



*St Michael's Church*

Worship • Community • Mission

# Annual Report 2021



Annual Report of the Parochial Church Council for  
the year  
January – December 2021

St Michael's Church is part of the Diocese of Coventry and is in Warwick and Leamington Deanery. The correspondence address is: St Michael's Church, Church Lane, Budbrooke, CV35 8QL.

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**PCC members who have served from APCM 2021 until the date this report was approved are:**

Rev'd David Brown (Chair), Rev'd Mary Lodge (ex-officio), Rev'd Martin Davies (ex-officio), Richard Lyttle (Vice-chair), Andrew Cowie (Treasurer), Susan Davies (Secretary), Ruth Grinbergs (Churchwarden), Stephen Poole (Churchwarden), Ben Davis, Val Roy, Royston Young, Sue Stanton (stepped down in September 21), Luke Thomas, and Mike Wood. There are currently two Deanery Synod representatives. The method of appointment of PCC members is set out in the Church Representation Rules. Since APCM 2021 the PCC has met four times (October, November, January & March).

**The electoral roll:**

There are 101 members of which 67 are resident in the parish, and 34 non-resident. 5 have joined the roll and 4 have left.



# Vicar's Report



2021 is a hard year to summarise. The constant uncertainty, lockdowns, restrictions and changes of guidance have made everyday life and the worshipping life of the church complex. We've had to come to terms to the ongoing nature of the pandemic, making any plans provisional with the constant possibility of change.

For any organisation that has had to lead change through this period it has been wearying and gruelling. The impact on schools is an obvious example, but it has been the experience across the board, businesses, public services – all of us have had to adapt.

I have to say I am proud of the way that we at St. Michael's have responded, 2021 saw us launch our streamed services. The quality of the output is a real testimony to the skills of the team who put the project together, and it has extended our reach.

We have also seen the continued development of our community pattern of worship. In many ways this is slightly ahead of the curve but very much in line with the wider Church of England who in announcing their vision and strategy in 2021 for the Church as whole, noted the priority of becoming a church of missionary disciples (heard that anywhere?). More than that, it is in line with our own Diocese's plan to establish new worshipping communities, all part of what the Archbishop of York describes as a "Mixed Ecology."

At the same time the changing restrictions have made it hard to be consistent in anything. I've lost count of the number of changes the Church Wardens, PCC and staff have had to make when it comes to patterns, risk assessments and the like. Yet somehow, in the face of all these challenges things have moved forward.

I'll say more in the reports below, but we have delivered real progress against the PCC vision, The Open Door has been transformed both in look and in ethos, and we have learnt a fundamental lesson through Retreat to Advance about how to approach discipleship in a way that can be multiplied.

We also have to be realistic about the impact of isolation and the fracturing that has come from Covid. Just because we've generally adapted well doesn't mean all is well. Though there are new faces, not everyone has returned to public worship. Our various ministry teams that paused in the pandemic have not found it easy to restart.

We need to face these things together, with love and hope. The handling of the harder things, and letting God speak hope into them was summed up wonderfully on Christmas Day for me.

It was all rather unpromising at first, Omicron hit our attendance generally, and Christmas Day, sadly, always a quiet service here, was no exception. In fact, so much so that as I came to start the service, inside I was thinking, 'let's get this over with so I can go home and have my turkey!'

Yet what happened that morning was glorious. We responded to a moving talk (thank you Grace!) by making space to pray and listen to God. It felt like we were all 'up for it' and there was a unity in the room. Prayers were led, pictures were shared, and two subsequent prophetic words conveyed to me.

In summary, the Words pointed to season where we as a church, filled with the fire of the Spirit and Light of Christ, started taking that to others, such that those now in darkness were filled with God's light, born again, new creations!

We left uplifted and believing that the Lord was promising a new day, a new chapter for St Michael's in which people would turn and return to Jesus.

I don't think this came from nowhere, we've begun to pray more consistently and earnestly on a Sunday evening, all part of hastening God's purposes for us. At the same time, much of the fruit of 2021 has emerged in unexpected ways and places, but we can take hope in all of this, the Holy Spirit is very much on the move. – **David Brown**


# Review of the Year: Worship

As we look back on this past year it might be easy to underestimate all that has happened. Somehow, as we've had to take change upon change in our stride throughout the pandemic, we can almost take for granted the things that have taken place.

Yet if we pause for a moment to properly reflect, what has developed over this last year has been quite remarkable.

After years of procrastination, 2021 was the year in which we went ahead and multiplied our Sunday services. In many ways this would seem the least favourable time of all to do it, yet the creation of the 900am and 1045am Services has moved us forward.

In any ordinary year that might be noted as the most significant step, yet in these Covid times, it was just one step of many. January 2021 saw us transition from Zoom to streamed worship. We now broadcast Sunday Services live to our YouTube and Facebook pages. These have had a wider reach than zoom, and have been a definite factor in people connecting with and joining St Michael's.



We want to thank the church family for their generosity in raising funds to install this equipment and thank the worship team and technical team whose expertise got us to an end result that we can be extremely pleased with and thankful for. They've also had to learn new ways of working with new equipment – great job everyone!

Of course, it doesn't end there either. 2021 has been the year that we have made most use of Kings Meadow. We've held regular outdoor services which helped those uncomfortable in coming indoors to a public gathering to meet for worship. Indeed this has been such a positive experience that we've now agreed to hold all our summer services outdoors in the school holidays, inviting people to stay afterwards for a picnic.

The whole site was used this way for New Wine and it was so good to have a good-sized group gather to camp. Staying local saw others come to the site for the day to share in the event. Again, this is something that we will look to build on.

In any "normal" year just one of these things would feel like a major achievement, but the openness to follow where we feel God is leading, the willingness to try new things, the openness to learn, and the patience as we hone our plans characterises our church. 2022 may see many fundamental changes, but, having made room for the Lord in these things, our expectation is that he will fill the patterns we've created.



# Discipleship

One of the axioms of the Christian life is to look for what God is doing and join in. Certainly, one of the most significant developments of 2021 was accidental. Retreat to Advance, a prayer journey for the whole church, marked a season of seeking God together.

Some of the fruit was what we might have expected, a number of powerful prophetic Words to the church came out of it, after all God promises that if we seek him we find him but we also learnt in unexpected ways.

Yes, there was a call to wholeheartedness, to learn to be bold, to bring down the barriers that stop us reaching out, people drawing close to us, “church without walls” – and these have shaped our priorities going forward. These matter deeply, but at the same time, the unexpected but maybe more fundamental fruit of the retreat is the pattern that it gives us for how we grow as disciples going forwards.

The CROWN framework has been a useful tool for thinking about how we live out our faith. Before Covid we had spent some time looking at the Re-Create elements, thinking about rest and sabbath. We’ve been careful not to be directive or prescriptive, but maybe too careful. The framework itself was maybe left too open-ended to help us practically apply the principles. Some of us need clear, simple, “how to” practicalities.

Retreat to Advance gave each participant a method or tool that they could put into practice when it came to personal devotional prayer. Nobody who shared in the retreat could say that they have not been taught how to pray. What is more, the pattern is simple enough for anyone who has experienced it can share it with someone else.

Perhaps unintentionally, we had created a tool for discipleship simple enough that everyone could try and anyone could teach. It was only when reflecting back on the fruit of the Retreat that we saw this – a real hallelujah moment!

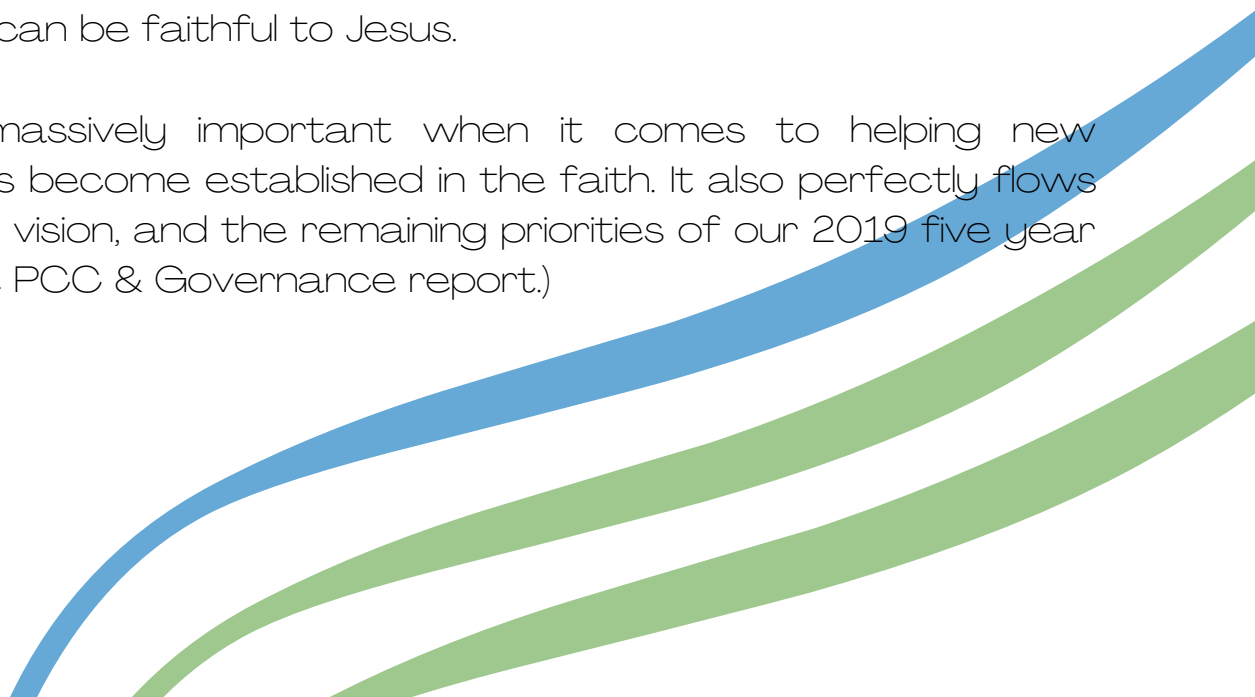
What we identified was the importance of providing tools that can be building blocks that any of us can incorporate into our lifestyle as a Christian so they become habitual.

From Retreat to Advance, the prayer pattern is a building block to help shape a WORD rhythm. It isn't prescriptive, you may have a better pattern, if so – follow that, but it is a starting place. For the new Christian, it is a tool they can use, to draw close to Jesus day by day.

The wider learning, of course, is that these building blocks can be developed for each area of CROWN. We started to see it with a “Prayer for Five”, something those participating in the evangelism learning hub took hold of in autumn 2019. The plan is to have simple tools for each area of the Christian life that we can share and grow in together. This is central to our vision to multiply discipleship.

We don't want to be prescriptive, if you have a better pattern for yourself in any of these areas, then go for it, but it growing discipleship within the framework of CROWN, using simple tools as building blocks will give us a basic common understanding (and to some extent language) about what we're trying to do and how we can be faithful to Jesus.

This is massively important when it comes to helping new Christians become established in the faith. It also perfectly flows from our vision, and the remaining priorities of our 2019 five year plan, (see PCC & Governance report.)



# St Michael's Communities

If you held out a two-meter ruler in your left and right hands and walk down St Michael's aisle, you would hit everyone who was sat on the back of the head. Of course, we don't recommend such an action, but it illustrates the challenges COVID has brought in a particular way to our parish.

We have responded with real creative thinking about how we might meet in person during the course of the pandemic and it has been extremely encouraging to see our smaller missional communities take shape. Each are different, hold a particular vision, each one has been creative in how they've approached meeting, each one has seen new people attend and they've all demonstrated they have potential to grow.

At the same time, whilst attendance is generally higher on a community week overall, we have to be honest and note that some members of the church haven't found this way of meeting easy.

There is the open question of what happens next? Where we go from here?

The stories from each of the community, detailed below, will help begin to speak into that. However, whether, how, or how often they continue are the wrong starting questions.

More fundamental than frequencies of meeting, is the question of whether the Communities themselves are growing patterns that build deep fellowship, see people come to faith and can multiply patterns of discipleship. This is the fundamental. If we can't do that, then we may as well return to gathering together on a Sunday.

However, if we are doing that, and there are signs that we are, then why would we want to stop?

I had to admit to the PCC I wasn't sure how this would look in the medium term – the reality is that we will need to prayerfully work this out together.

Perhaps the clearest clue to the future is how these wider outcomes are achieved. A community whose mid-week patterns are strong, may not want to meet twice a month on a Sunday. A community who is seeing large numbers of new people attend their meetings may feel their call is to journey towards become a worshipping community or congregation in their own right.

Wonderfully, all of these possibilities were held together in the PCC's vision that we set out in 2019, it's just that the pandemic has taken us there on a slightly different route than we imagined.

So, as we listen to God for how things might shape in 2022, let's do so with thanksgiving as we look back at 2021. Praising God for the commitment, the creativity, the vision of our community leadership teams that God has raised up in such extraordinary times



# Hampton Magna

Hampton Magna. (The community meet at 10:45am in The Open Door for more info contact Ben and Alex Davis, Rebecca Cowie, Eddie Fowler and Debbie Wilson).

Once the New Year lockdown eased, our community met at the Budbrooke Community Centre for worship through until September 21, when the group relocated into the newly refurbished Open Door.

Over this period our numbers have varied, at times the café has been full to overflowing and at others a core group of around 14-15 have been present. We have seen new members join us which has been encouraging and are seeking to build consistent patterns as we move forwards.

A regular evening small discipling group has multiplied into a second daytime group where we have followed the themes of the Church Sunday sermons and latterly a course on mission – as we seek to “learn to be bold.”

A few of our members are delivering welcome gifts and information to residents in the new housing as we move in and some have connected with our community and the wider church family and we hosted a Christmas craft event at The Open Door, followed by a guest service the following morning. This has developed into a pattern whereby our meeting on the 4th Sunday of the month is in a format that is suited to non-Christians who might wish to hear about Jesus or explore faith further.

We are so grateful for Andy & Kath Poole who have led the community through until now, built a team and given us a real foundation to build from. We wish them well as they prepare to move away in the next chapter for them.

# Chase Meadow

Chase Meadow. (Meet at 10:45am in the Chase Meadow Community Centre for more info contact Luke and Lou Thomas).

We continued this year navigating Covid and the ever-changing restrictions. We continued to support the work of make lunch and the re launch of mini meadows.

We continue to meet as a community twice a month on a Sunday and have seen consistent number of people joining us each time, and a few new people finding home with us.

We have sensed that God is calling us to invest in the children in our community, having up to 13 join us at our Services. As we step into the new year, we are looking at how we can be more missional exploring the ideas of a monthly Oikos, small groups and investing into pre-existing community events.



# Network Community

Network Group. (Meet at 10:45am in the Church Centre for more info contact Michael and Suzanne Wood).

The ethos of the Network Group is to provide a place at St Michael's where members of the congregation who don't live in the parish can feel at home. Consequently, we have active participants from far beyond the parish borders, as well as some from the parish itself.

During the past 12 months, the Network Group has built up a core group of about 10 leaders who take it in turns to lead the group, gaining experience and confidence in standing at the front. We are also blessed with a number of musicians, who often provide live worship for the group.

We regularly see upwards of 20 people attend our meetings, who seem to enjoy taking an active part in meetings, in particular discussing the talk, giving words of encouragement and praying for each other.

Despite the challenges of Covid, we have two active discipling groups and are keen to encourage more.

Recently, as a way of developing a sense of community and helping members of the group to get to know each other better, we have started meeting weekly for a simple supper of soup and desserts. We held the first one in the first week of Lent to coincide with the start of St Michael's Retreat to Advance course. After the meal, we've been taking part in R2A feedback sessions. We hope to continue this after Lent.

# 9am Communion Community

9.00am Holy Communion Community (9.00am service in St Michael's Church building for more info contact Martin Davies)

The 9.00 am HC community have been meeting in person since congregations were allowed back into the church building, post lockdown which has been great in strengthening our sense of community. We have welcomed new members and welcomed back members who were part of the different mid-week worshipping groups that used to meet pre-pandemic and many of whom have suffered two years of isolation from our congregations due to being in the different shielding groups. We have also seen different members of the community willing to take part in the services by reading, writing and reading the intercessions, prayer ministry, tech and warden team. We hope to be able to encourage others to take part too. We give thanks to everyone involved in these and the other ministries that make our services the special times they are.

Our Christmas service of lessons, carols, poems and live music, followed by mince pies was a great success and it is hoped that we can do more of these special services through the year.



# Youth Ministry

Once again, the youth ministry has gone through significant changes in 2021. We started the year with Steve leading the small group of volunteers whilst Lou finished her maternity leave. He did a fantastic job of keeping everything going, for which we are very grateful.



During the first part of the year, thanks to ongoing covid restrictions, youth work was kept to a weekly online Zoom meeting on a Friday evening, to which all the youth were welcome. We had a small but consistent group of young people who attended. It was a real blessing to get to know these young people better. The meetings consisted of playing some online games followed by a short Bible study which the leaders shared between them.

We were all very much relieved when we could leave behind the Zoom meetings and finally meet in person again though. The field at church became our weekly meeting space, with plenty of room for outside games. We learnt very quickly to dress warmly and bring blankets with us!

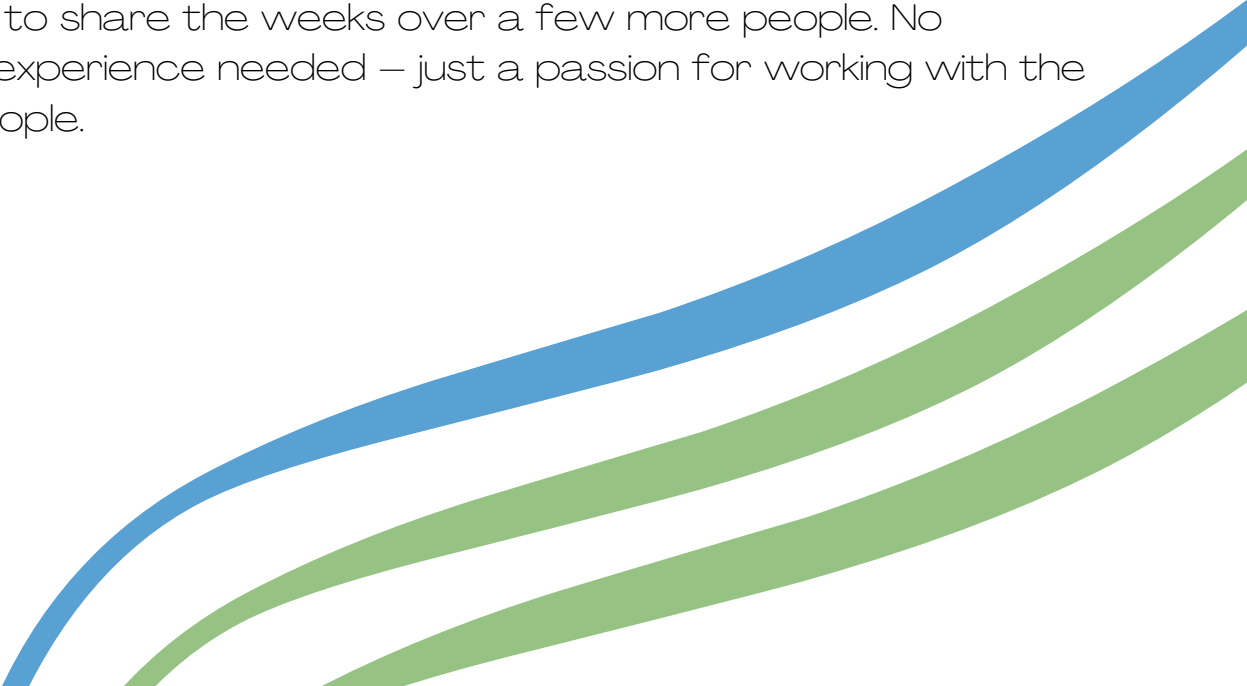
Lou returned to us in June but we kept the pattern of one youth group session on a Friday in the field. Then in September, we returned to the pre-covid pattern of an older group of young people on Tuesday nights at the church centre, Rooted, and a younger group on Friday nights at the Chase Meadow Community Centre, The Rock. The numbers for the older group were pretty consistent but The Rock failed to recover the large numbers of young people we were seeing before the pandemic. We quickly felt like God was wanting us to move The Rock back to the church centre and to work on encouraging the younger members on the fringes of St Michael's to come along and build the good relationships that we have seen among the Rooted group. So, in the autumn term, that's what we did! We have seen

a lovely, small but growing group of young people come along to The Rock, quite a few bringing friends along too. We quickly noticed that the needs of this group were quite different and have gone back to some Bible basics to give them a sure foundation.

With Lou returning to her job, SMYLE was reborn on a Sunday morning in September too. Open to all the youth, it runs just once a month on the last Sunday with Lou introducing teaching based around one character from the Bible each session. One or two of the youth had a go at running a session for us which was wonderful! If we can find more volunteers, we would love to increase this to two Sundays a month.

Sadly, with the end of 2021, Lou stepped down from her role and left the youth work in the care of the volunteers. Lou has done a wonderful job of working with the youth for many years. She is passionate about caring for their needs, encouraging them and helping them in their journey with God. She has been an inspiration to all the leaders and we are so grateful for all she has done. Given her gifts for relating to the young people we know she will be back one day!

And so, into 2022... the volunteers are keeping things going with a session on Friday nights, with separate teaching for The Rock and Rooted groups. We really would love to welcome some new volunteers to join our small team. At the moment we are very reliant on all of us being able to be there every week so it would be great to share the weeks over a few more people. No previous experience needed – just a passion for working with the young people.



# Children and Families Ministry

It has been another interesting year for the Children's Ministry as we all started adjusting to life post Covid.

As the Church has continued to develop and grow meeting in communities, we have had to restructure how the Sunday morning children's groups look. We have a Kids' Church session two weeks a month, alongside the weeks where the church meets as one. This has been great having all the children together from all the different communities to have fun learning about God, and we are back to making display boards to show the rest of the church what we are up to.

Figuring out how to engage the children with Church during the community weeks was a bit more of a challenge. We have developed a pattern where the communities have one week of the month with a Children's session run specifically for them, Hampton Magna and Networks form one group and Chase Meadow are the second. On the other community week each month, the groups are encouraged to run a more all-age style service including some elements for the children. Even though figuring out a way to make Children's work possible in the communities wasn't easy to start with, we are now seeing the fruit of it, with multiple new families joining across various communities.

Since September we have been able to re-launch our toddler Group Mini Meadows on Wednesdays at the Chase Meadow Community Centre, where we have connected with lots of local parents.

## School's Ministry

We have had to approach school's ministry slightly differently; we had hoped to be back in the local schools delivering assemblies but that has not been possible due to Covid. But even though we were unable to go to them we have had a few visits up to church from Budbrooke Primary, where we have worked with them to leading Harvest and Christmas Celebrations.

We have also partnered with St Pauls going into Newburgh Primary School to provide 'Early Intervention' which is TLG's mentoring scheme. This is where we are paired with a child who might be struggling and needs some extra support. Each week we go in for an hour 1:1 session where we play games, do craft and most importantly provide a space for the child to express themselves and feel heard. This is something that we would love to continue and increase the support we can offer to the school, so if this is something you would like more information about please get in touch.

# Ministry of the Church Centre

The church centre is managed by our wonderful administration team consisting of our Operations Manager – Sue Davies, and our Admin and Operations Assistant – Lou Thomas who started with us in January 2022.

With Sue continuing in the role of general management of the church and the different ministries that St Michael's runs, Lou steps into take on the role of Bookings Administrator.

With the centre re-opening at the beginning of September 2021, we have seen a gradual increase of bookings coming in month by month. To the point of the last few weeks there have been bookings pretty much every day!

We have seen a continued support from our regular hirers throughout the pandemic, and that support continues to this day.

Since the re-opening of the centre back in September 2021, we have opened the main church building to function as another booking venue, and have hopes to expand that option for users further to function as a conference meeting location.

The feedback forms we are receiving from users after their events with us are showing great customer satisfaction. Many are finding the location welcoming and hospitable with the phrase 'approachable' occurring regularly.

There are some plans in the early stages, of improving/upgrading the interior design of the centre, to provide a more welcoming environment for users at the centre. With plans involving updating the noticeboards, opening the church and the outside space for users to have a look around during their bookings, a

prayer team available if required for the users, and even an audio system through the building to be playing background worship music as the users manoeuvre throughout the centre. A key focus for the Church Centre moving forwards, is how to increase our reach to users who haven't booked with us before. How do we reach them, how do we advertise, how can we expand our target audience and increase the demand for bookings at the centre.



# Outreach and Community Ministry

## The Open Door

The Open Door Cafe continued as a COVID-19 Community Support hub until the middle of the year. During this time the Make Lunch team continued with their great work in the distribution of surplus food to families in need. The Community library and jigsaws were a much-needed distraction for those who were struggling to know how to fill their time, and the prescription delivery team continued with their deliveries to support Budbrooke Medical Centre.

In May, we were delighted to welcome Entrust Care Partnership back to The Open Door, their wonderful trainees ready to serve delicious coffee and cake. With certain restrictions in place, our priority was for the protection and safety of both customers and volunteers, but this was managed well and we were so thankful to have the chance to meet up again!

At the same time, longer term questions were being asked about future of The Open Door, including consultation with representatives of the Community Centre and Parish Council. This brought us back to the vision which began to emerge in 2018 inspired by Isaiah 55 for the creation of a community hub from which we could better serve the community and through which new activities and services could be brought into the village.

The PCC allocated significant funds and successful bids to the Warwickshire County Council's Green Shoots scheme, allowed the installation of energy-efficient lighting and heating and the delivery of a new 'Repair Café' project due to start in 2022. Funding also came from Warwick District Council restart business grant, National Grid ESO Community Fund, WDC Covid CEV fund and WCC Covid19 Recovery & Investment Adapt & Diversify grant.



During the summer The Open Door was stripped back and renovated to provide a fresh new look.

In September The Open Door renovations were completed the premises reconfigured and transformed. The dedicated volunteer working group gave considerable time and energy to deliver the project, supported by the administrative staff of St Michael's. The photo below shows the new look, detailing the community library/jigsaw library.



We are grateful for the hard work of Sue Stanton, Sue Davies, Caroline Edwards, Eddie Fowler and David Brown (the TOD working group) and many others who were instrumental in scoping, fundraising for and delivering the project.

There is a positive feel about the venue and its new Pay What You Feel ethos. Now a light, bright, welcoming and airy place – it has gathered new users. The furniture is flexible, meaning a variety of activities can be offered. The “flow” of the space leaves the donation station in a discreet position, meaning people might pay before or after getting their drinks – this dynamic makes it more discreet for those who can’t afford to pay. Privacy blinds mean groups can operate in a discreet way, should they wish to do so.

We welcomed back user groups, Entrust, Twirling Toddlers, and Spin a Yarn and the Walking Group. The PTA now also run a session on Friday mornings ‘Fun Toast Friday’ from 8 – 10.30am. Parents and children meet up before school to share toast and refreshments and then reconvene once the children are at school.

In November we held our first Tastelife course. A lovely atmosphere with people sharing their journeys of eating disorders very honestly. We are looking forward to helping people get equipped on their road to recovery. The privacy blinds and flexible seating works perfectly for these groups.



A welcoming and sociable space for any group to get together. Pictured – Ramblers Wellbeing Walking group.

Our work continues with Budbrooke Medical Centre (in the appointment of a Community Outreach and Link Worker, starting in 2022), the Parish Council and our wider community. We are continuing to build on the services available to our expanding community and are excited about what this will bring.

# Make Lunch



Since schools closed in March 2020 at the start of the Covid-19 pandemic, when we morphed from serving lunch in school holidays to weekly distribution of food parcels, we have continued into 2021 until in-person Make Lunch sessions resumed safely but with considerable trepidation in summer holidays. At that time, we also moved our operation from The Open Door to Chase Meadow Community Centre (CMCC), and scaled back our deliveries, instead inviting families to come to collect food from us on Monday mornings.

Life has returned to near-normal for many of the families we had doorstep contact with, in the form of low-paid jobs; however, we are still helping around 20 families to some degree, with regular contact with up to ten of them on a weekly basis. Warwick & District Foodbank provide us with staple foodstuffs, and we have variously collected supermarket surplus from M&S and Sainsburys, and now the new Lidl.

As our conversations with parents have uncovered other needs, and only after our Chase Meadow church community committed to pray regularly for the teenagers in our Make Lunch families, we have been able to signpost families to the provision of free laptops for two teenagers, and to on-line help for mental wellbeing issues for others. Another family has been

provided with a new fridge and school uniform. In order to address these more pastoral concerns, we are now changing our activity day at CMCC to Wednesday afternoons, offering a cuppa and listening ear to any who would value it.

CMCC continue to be supportive, by giving access to their community fridge, stocked weekly by FareShare, to our families. Residents also organised for the second year a Toyfest before Christmas, to which our families were invited to have first pick of the toys and games on offer.



TLG (Transforming Lives for Good), the organisation overseeing Make Lunch, continue to be very supportive, offering termly on-line forums which are invaluable for exchanging ideas with other Make Lunch clubs. They also regularly update and send copies of their resources, which help parents and children with emotional difficulties.

Given TLG's desire to promote children's literacy, we made a case and received a book token award for £125, most of which has been spent to set up a small library for use by families who collect food weekly.

The Flying Seagulls, introduced to us by TLG, are a small troupe of enthusiastic and very energetic actors who give free interactive circus and magic shows to children who need cheering up, and we enjoyed their visit at October half-term.



For Easter and Summer, we received funding from the new government HAF (Holiday Activities & Food) fund, of which Warwickshire received £1.7m. This money will be available for the enrichment of vulnerable children's lives until 2025, and we have submitted a successful bid to be part of HAF again for 2022. None of this would have been possible without the support, prayers, and considerable devotion of our team of deliverers and helpers, all of whom have such a heart to reach out to families going through the most difficult of times. Thank you to each one of you.

**Val Brant, Make Lunch Budbrooke coordinator**



# Midweek Group

With the Covid restrictions continuing, it was not until September 2021 that we could start to offer anything like the programme of Midweek events we had originally planned. However, throughout the year, we continued to keep in touch with the Midweek community with regular newsletters so that they would feel remembered and valued. Valentine's Day was marked by giving a small love-themed gift to every member of the community which was greatly appreciated. On April 7th and 8th we held an Easter Praise afternoon in the Community Centre and Village Hall respectively. Numbers had to be limited because of social distancing requirements but we listened to songs and music played by Keith Arnold and poems and readings with an Easter Theme. These occasions were enjoyed by all who came and they each went home with a gift box of Easter goodies. The Summer Praise event planned for July had to be cancelled. As restrictions eased, the very popular monthly Lunch Club restarted in September at the Church Centre. From January 2022, the Lunch Club moved from the second Thursday in the month to the second Friday at the Church Centre. 'Moments' afternoons began again at the newly refurbished Open Door and they have continued to take place every first Wednesday of the month as we moved into 2022. One of our Moments team for many years was Jane Field who sadly died on October 2020. The Celebratory Tea Party that Jane's family had planned to take place in July 2021 had to be postponed because of Covid until October 30th. It was a lovely occasion with many happy memories of Jane shared with family and friends. The annual Carols and Cake Christmas Celebration was held again in December at Hampton-on-the-Hill Village Hall and it was well attended and well received.

We look forward to offering a fuller programme in 2022 in line with the vision we set out in 2019. This will continue to include the Lunch Club and Moments events together with quarterly praise celebrations at Easter, Summer, Harvest and Christmas. As part of our original vision too, we would like to introduce a regular monthly discipleship/prayer group at the Open Door for Midweek Community members but open to others as all our events are. There are no plans to reinstate the Midweek Communion service as it is hoped that those who used to attend this service will be able to join the 9am Communion Community at the Church on Sundays or one of the other Missional Community Groups. Midweek Leadership Group:

Ann and Keith Arnold, Caroline and Michael Edwards, Ruth Grinbergs and Mary Lodge



# Church Family News for 2021

The impact of the pandemic has meant that significant life-events and moments in the church family have not been shared in the way we would wish. This has been a loss and something to lament, but technology – and our capacity to stream – has meant others can share in services, weddings, funerals, even ordinations, even when numbers have been restricted.

The year began with the shock of Hannah Montagu's brain bleed, that morning we opened our Zoom meeting early for prayer, and subsequently joined the ongoing meetings crying out for her healing. We rejoice that the Lord did indeed deliver her from death, and with Rob, Royston, Karen, Ellie, Abbie and Thea, we continue to pray for her full restoration. Many of us continue to pray daily for Hannah and the family, and members of St Michael's continue regularly to join the prayer calls which have the feel of a revival movement.

January also saw the birth of Oscar Bourton, Connie and Geoffrey had moved into Hampton Magna during the pandemic, connecting with St Michael's online before finally being able to attend in person at Easter. The October Thanksgiving Service for Oscar's arrival, with prayers of dedication, was a special moment, family in Northern Ireland could join the live-stream, and the story of his birth and the song that was playing, "There is a Cloud" felt like a moment of hope for and a promise for God's purposes for the family and wider church family.

Audrey Dixon died in January 2021. Audrey was married to local farmer Mike Dixon and previously lived at Grange Farm right next to the church. Although Mike retired in 1997 and the family

moved to live in Warwick, they kept in touch with friends in the church and the local community. Audrey was an active member of St Michael's; playing the piano for services, leading the Mother's Union and in the community she was a lifetime member of the WI at local and national level.

Margaret Jones, a longstanding member of St Michael's who was at the heart of our Young at Heart and Midweek ministries prior to her moving into care, died in May. Her funeral in Wales was streamed to St Michael's where a socially distanced group were able to gather, and we were able to host a memorial service here in October 2021. This was a feast of music, story, poetry and a wonderful tribute to a long life, well lived.

The summer period also saw a number of significant changes in the church staff. Janice Cairns, who had helped us navigate the pandemic stepped down as Church Centre Manager to focus on her growing prayer ministry commitments. Luke Thomas was recommended to train for ordination, and placed as an ordinand at Budbrooke, where he will help lead the Chase Meadow Community for the next 3 years.

These changes in role continued as the year went on. Lou Thomas stepped down as Youth Worker (before later returning to take on a role in the Church Office), and that ministry has been wonderfully led by the team of volunteers with support from Thrive Youth Ministries, whilst we prayerfully consider the shape of roles and vision for the future.

A real high point was when Martin Davies was ordained priest at Coventry Cathedral on 4th July 2021 by Bishop John. It was good that more of church family could be present this time, but sad that the celebrations we might otherwise have held were muted by the ongoing restrictions. The service was streamed to both church and pub! Martin's first communion followed and, we understand, Tim Hetherington is working on a mini documentary charting Martin's journey from farmer, to local minister – watch this space.

Martin also took the funeral of Sheila Hall. Sheila, widow of Jim – who had been Churchwarden alongside Martin and a renowned character of St. Michael's, had been bed-ridden for many years. She was relieved of her suffering in June and we trust the hope she had in Christ will now see her declare with St Paul, I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us.

Betty Pettle who died in July 2021 had attended St Michael's since she was a child being part of the children's and then adult choirs and active in every aspect of the life of the church and the local community. She was a devoted member of the Mother's Union for many years and later in life she supported the Young at Heart services. Always an energetic and positive person in spite of her disabilities, while living at Cawston House Betty was the driving force behind establishing a monthly communion service there. It was a great comfort to her and the family that she was able to spend the last years of her life living with her daughter Diane in Derby.

August brought news of Josh Brown and Grace Poole's engagement, they plan to marry in summer 2022. This was quickly followed by elder brother Peter's news of his engagement to Jael Bretschneider. Jael had been an intern at St Michael's – Pete, now a Youth Minister based in Moulton, Northamptonshire, had been a member of the Youth team whilst completing his Youth and Theology degree at St Mellitus, London.

Just as the year saw new members join St Michael's – it has been encouraging to see how people who move into the area are much more likely to visit and try the church than in previous years. One such example is the baptism of Elijah Jones in August. Mum and Dad, Emily and Andy were the first new residents visited by welcomers from St Michael's – bearing a gift of biscuits, local information and, we trust something of the love and blessing of God! 2021 also saw a number of people move away. We said farewell to Pam Garnett (With Geoff and Maddie) and Ed Tooker and Lorraine Tooker all of whom moved away.

The year ended with a Christmas arrival, baby River, Amie and Max Christmas's third son. The family had moved into the village earlier in the year. Much prayer was lifted for the youngster who needed skin grafts and other treatment after his arrival – we were encouraged he was able to come home much earlier than expected – and continue to pray for his development. Christmas also saw the return of new students Sam Gayler (York) and Carys Swartz (Plymouth) from their first terms at University – along with those who are already students.

As we head into 2022, the PCC are discussing the rhythms of the year, into which we hope to build regular events and activities that we can share in together, especially as the restrictions of the last two years begin to ease.



# Wider Church Links

## Warwick Team Ministry

2021 has been an important year for the Warwick churches. The shared journey which saw the development of the “project pool” – a shared initiatives pot from the King Henry VIII funding for Christian outreach and mission work in the community – has begun to take more formal shape.

The proposal to form a new charity to oversee the pool has progressed. Each parish will have representation on the board alongside representatives of King Henry VIII. A process for discerning priorities, plans and reviewing projects has been agreed and will help shape the strategy of the fund into the future.

COVID delayed the launch of the Message bus, the landmark £200,000 Youth Bus project in partnership with the Message Foundation. However, by the year end the bus had arrived and a project manager recruited, ahead of the launch in early 2022. Funds for the pool in 2022 are forecast at £400,000 with further increases anticipated for 2023

The other significant development with the team has been working more closely with St Paul's church in 2021. Members of our team have helped lead worship there and David has delivered input and support to St Paul's PCC in clarifying their own plans and strategy. This closer working has led to the forming of a shared strategy for schools' work and, once the Message Bus is in place, a plan to progress youth outreach. In the mid-term, the potential of a “graft” into St Paul's (a form of church planting) is something to prayerfully consider and pursue.

## Churches Together in Warwick



Ten member churches became eleven during 2020, as the Redeemed Christian Church of God (RCCG), who meet at The Gap under David Olanrewaju's leadership, were elected at the AGM in October. Their congregation supported our Make Lunch Christmas food parcels in 2020, and two of our members attended their inaugural service at The Gap, when they moved from Myton School premises.

Rev'd Jonathan Hearn of St Paul's continues as CTW Moderator, with Richard Akers as Treasurer. Mark Leonard of Castle Hill Baptist took on the Secretary's role. Emma Pace manages our Facebook page, and Andy Walker maintains the CTW website. Rae Poole and Val Brant, Minutes secretary at the three Forum meetings, continue to represent St Michael's.

Revision of our Constitution, prompted by the demise of Coventry & Warwickshire Ecumenical Council (CWEC) has been completed and signed by all member churches.

Much of our programme was curtailed by the pandemic; churches have, however, responded to need in whatever ways they could. Joint events have included:

- Monthly Prayer Breakfasts resumed in-person in August and are enjoyed by around 20 people for a half-hour of worship followed by continental-style breakfast and useful conversation. St Michael's hosted at Church Centre in November. Our dates for 2022 are 7th May at St Michael's, and 1st October at CMCC. Everyone is welcome to attend all events.
- Walks of Witness in Warwick on Good Friday, were unable to take place due to Covid restrictions. Plans are being made to hold Walks and a service in Market Place on 15th April 2022.

- For the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity an inspired joint prayer leaflet was again compiled by Kirsteen Robson of St Mary Collegiate, taking the theme “We have seen his star in the east”. Prayer walks involved all our churches to pray for all that goes on in our communities. The United Service was hosted in-person and virtually by Warwick Methodist Church, with some 50 people joining across the formats.

After much prayer and soul-searching, the reduced team concluded that their fortnightly Healing On The Streets (HOTS) prayer ministry in Market Place on Saturday mornings would cease; prayer is instead available by e-mailing [warwickhots@gmail.com](mailto:warwickhots@gmail.com)

To help our communities to overcome post-pandemic anxiety, plans are being made for The Big Local Night Out, under the steering of Graeme Russell, Methodist missionary. The sparking point is the show being presented by Warwick Sings! planned for July; the top two local acts will be joined by two headline acts for The Big Local, to be staged at Bridge House Theatre. Churches are asked to support it by buying affordable tickets for friends, family, groups, and will have the opportunity to showcase their activity during the interval. The first Big Local Night Out could be in August, with more to follow.

## **Val Brant**



# Mission Links & Charitable Giving

St Michael's PCC commit to give 10% of our income to Christian mission and wider needs and causes. 2020 saw the creation of three streams, regular beneficiaries, bursaries for usage of the Church Centre and a discretionary fund. The aim of the latter was to empower church members to identify needs in the community and wider Christian networks we might be able to contribute into.

In 2021, as the practicalities of this strategy have played out, we have chosen to simplify further the Church Centre element. Going forwards, the centre is now offered on a donation only basis for church, community and non-profit groups on quieter days of the week.

Alongside this, we have continued to support regular beneficiaries and partners, as follows:

Tear Fund    £600.00  
Compassion    £364.00  
The Well    £600.00  
Thrive    £1200.00  
Kairos Connexion    £1200.00  
Carriers of Hope    £600.00  
Transforming Lives for Good    £600.00  
Warwick & Leamington Food Bank    £600.00

In total, we disbursed £11715.71, or 10.02% of our income. Among a number of hardship and community grants, the most significant other grant related to the installation of a new playground train in memory of Jack Welch – following the retirement of the Super Jack Special play train in The Open Door. The new installation cost £3062, and is anticipated to be in place by April 2022.

The PCC continue to invite church members to make suggestions or recommendations of potential beneficiaries both on an ongoing basis and for one-off support. – **David Brown**

# Governance

# PCC Report

One of the surprising aspects of the pandemic has been the way in which the PCC's 5 year Strategic plan (2019-24) has progressed. Remarkably, we have all but completed 7 of the 10 goals that we set in 2019.

Amid the constant demands of pandemic, we have made the most of every opportunity to move things forward. In fact, it is probably fair to say that the pandemic has provided us with the opportunity to progress some of these things.

We have reconfigured the Church Staff to help resource our mission, we have refurbished The Open Door, leaving just the Church building to be re-furbished, and even there we have been able to upgrade our AV system.

Our ministry patterns have re-shaped around our vision for multiplication which leaves us the opportunity to focus these next years on the longer term strategies that will be the most transformative. To develop our training and equipping, our discipleship framework and groups and communities – properly progressing these areas will be what determines our eventual success.

To this end, the PCC has managed considerable detail, whilst also holding onto the Big Picture vision. We should be rightly grateful for their gifting and oversight. Our finance team of Andrew Cowie and Graham Leeming have once again managed complexity, uncertainty and challenge to ensure that the PCC has had timely and good information for decision making. The years details are summarised in the annual accounts and financial review below.

This is also a moment to pay tribute to two particular PCC members as they prepare to step-down.

Stephen Poole has completed his term as Church Warden and has been a constant help and encouragement – for which I know many (including myself) are grateful. At the same time, Richard Lyttle is also stepping down after forty-two years. Ordinarily, you might think that someone who has sat on a committee that long is simply going through the motions, or might be past their sell by date.

Richard remains a visionary and strategic leader. He was instrumental in the purchase of King's Meadow, and has been at the heart of every key decision we have made during my time as vicar. We rightly give due honour for that, and I am glad that his wisdom will continue to be available, albeit on a more informal basis.

We are indeed very blessed with those who serve and lead us.  
Thank you, Lord! – **David Brown**



# PCC

# Safeguarding Report

Finally moving away from lockdowns – while very welcome! – created a few challenges for safeguarding, as many of the teams have changed radically and processes had had to be paused.

We have been reorganising our DBS checking, volunteer registration and reference– taking so we are ready to move back into more face to face ministries, and because hopefully this will also make the procedure more secure and leave fewer gaps. We've had quite a few new members of the congregation over lockdowns, several of whom have volunteered to serve, so thank you to everyone who has filled in their online forms!

The Diocese has changed the requirement for DBS checks from every 5 years to every 3 years, so there are many volunteers who now need to be rechecked, and many who now need to renew their safeguarding training. Fortunately, this is still online! We are very grateful for everyone's patience during this time – we're trying to keep it as simple as possible! Leadership training will be organised as soon as it becomes available through the Diocese.

We have also transferred church email addresses to Outlook, so that all official church emails can be monitored by more than one person, and are separate from personal emails, and we are working on the Social Media policy as required by the Church of England.

Our thanks go to Thea Young and Claire who put in many hours setting up the online registration system and Steve Thompson for reorganising the email addresses.

The PCC have readopted the 'Recruitment of Ex-Offenders' policy, and the PCC has complied with the duty to have "due regard" to the House of Bishops' Safeguarding Policy and Practice Guidance. All those working with children and vulnerable adults are safely recruited.



# PCC Fabric & Maintenance

The continuing pandemic meant that for the first part of the year, we were very much just keeping things going in accordance with Covid requirements – ensuring that services complied with restrictions and that streaming could take place. However, as the year went on and restrictions eased, we realised that the church building was looking tired and a bit grubby, so we put in place plans for a working party to freshen up the church and churchyard in readiness for Advent, the beginning of the church year.

Around 20 people turned up and had a great time clearing out all sorts of cupboards and corners, vacuuming cobwebs, replacing hazard tape and polishing brass, while in the churchyard others swept up leaves and dug out a very stubborn root. Our thanks go to them and to those who have continued to maintain the churchyard throughout the pandemic.

As David has mentioned in his report the Open Door has been transformed. We would like to thank Sue Stanton and her team for all the hard work it required to make this re-envisioning of the Open Door a reality.

We are also trying to ensure that the requirements of the last quinquennial report are met – arrangements for cleaning the gutters were delayed by the winter storms (although the work has now been carried out) and, at the time of writing, we await a report on the adequacy of the existing gutters. In addition, we continue to try and explore possibilities for extending the Garden of Remembrance.

Finally, we need to mention that Stephen Poole is stepping down as church warden after six years and Ruth would like to express her appreciation for all that he has done during his time in office and in particular for his help as she has tried to learn what being a church warden requires.

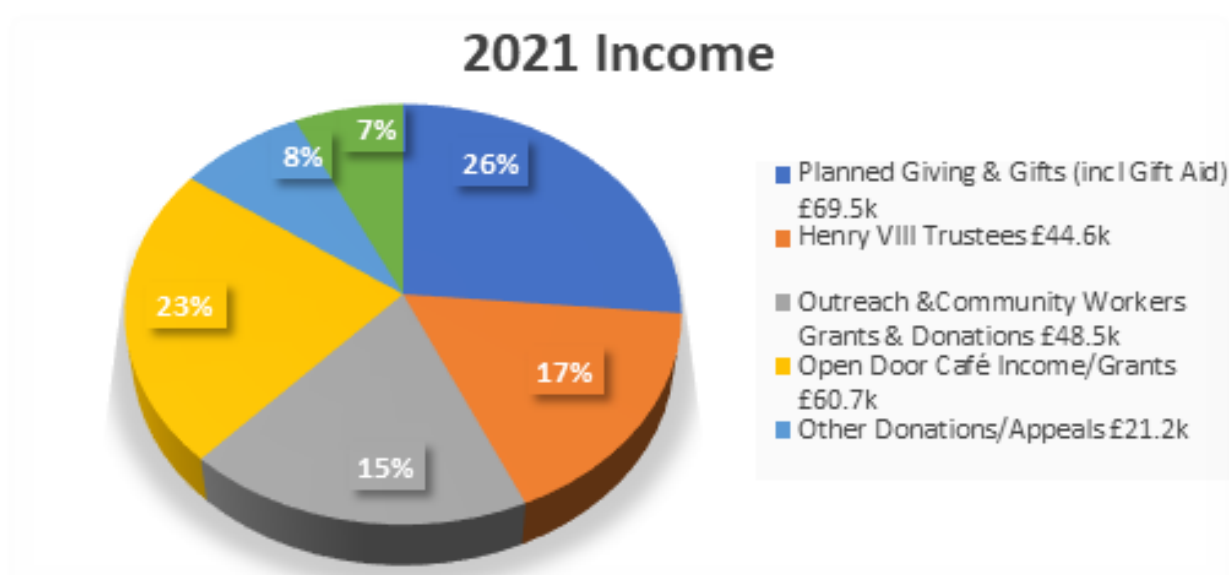


# Financial Review

The impact of Covid restrictions has had a continuing effect on the financial position and yet overall regular giving has fallen by around only 2% from the 2020 level. We are especially grateful that income from church family standing orders has been once again largely maintained and we recognise and value the sacrificial nature of such choices. The support received from the Trustees of King Henry VIII Trust and their dedicated work to maintain distributions in a time of transition for the trust has again been a considerable help too.

Income from Church Hall lettings was 5% lower than in the previous year. Café trading income has been significantly impacted by both Covid and the need to restrict opening due to the refurbishment project. However, a significant benefit in 2021 to the cafe has been the receipt of Business Support Grant income of £53,841. One employee was put on the Government's furlough relief scheme.

The most significant restricted fund to have received support this year has been the Outreach Worker Fund which has received £25,000 including £5,000 from Budbrooke Medical Centre.



The main sources of income in respect of percentage of total were planned giving (25.6%), income from King Henry VIII Trustees (16.9%), and grant support income for the Café refurbishment (23.1%). Income from Church Hall lettings, normally a strong contributor to total income, fell to just 2.4% of total income. Unrestricted income, prior to the revaluation of investments, was £103,579 (£106,733 in 2020)

## **Regular Giving and Gifts**

The majority of our Church family give regularly through monthly standing order and respond to specific appeals. The Gift Aid Scheme then enables us to add to this regular giving as well as being able to reclaim tax on smaller giving through the plate. Giving from our personal financial income is a fundamental principle of our Christian faith and commitment. This giving is unrestricted in its use which will be explained later within Expenditure with examples.

The total unrestricted income from regular giving (STOs) and plate gifts amounted to £58,350 (2020: £59,874) and in addition £11,135 (2020: £11,012) was recovered in tax reclaimed from HM Revenue and Customs.

## **Henry VIII income**

We are very fortunate and appreciative of the continued income from the Trust and St Michael's Church benefitted from an allocation of £44,551 (2020: £40,105) to be used for our mission in the Parish.

In addition to payments made direct to the PCC by King Henry VIII Trust, the Trust also makes payments direct to the Diocese in respect of clergy stipend and housing of £46,699 (£45,833 in 2020) thus relieving the need for such payments by the PCC.

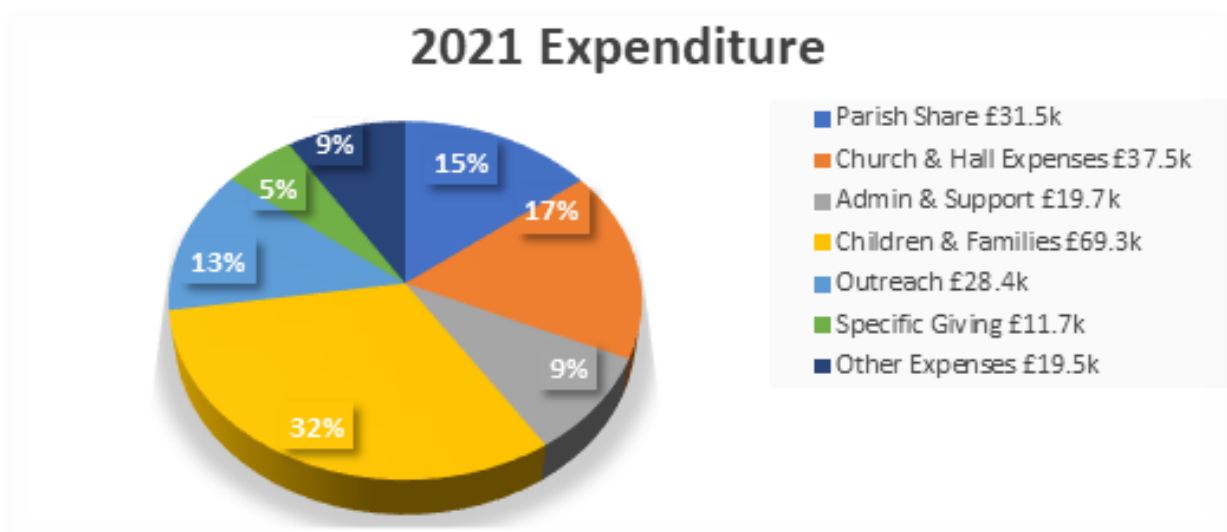
## **Letting Income**

As mentioned above, the lockdown imposed in March 2020 and beyond continued to have a significant impact on letting income. Total 2021 letting income amounted to £6,392 (£6,711 in 2020).

## **Outreach Worker**

From March 2021 St Michael's PCC approved the creation of a new Outreach Worker role. The funding income for this role was received as:

29 May 1961 Trust	£4,000
King Henry VIII Project	£5,000
Warwick County Council Wellbeing Fund	£5,000
Warwick District Council Covid Business Support	£6,000
Budbrooke Medical Centre	£5,000
	£25,000



The Church and Church Centre have significant expenditures ranging from administration, youth and families workers, Parish Share, Mission outreach, to running costs such as utilities and insurance. The total unrestricted expenditure amounted to £110,776 (2020: £84,036). Detailed information can be found in the Annual Accounts for 2021 which are also supplied to the Charity Commission.

## **Parish Share**

The significant costs of our clergy are funded directly to the Diocese by the Henry VIII Trust as mentioned above, however we are still required to pay the Parish Share from our resources which is used to support less well-off churches in the area in providing clergy, worship and mission in deprived areas such as Coventry. The Share also provides support services available to all churches such as training, legal advice, safeguarding and guidance. Expenditure in 2021 on Parish Share was £31,505 (2020: £32,732)

## **Mission Outreach**

As a church we are focused on discipleship and mission in supporting our local communities through Missional Communities in Hampton Magna and Chase Meadow supporting both young and older people. Expenditure in 2021 on Outreach costs amounted to £28,399 (2020: £38,517). The 2021 figure is reduced since the Community Worker role ceased in August 2021.

Unrestricted Giving (Church Tithe)

The PCC seek to tithe its income and give 10% to Christian mission supporting causes locally, nationally and internationally. Any funds received from King Henry VIII Endowed Trust that are tithed are given specifically within the parish or the wider C34 boundary. In addition, from our regular giving, we support Anglican parishes within our Diocese through the mechanism of the support fund which is a voluntary element of our overall Parish Share. In 2021, as we implemented our mission giving strategy, we paid out gifts of £11,716 or 10.0% of our income. Our contribution to the support fund was to £18,831 or 16.1% of eligible income. In total then, we gave 26.1% of our income to needs beyond ourselves.

## Youth Children's and Family Work

This work continues to flourish in reaching children, young people and families. Expenditure in 2021 amounted to £69,278 (2020: £53,017)

## Running Costs

We continually review our running costs and continue to benefit as a result of joint purchasing with Parish Buying for cost efficient utilities. Running expenses in 2021 were £18,920 (2020: £17,142)

## Restricted Spending

We benefit from continued support from the Henry VIII Trust and their funding enables additional provision of resources which is used in the Parish and included employment of youth workers. Further details of expenditure are provided in the accounts.

We would again like to thank the Trust for their continued support which has provided additional resources for wider use in the Parish to support children, families and older people which otherwise we would not have been able to provide.

## The Open Door Café

The Open Door Café benefitted from a substantial refurbishment project during 2021.

The financial outcome of the project was:

Income from Grants	£38,434
Expenditure Capitalised to Asset Register	(£32,514)
Expenditure Written Off Immediately Against Reserves	(£5,936)
Deficit Recorded in 2021	(16)

Total grants received by The Open Door Café (including those applied to general unrestricted income) in 2021 totalled £53,841.

<i>SOURCE</i>	<i>REFURB PROJECT (Restricted Income) £</i>	<i>GENERAL (Unrestricted Income) £</i>	<i>TOTAL £</i>
Warwick District Council (CoVID Support Grants)	11,700	14,717	26,417
Warwick County Council (CoVID Adapt & Diversify)	12,826		12,826
National Grid (ESO Community Fund)	5,000		5,000
Warwick County Council (Wellbeing Fund)	5,000		5,000
Warwick County Council (Greenshoots Fund)	3,908		3,908
<i>Sub-Total</i>	<i>38,434</i>	<i>14,717</i>	<i>53,151</i>
Warwick County Council (Greenshoots Fund) Applied to Repair Shed	690		690
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>39,124</b>	<b>14,717</b>	<b>53,841</b>

Restricted grant income of £690 was used to fund a new Café Repair Shed Project.

## Capital Expenditure

The PCC continue to be responsible for the replacement of assets reaching the end of their working lives. In 2021 the additions to assets were:

Assets related to service streaming	£8,241
New Centre lighting	£1,732
Laptops (Children & Youth)	£1,600
Laptop (Church Centre office)	£369

Church & Centre	£11,942
Café refurbishment	£32,514

Andrew Cowie & Graham Leeming  
March 2022

This Annual report was approved by  
St Michael's Parochial Church Council  
on 9th April 2022 and signed on its  
behalf by

Rev'd David Brown – Vicar

