trust) carried out remotely for SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities) and Pupil premium, Remote Learning Provision and Ofsted Inspection Ready.

All these were good, with some recommendations, but the remote learning received high praise and we know was highly coveted by parents from other schools.



At the time I, as chair of governors, wrote to parents to emphasise this achievement:

"We should recognise and give commendation to the amazing teaching staff that have knuckled down and creatively and thoughtfully produced the children's education via Google Classroom, Zoom and Powerpoint. This has not been an easy task for them at all, and to momentarily reflect on this, there can't be many jobs that have morphed into something completely different during this pandemic. Having to grapple with new technology, applications and systems with little training in such a short space of time, and to still deliver excellent learning programmes for your children is inspiring at the very least."

Staff have certainly gone the extra mile for the children and I have had the joy of writing a number of commendatory letters this year to some staff for specific and recognisable achievements.

The wellbeing of pupils, staff and parents has been recognised and supported by governors through regular monitoring and advice being made available.

"Closing the gap" has been a clear priority and significant progress has been made to get children academically back to where they should be.

The pandemic has taught the school new ways to manage and do things differently, one being parents evenings which were held remotely. Virtual worship and Collective Worship in classrooms have been effectively deployed and the school have started to use the Contemplative Toolkit published by the ODBE (Oxford Diocesan Board of Education). Why not try this for yourselves?
<https://www.oxford.anglican.org/everyday-faith/contemplative-toolkit/contemplative-toolkit.php>

There have been some staff changes, but we are fortunate in not having any vacancies or having to spend significantly on supply.

It was a delight to once again have an in-person staff governor breakfast before the Christmas Covid flare up.

There was significant change in the Governor team with the departure of Jenny Faulkner and Duncan Wynn at the end of the academic year. We were very pleased to welcome Donald Campbell-Brown as a replacement foundation governor. From the parents representation we saw the departure of Zoe Brooks and the arrival of Esther Russell. Having been re-appointed for 4 years, I stepped down as chair of governors, but remain as joint vice-chair for transition and succession purposes. The new chair of governors is Melanie Peel who was appointed in September 2021.

**Peter Flory - Joint Vice Chair and Foundation Governor
with Jackie Lambert and Donald Campbell-Brown – Foundation Governors**

DEANERY SYNOD

Amersham Deanery Synod, a group of representatives from Church of England churches in an area extending beyond Amersham itself which meets four times a year. St Leonard's elected lay members are Peter Flory and Jackie Lambert.



The clergy are automatically members.

There are two working sub-committees, the standing committee and the Mission and Pastoral committee which Peter sits on. This gathers and prays for each parish and its current needs and ensures parishes are supported during interregnums.

Full details are available on the Amersham Deanery website:
<https://www.amershamdeanery.org.uk/>

Our March meeting was on Zoom and we appointed our officers, Lay Chair, Hon. Treasurer and Hon. Secretary. We split into breakout rooms for prayer for our parishes and shared communion led by Tim Harper and Casa Messervy, who were leaving the deanery.

In September we met in person and Gill Lovell our Parish Development Officer presented on the subject of "Learnings and Questions for Recovery and Rebuilding" followed by Rev Dr BP Ludlow who presented on Occupational Health issues in the pandemic which have some interesting insights. We also received General Synod and Diocesan Synod reports from members. Revd Peggy Ludlow has been appointed Co-Area Dean replacing Tim Harper and Martin Williams has now stepped down from his role of Co-Area Dean.

At our November meeting we approved the terms of reference for the Mission and Pastoral Committee and appointed the members to it. The Parish Share for 2022 was approved and we had an excellent presentation from Steve & Lindsey Poulson on their work in Honduras.

Needless to say we received our usual regular Area Dean's reports, the financial accounts, Parish Share allocation and budgets throughout the year.

All papers and minutes can be readily seen on the website <https://www.amershamdeanery.org.uk/>

Peter Flory & Jackie Lambert – Deanery Synod Representative

PARISH CENTRE REDEVELOPMENT

The year started with high hopes that our planning application for the new Parish Centre would be met favourably. We had a positive Case Officer report recommending approval (with conditions), and some very encouraging comments from other officers at Buckinghamshire Council. In a surprising and disappointing turn of events, the newly-formed 'East Buckinghamshire Area Planning Committee' refused the application on Tuesday 12th January 2021.

Following this, we received a formal written report detailing the reasons for refusal:
These were:

1. *Overdevelopment (too much built form proposed on the site)*
2. *Harm to the Conservation Area (inappropriate design, and new residential too close to North Rd)*
3. *Effect on neighbour's amenity (Old Rectory – light and noise spillage from car park)*



4. *Highways issue (intensification of existing car park entrance creating safety concerns)*

Ecology/biodiversity was also a concern stated but was not included in the formal reasons for refusal.

The PCC needed to consider what next steps the church community should take. There were three options:

- *Option 1: Stop the project (temporarily or permanently).*
- *Option 2: Go to a Planning Appeal on the current application.*
- *Option 3: Resubmit a revised planning application with changes addressing reasons for refusal.*

This was a real ‘crossroads’ moment for the project, and for the church, and clarity of decision and unity were both important. It was decided after much discussion and prayer and two dedicated PCC sessions, that the right course of action was to appeal against the decision as being unreasonable, via a formal Planning Appeal.

Following this PCC decision around Easter-time, St. Leonard’s PCC commissioned Habitat for Humanity to form a scope and budget and engage the Planning Consultant and Highways Advisors needed to make a ‘Written Representation’. They were then able submit this Planning Appeal on 30th June 2021. The public consultation stage took place during December 2021, as that was the month that the Planning Inspectorate appointed a Case Officer, Neil Devereux. All the relevant documents that were lodged by St Leonard’s, and by the Local Authority (Buckinghamshire Council) along with 3rd Party representations, can be found on the Planning Portal at the following link (relevant docs are from 30th June 2021 onwards):

<https://pa.chilternandsouthbucks.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=documents&keyVal=Q54TUSESLCR00>

It is important to note that the appeal is strictly based on all the information that was submitted for the Planning Application, and could not include any adaptations or revisions. This is the primary reason no further consultation was had with the Parish Council, or within the community – the plans had not changed from those presented to the community as part of the planning application. The Appeal process is to review whether the decision to refuse taken by the Local Authority Planning Committee in January 2021 was reasonable and should be upheld, or whether it was unreasonable and permission should be granted.

The outcome of the Inspector’s decision will obviously be key to how the project proceeds, but a strong case was made and the Local Authority will have to defend a decision that their own officers did not recommend. We are now waiting for a National Planning Inspector to be appointed to carry out a site visit and to make a final assessment of the appeal case.

We are grateful to all the dedicated professionals who have helped us on what has proven to be a difficult path for the project. At present the timescale for this is not yet clear and could be several months away, so patience will be continue to needed with the ongoing process into 2022.

David Clare – Project Manager for Habitat for Humanity