

This document provides a full picture of the many ministries of Great St. Mary's, the University Church, and Michaelhouse during the year of 2021, both during national lockdowns and once life opened up in-person once more.

The PCC met regularly throughout the year on-line, via Zoom, with signed Minutes stored both in paper archives and electronically in the church Cloud. Copies are available on request.

Marion Cobby, PCC Secretary and Vestry Clerk

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INTRODUCTION



When the Archbishop of Canterbury preached from the pulpit at Great St Mary's for the 2021 Ramsden Sermon Before the University, he quoted my favourite American theologian, Bill Stringfellow: "Hope is living constantly, expectantly, patiently, resiliently, joyously in the efficacy of the word of God." Archbishop Justin then concluded:

"The last year has changed the world, the next 50 years will do so even more. Science will change war and peace. Climate change will move vast populations. Amidst such change the church around the world will know more about each other and may choose to let the Spirit of God equip it as it is driven out into the changing world, or may seek protection by hiding behind what it has always known. The former is to choose life. The latter is to choose death.

Ezekiel responds to God's questions, "Lord, you know". Faced with such change we cannot say more. Faced with such change we must, as the first disciples at Pentecost, call on the Spirit of God. If we do not, we will go down. If we do call, we will be driven out into all the complexity and muddle of the world, but we will go out with good news, in the faithfulness of Christ, improvising a new dance in a new world, bringing a new freedom ... all to the glory of God."

2021 was a year of both difficult challenges but also of surprising growth, life, and resilience at the University Church. Ongoing pandemic restrictions, and the devastating impact of COVID-19 on people's physical, emotional, and spiritual health, were a significant part of our experience not only as individuals but collectively as a church. The vicar's medical leave had an impact not only on the clergy and staff team, but on the whole of the congregation. We said farewell to Carolynn as our Children's Minister of many years, and to Andrew Day as he completed his curacy (though thankfully Andrew remains an associate priest here while serving as Priest in Charge at St Clement's). Amidst all these things we discovered new gifts of leadership in our congregation, we welcomed the Revd Jon Sanders as a curate, celebrated the Revd David Bagnall's ordination to the priesthood, and discovered that we were growing as a congregation — in our average Sunday attendance, in welcoming new families and individuals into our community, and in continuing to grow and deepen the prayer and study groups which began in 2020 during lockdown.

Bearing fruit in the midst of adversity is one of the great signs of the Holy Spirit at work. Thank you to being open to God's grace during 2021, to accepting new challenges as well as learning to set aside past burdens, and to your contributions to making Great St Mary's such a wonderful and vibrant Christian community!

Revd Devin McLachlan, Associate Vicar

ELECTORAL ROLL



The revision of the Electoral Roll was deferred for 2020, after consultation with the Diocese and the Vicar, due to the pandemic. The number on the Electoral Roll at December 2021 was 237.

Marion Cobby, Electoral Roll Officer

DEANERY SYNOD



The Deanery Synod is the channel of communication among the parishes in the deanery and between the parishes and the diocese and national Church. It has responsibility for the allocation of the Ministry Share among the parishes. Great St Mary's is represented on the synod by our licensed clergy and 3 elected lay members. The Diocese of Ely has fifteen deaneries, with each appointed a Rural Dean. Rural Deans are senior members of the clergy who have administrative and pastoral oversight of their deanery. The Revd Canon Adrian Daffern is the Rural Dean for the Cambridge North Deanery. In a difficult pandemic year, the synod managed to meet in-person twice in 2021. The synod met at St. Andrew the Great in September to hear about Deanery Synod planning, the General Synod, and Living in Love and Faith (www.churchofengland.org/resources/living-love-and-faith). It met again in November at The Good Shepherd where the meeting was devoted to a presentation on Living in Love and Faith by Dr Eeva John, National LLF Enabling Officer.

Andrew Dobson, Cambridge North Deanery Synod Representative

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS AND REPORT



The 2021 year was again badly affected by the pandemic but was very much a year of two halves as in the second half the income dependent on visitors bounced back and was more than we had budgeted and for the full year was, although still down on 2019, £80,000 up on 2020. Pledged giving and donations increased by almost £80,000 and included very generous donations of £55,000 in support of staff salaries, £60,000 for the new Children's and Youth lay minister, another £30,000 for the Assistant Organist together with two unrestricted donations in excess of £20,000. Savings on costs were again made from the lower level of activity during the first half of the year and this, together with the income from the Government's Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme, resulted in an unrestricted surplus for the year of £79,205, excluding designated funds, which have been added to our free reserves, making a total of £204,273 towards our target free reserves of £375,000.

The PCC was again able to pay a Ministry Share above that asked. Fundraising continued for the South Aisle Roof and we transferred £16,667 from unrestricted funds, an amount equal to the restarted mortgage repayments

There were no significant expenditures on repairs or improvements during the year, which enabled the designated Fabric Fund to again remain unused. As mentioned last year we are aware that over the next 4-5 years we will have to spend over £100,000 on repairs to the top of the tower and need, once the pandemic is over, to build up the Fabric Fund to pay for this work.

This year's accounts include the trading subsidiary set up to run the café in Michaelhouse and despite the fact that trading was badly affected by the pandemic it managed to broadly break even.

Graham Day, Treasurer

SAFEGUARDING



The past year was largely focussed on ensuring everything was in place as people returned to in-person events following the various COVID-19 lockdowns, and in welcoming new members of the Safeguarding Team, and especially Marianne Hirtzel as the new Safeguarding Administrator. Great St Mary's took great care to ensure that our safeguarding procedures were helpful to our activities, community, and in compliance with all Diocesan and National guidelines, and especially to adapt to things that had been updated or adapted.

Many activities that had been paused or delivered online had now resumed meeting in-person and Safeguarding were very glad to be able to support these through the safer recruitment of staff and volunteers, and through support with training, checks and policies.

Great St Mary's staff and volunteers completed new Safeguarding courses provided by the national Church of England Safeguarding Office on topics including Safer Recruitment and Domestic Abuse Awareness. Many members of Great St Mary's also re-took established safeguarding courses to ensure that their training and knowledge was up-to-date. A good range of safeguarding training, that was previously only available at a limited number of in-person sessions in Ely, was now available via the Church of England online Safeguarding Training portal, making them accessible for greater numbers of people to be trained.

As ever, Great St Mary's was committed to maintaining the highest possible standards in its ministry to children, young people, and vulnerable adults.

Julie Crockford, Safeguarding Officer

BELL RINGERS



The Society of Cambridge Youths is the group responsible for bell ringing at Great St Mary's. The primary focus for 2021 continued to be on keeping the band together, and as lockdown restrictions were lifted the emphasis was on encouraging ringers to come and ring again at Great St Mary's.

It was not until May 2021 that Sunday service ringing resumed and July that the Youths could ring all 12 bells once more. Ringing was getting back to normal by the beginning of October; however, the arrival of the Omicron variant in November had a dampening effect on ringing that lasted into early 2022.

Of note in 2021 was the tolling of Great St Mary's bells to mark special occasions. On 23rd March the Great St Mary's tenor bell was tolled to remember the victims of COVID-19. On four separate occasions there was tolling to mark the death of the Duke of Edinburgh on 9th April.

With the resumption of tower bell ringing on higher numbers, a theme had been to re-establish our top end ringing. For the first time since 2019 we entered a band for the National 12-bell striking contest. We do not expect to win but are hopeful of getting through to the final in June.

This Society faced many challenges in the aftermath of this pandemic, mostly linked to encouraging talented ringers to become an integral part of the Great St Mary's band. That said, we are confident that the Society will thrive in future, and there is plenty to be positive about.

David Richards, Ringing Master, Society of Cambridge Youths

BOOKSTALL, BRASS BAND AND LUNCHTIME CONCERTS



Bookstall

The bookstall in the narthex was available whenever the church was open and the money raised there went towards paying back the loans for the installation of solar panels and the south roof repairs. For the first part of 2021 the church was basically closed but with the help of some outdoor bookstalls, and a particularly successful one just before Christmas, we managed to nudge the total to just over £1,000 by the end of the year.

Paperback novels are the regular sellers and they can be left in the box beside the bookcase. Thank you to all who have supported this venture, whether by buying or donating books.

Brass Band

A small group of volunteers come together about once every six weeks, or before major festivals, to make sure that the brass in church is gleaming. With four or five of us working together it does not actually take very long and the refreshments and chat afterwards are all a part of the enjoyment.

Lunchtime Concerts

Despite the limitations that COVID-19 placed upon us, we managed to hold 13 Friday Lunchtime Concerts during 2021. Although we loosely worked in 'Terms', we acknowledged the liturgical year – and constraints – by taking a break during Advent and Lent so that all the other activities could then take place.

A variety of performers kindly came to play and their willingness and enthusiasm was much appreciated. Inclusion in the Cambridge Concert Calendar helped to swell the audiences and moving away from the 'West Road Concerts' day probably helped as well.

Many of the performers were quite local, including schools; others came from further afield including Greece, Italy and Bermuda. It was also possible to see our Operations Manager playing in his folk band on occasion and an African Ensemble is booked for the autumn. (Most of the programme is of a more 'traditional/classical' variety however).

Fridays from 1-2pm; come and listen! You will be very welcome.

Lorna Atwell

CHILDREN'S MINISTRY



Following the resumption of worship in the Spring of 2021, a working group was established to look at how our provision for children and young people might look going forward. The PCC had previously highlighted children's ministry as an area for mission and growth, and Carolyn had left us in a great position in terms of resources and existing practices, but it was felt that, in order to develop our ministry further, it would be necessary to employ a Youth and Children's Minister.

Once the funding for this post had been secured, then, the task was simply to get our Children and Youth ministry up and running again ready for the new minister to take charge. Bolstered by an army of wonderful volunteers, we therefore established a new pattern of children's church in Michaelhouse every Sunday morning, centred around the lectionary readings. Attendance grew steadily throughout the year, and by the time our fantastic new Youth and Children's Minister – Christyana – arrived, a steady rhythm had been established. Christyana has made a brilliant start, and is looking to develop our Youth and Children's Ministry further over the coming year. Since her arrival, we've had new faces at children's church nearly every Sunday, and we look forward to what the new year will bring.

Revd David Bagnall

CHURCH OPERATIONS



During 2021 the normal work and activities of the church were again significantly disrupted by the Coronavirus pandemic and the restrictions imposed to contain it. Nevertheless, much work went on behind the scenes as we sought to adapt and innovate and develop good practice which then helped us to restart activities and have (under the circumstances) a very successful year.

We again completed numerous risk assessments and embedded a new procedure for visitors climbing the tower. This meant that we were able to open in a COVID-safe way when lockdown restrictions were eased. Staff and volunteers worked hard to implement the new innovations and they were so effective that we intend to keep many of them in future. Visitor numbers built back over the course of the year and we were grateful to our staff for their hard work in ensuring that our income from the shop and tower exceeded our expectations.

Michaelhouse café is now operated on behalf of our trading company by contract caterers, Wilson Vale Ltd. We worked closely together to provide a safe and welcoming space in Michaelhouse for locals and visitors to engage with us and explore their faith in various ways – through our hospitality, talks and events, exhibitions and the opportunity to use the Hervey De Stanton Chapel for quiet prayer. The café business built back rapidly after the pandemic closure and we were grateful to all at Wilson Vale for their hard work which made this possible. The other activities such as exhibitions and events were slower to recover and we shifted the balance of these activities a little to focusing on developing Michaelhouse primarily as a resource to for sharing our faith and engaging with visitors and the local community.

The extensive range of online offerings continued and despite the restrictions, there were a number of special services over the year which we undertook as part of our role in supporting and developing the diverse and varied life of the City and University of Cambridge and its residents. These included the Remembrance Day service and University Services, including our traditional carols service for the University staff. Concerns about the pandemic meant that some local organisations that normally use the church for their annual carol service felt unable to this year. However, other events did go ahead and we held four socially-distanced, ticketed, carol services with restricted numbers in place of our normal one or two candlelit carol services.

We were again pleased to be able to offer the church as a venue for the (socially distanced) presentation of the British Empire Medal by the Lord Lieutenant of Cambridge.

The church continued its strong and supportive relationship with Park Street School for whom it provides governors and acts of collective worship. The school normally uses the church for significant occasions such as marking the beginning and end of term and saying farewell to leavers. It was a special pleasure to be able to hold an end-of-term carol service for key stage two at the end of the autumn term.

Our series of free lunchtime concerts recommenced once the restrictions allowed and were well attended. They provide a facility for residents and visitors and an opportunity for musicians to showcase their talents. We also made the church (and space in Michaelhouse) available for partnership events and for hire as a concert, meeting and lecture venue. Again these activities recommenced once the lifting of restrictions allowed and have been developing well.

The re-commencement of activities meant that we needed to recruit a new part-time Administrator and Marianne Hirtzel began in that role at the beginning of September.

Safeguarding continued to be a high priority. The Safeguarding Committee met regularly and practices and procedures were reviewed and up-dated. Training for staff and volunteers continued and we worked hard to raise awareness of Safeguarding issues.

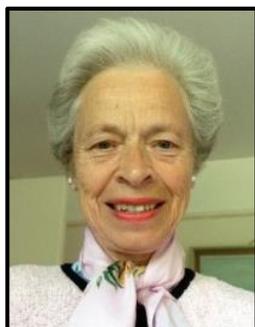
In 2021 our Facebook page reached over a hundred and fifty thousand people, with 13,524 page visits and over a thousand Facebook Page likes and followers. Our Twitter feed reached over 20,000 people a month, with 1,351 followers and over two thousand profile visits a month — all opportunities for people to learn more about our community of faith. We also had 366 YouTube subscribers (nearly double from the previous year) with over a thousand views per month taking part in our online worship services. The weekly eMag reached 400 people a week, and our website traffic more than doubled, with sometimes over a thousand visits a week to our website.

The continuation of the pandemic meant that we had to place the next steps in our intended strategic re-visioning on hold. In the meantime, subject to the restrictions created by the pandemic, we successfully focussed on rebuilding our capacity, structures, finances and presence in the community following the pandemic (and the consequent lockdowns) and developing our role as a place of worship and welcome for all who wish to join us.

I would like to personally thank, all the staff, volunteers and members of our community who did so much to help the church to get through this difficult period and once again begin to prosper.

Richard Summers, Director of Operations

CHURCHWARDENS' REPORT



Throughout 2020 we told ourselves that 2021 would be the year when everything returned to normal after the pandemic. In practice, 2021 was very much a year like 2020, with the start of the year commencing with a national lockdown. For Great St Mary's this meant the PCC were faced with the soul-searching decision as to whether we should remain open for worship in the first few months of the year. On reflection the PCC voted for the church to be closed, a situation which lasted until Palm Sunday, at the end of March.

Faced again with a closed church, and with the sadness of the Vicar on leave of absence on health grounds, the clergy and laity responded magnificently to the challenges of the new year. Online worship continued to be held at 10.30 am each Sunday, followed by lively Zoom coffee sessions which helped to keep the Great St Mary's community in touch.

The offices of Morning and Evening Prayer continued to be observed daily. By Easter we were confident enough to vote for the resumption of in-person worship in Great St Mary's. Holy Week and Easter were celebrated with several moving services, including the Easter dawn breakfast. Notwithstanding the constraints of the pandemic, it was heartening that the congregation continued to grow.

In the Vicar's absence, we were grateful to Devin stepping up to being full-time. The Finance and General Purposes committee ensured that appropriate remuneration was made to Devin for the additional hours worked.

The church was closed not only for worship but for the tower and shop in the period January to March which had a detrimental impact on our income. The church was able to benefit from the Government's furlough scheme, which contributed 80% of our salary costs and we were very grateful for the continuing donation which enabled us to ensure that all staff received their full salary during the first quarter of the year. Since re-opening in April 2021, the number of visitors to the church exceeded all expectations, particularly in terms of income raised as a result of visitors to the tower. A huge debt of gratitude has been expressed to the staff team who welcomed visitors every day and remained amazingly cheerful and focused. Thank you also to the volunteers who helped over the summer and early autumn.

In April 2021 Great St Mary's held a Special Service following the death of the Duke of Edinburgh on 9th April, which was attended by the Deputy Lord Lieutenant, a former High Sheriff and the Vice Chancellor of the University of Cambridge.

In May we were delighted to welcome Adrian back to ministry at Great St Mary's, on his return to health and to see him quickly immerse himself back fully into the life of the church.

July 2021 was a very special month when we marked the following:

The Peter-tide Ordinations. On Saturday 3rd July David Bagnall was ordained priest in Ely Cathedral and on Sunday 4th July Jon Sanders was ordained as a deacon. The latter event marked the start of Jon's ordained ministry as a curate at Great St Mary's and we were delighted to welcome him, Hannah and Klara. The Sunday evening was marked with the holding of a Eucharist when David was celebrating for the first time and Jon was deaconing. A very special event in their lives and that of Great St Mary's.

The appointment of Marianne Hirtzel to the part-time post of Church Administrator, and we were delighted to see her become fully immersed in the life of the office since she joined us in September 2021.

Saying thank you and goodbye to Arvan and Carolynn Pritchard. For Arvan it marked the stepping down from his duties on the Deanery Synod and Great St Mary's PCC and for Carolynn retirement from her role as Children's Minister, following her sabbatical. Warmest appreciation to both for their years of service.

The autumn marked the start of the new pattern of Children's Ministry at Great St Mary's, with Children's Church meeting at Michaelhouse for the first part of the 10.00am Eucharist and joining the congregation at The Peace. David Bagnall took on responsibility for this important ministry and in October we were delighted to hear the news of a very generous, anonymous, donation that would enable the church to employ a children's minister for three years. Following an open recruitment process we were pleased in December 2021 to announce that Christyana Visk had been appointed to the post and would take up the post in the New Year.

Another new, but familiar, face who joined the clergy team in the last year was Dr David Grumett, who was licensed as a Lay Minister at Ely Cathedral in October. We were grateful to Ed Cearns for his continuing role as Minister for the Market Place and to the ordinands from Ridley Hall and Westcott House who enhanced the life of Great St Mary's in so many ways.

An inspirational Quiet Day led by Megan Daffern was held at Madingley Hall in October. Over the autumn we were able to host several major services including Remembrance and Harvest. It was a great joy to welcome so many to share our beautiful Christmas services, including four carol services, Midnight Mass and Christmas Day, with superb music by the choirs under the wonderful direction of Sam and Benedict.

The PCC continued to meet regularly throughout the year, both on Zoom and in-person. Membership followed the rotational cycle of members serving for three years. The church was singularly fortunate in continuing to attract new

talented people willing to serve on the PCC, for which we can be eternally grateful. On Saturday 15th September the PCC held a very successful Away Day, when Adrian shared with us his vision for the church as we emerged from the last two years. There was much stimulating discussion and many ideas are being explored further.

Two important matters were discussed in the last year by the PCC. One was the timing and nature of our Sunday services, both of which had attracted several comments from members of the congregation. For many years our pattern of worship on a Sunday had been the 9.30am Eucharist followed by Mattins, a pattern which changed in lockdown. In a range of discussions, including with the choirs, two clear views emerged; firstly, that there should be a Sung Eucharist held every Sunday morning and that Mattins should not disappear from our pattern of worship. The outcome was the agreed proposal that every Sunday there would be the 10.00am Sung Eucharist with Mattins being held at 11.30am on the fourth Sunday of the month.

The second matter was the maintenance and preservation of our two beautiful churches. We now have a full time Buildings Facilities Manager, who works closely with the church architect to ensure the buildings are well looked after. It was decided that the Property Committee be discontinued and responsibility for the buildings, together with the associated finances needed to maintain them, be carried out by the Finance and General Purposes (F&GP) Committee, with its enhanced membership of the Lay Vice-Chair of the PCC and PCC Secretary. Specialist project committees would be set up (as in the past) to oversee strategic work. This was agreed by the PCC at their October meeting, with thanks recorded to those who have previously served.

Saying goodbye to David Girling in February, Philip Oswald in May and Sue Spencer in August, as they came to the close of their journeys on earth, were sad events for everyone who knew them. We were grateful to the families of all three of them for the services that were held in Great St Mary's to commemorate their lives.

Lastly, to say thank you to everyone who has been involved in the running of Great St Mary's in the last year - not least the Vicar and members of the clergy team, to Richard Summers and the lay team, including Sam Hayes the Director of Music and to everyone who has worked to ensure that Great St Mary's continues to be the living body of Christ in the third decade of the twenty first century.

May the Peace of the Lord be with you this day and always, Amen.

Margaret Johnston and Joye Rosenstiel, Churchwardens

COMMUNICATIONS



An enormous thanks to Jon Sanders for taking on the editing of the eMag, our email newsletter that did so much to keep us connected last year even during lockdowns. Services such as the University's memorial for Prince Philip, the bell ringing in advance of COP26, Remembrance Sunday and the Road Victims Trust evensong meant that neighbours near and far saw the University Church on local television and newspapers. As Richard has celebrated elsewhere in this year's Operations Report, we've had a robust social media presence: in 2021 our Facebook page reached over a hundred and fifty thousand people, with 13,524 page visits and over a thousand Facebook Page likes and followers. Our Twitter feed reached over 20,000 people a month, with 1,351 followers and over two thousand profile visits a month — all opportunities for people to learn more about our community of faith. We also had 366 YouTube subscribers (nearly double from the previous year) with over a thousand views per month taking part in our online worship services. The weekly eMag reached 400 people a week, and our website traffic more than doubled, with sometimes over a thousand visits a week to our website. Ed Cearns kept our Instagram account fresh with wonderful pictures (many of which are on the cover of this year's APCM report!).

The great gift of communications is to provide new and fresh ways to tell the story of Jesus' love, and to raise awareness of the vibrant and diverse community of prayer and action here at Great St Mary's. If you are a social media user, please remember to like and share our posts and online services — doing so makes a very measurable impact in making the church and our ministries visible to others, not just to your own circle of friends but in the algorithm which social media services uses in choosing whether or not to show our posts. And it's good practice for the harder work of evangelism — inviting friends to church, listening to their stories, praying about how you can best in word and action share the good news of God's love.

Revd Devin McLachlan, Associate Vicar

ENVIRONMENT GROUP



The Environment Group aims to educate the congregation and wider community about environmental concerns and the need to live more sustainable lives. The Church of England has set a target to reach net-zero carbon emissions by 2030 for its churches and schools, so the Environment Group has been engaged with a number of projects to support this goal. Although the continued pandemic prevented face-to-face meetings, Zoom sessions allowed our 10-person committee to meet regularly during 2021. Following a lengthy application process to ECLAS (Equipping Christian Leadership in the Age of Science), we were informed in July that we had been successful. Professor Don Broom, Revd Andrew Day and Andrew

Dobson were then invited to the ECLAS base at Durham University for a 2-day workshop where we (and the other successful applicants) were given guidance on running projects. The initial grant of £10,000 plus additional funding from the Church Schools of Cambridge will be used to appoint a Science in Faith Engagement Officer. In this project we shall engage with schools and congregations about all aspects of sustainability, including climate change and human interactions with other species, developing resources and materials for teaching in schools and wide dissemination.

Having already achieved our silver accreditation in the Eco Church awards, the committee carried out an audit on the requirements for our Gold Award which we will work towards in 2022 (<https://ecochurch.arocha.org.uk/>). We continue to ensure that environmental concerns, the climate crisis, and sustainability are included in our worship and our community and global engagement. During the year weekly Eco-tips have been published in the eMag to encourage the congregation to reflect on their individual lifestyles.

As part of its advocacy work, the committee met with Daniel Zeichner MP in March, providing us with the opportunity to raise environmental concerns. In July, the committee was given a tour of King's College gardens by head gardener Steven Coghill.

My grateful thanks to those who have served in the Environment Group.

Andrew Dobson, Chair, Environment Group



FRIENDS OF MICHAELHOUSE LTD



Direct responsibility for the operation of the Michaelhouse café and community centre was transferred to the PCC in 2020. All fixtures, fittings, furniture and equipment relating to the café and events were transferred, together with responsibility for the maintenance and repair of those assets. Following this change, the Trustees of the charitable company, The Michaelhouse Centre Cambridge Limited, (MHCCL) gave careful consideration to the question of how best they could enable it to continue to meet its charitable aims and objectives. It was clear that there was a need to provide an appropriate framework for the support of the Friends of Michaelhouse, which had been set up as an integral part of MHCCL. The Trustees consulted solicitors, Birketts, who advised that rather than setting up a new organisation for the Friends, which would need to apply afresh for charitable and HMRC status, open new bank accounts, etc., the existing objectives of MHCCL were sufficiently wide to allow it to be restructured by changing its name and adopting new Articles of Association. Birketts also recommended simplifying the governance by reducing the number of members and the size of the Trustee Board: the Trustees would form the company's membership in future. The re-named MHCCL would provide a forum for collaboration between the Friends of Michaelhouse and the PCC.

At an Extraordinary Meeting of MHCCL held via Zoom on 4th May 2021 the legal proposals necessary to reflect the company's changed role and purpose were passed unanimously. The charitable company is now formally The Friends of Michaelhouse Limited. During the early part of 2021 the Trustees sorted out all their outstanding financial matters relating to the Michaelhouse Centre and made a grant of £9,500 to the PCC, to be credited to the Designated Michaelhouse Fund. This was in addition to the £15,000 transferred to the PCC in 2020. After the year-end, the Trustees made a further small grant to the PCC and closed down the old MHCCL bank account.

The Trustees are now focused on their role as the legal and financial framework for the Friends of Michaelhouse. In 2021 they provided support for the Michaelhouse Singers, by funding the extra costs involved in organising and directing Zoom rehearsals, and they will continue to make a contribution to rehearsal costs for the time being. They were delighted that three live Saturday lunchtime concerts were able to be held in St Michael's Church in the autumn of 2021. All donations collected at the door went direct to the charity Arts & Minds for the support of the Michaelhouse Singers. The Trustees hope to revive the Friends' Sponsorship Funding for exhibitions in Michaelhouse. On behalf of the Friends, the Trustees are also discussing with Great St. Mary's how part of their Reserves might be used to enhance or improve the fabric of St. Michael's Church.

Fiona Cornish, Chair of The Friends of Michaelhouse Ltd

MARKETPLACE CHAPLAINCY



Summary

The chaplaincy continued as part of the market community during the period of lockdown, with Ed continuing to visit and support the market community throughout the winter and spring lockdown. Once retail restrictions were eased, he was able to return to his Pocket of Art market stall twice a week selling his own artwork, whilst having a presence as chaplain. He was able to engage with visitors and signpost them to the church for services and sightseeing.

Activity and Progress

Due to, firstly, COVID-19 restrictions and, secondly, Ed's training commitments, we were not able to offer liturgical activities within the market community.

Sadly there were a number of incidents of anti-social behaviour in the market, exacerbated by the fall-out of the pandemic and lockdowns. Ed liaised with the police to help address these issues and seek to improve the situation for the welfare of the market community and visitors.

In the summer of 2021 the council undertook a major public consultation about its ambitious plans to redevelop the market. A change in senior management at the council then resulted in a re-think and plans were being paused whilst the council considered the future use of its estate, including the Guildhall. The council is currently developing a stakeholder group to act as a sounding board for the refreshment of this redevelopment project.

Transition

Ed recently had to make the difficult decision to put his ministry as Marketplace Chaplain on hold, in order to focus on his studies and training for the priesthood at Westcott House. Ed says it has been a pleasure to be an ambassador to Christ amongst the marketplace community and he hopes and prays that Great St Mary's will continue to have a presence within the marketplace.

Edward Cearns, Chaplain to the Marketplace

MUSIC – CHOIRS AND ACADEMY



Choirs

2021 was a year of great challenge and great innovation for Music at Great St Mary's. With January arrived a third lockdown, where we took the decision to suspend the in-person activities of the choir. A number of new initiatives were launched across the ministry team to engage worshippers online and to preserve interest and momentum amongst our regular singers.

It was important for me to make sure that our virtual projects were not an attempt to imitate or reconstruct what we had once been able to do in person, so I set about building a new repertory for all the sections of the choir. The core of this was music for the Eucharist, and, over nearly four months of online rehearsals, the choir learned settings of the Mass which were not only new to the singers, but probably had never been heard at Great St Mary's, plus other works by composers who had been under-represented in the library hitherto. The fruit of these online sessions was very varied: most immediately, many virtual projects were completed for online worship between January and April, painstakingly assembled by Benedict and me from the brave domestic performances from the individual singers. After the choirs returned to live singing, the groundwork we had undertaken online early in 2021 continued to bring new music to live services right up to the end of the year.

It was not just singing which had to take place online during the chilly early months of the year: the choristers held their first-ever pancake party, simultaneously whisking, frying, flipping, filling and eating pancakes in their own homes, whilst watching their friends, and the music staff, do the same, through the medium of Zoom. It was a great afternoon that I suspect will prove quite difficult to replicate live next year, but we look forward to the challenge!

Fittingly, the first live music of 2021 from our own musicians was heard at Great St Mary's over the triduum, culminating in a two-organ paean of praise composed by Benedict, and Helen's beautiful singing as soloist on Easter morning.

The Easter term saw the choirs settle into a new rhythm for Sunday services, where, most weeks, the combined boy and girl choristers alternated with our teenage and adult voices. This brought out new strengths and characters in the choirs' liturgical performances. Our celebrations of the Eucharist, in particular, developed a new musical tone, one which, for me at least, seemed much fuller of beauty and interest than that which we had enjoyed before the pandemic, with additional anthems and regular choral elements of the Mass ordinary. It is odd to think that we have the limitations and constraints of the pandemic to thank for having the opportunity to explore this dimension to worship.

At the end of May, amateur musicians around the country were dealt a frustrating blow, where, at the same time as much of the country was opened up, amateur choral activities in places like Great St Mary's were suddenly more tightly constrained than they had been since summer 2020, in a peculiar move from the government, aimed at standardising the approach to gatherings of people. This meant that our adult singers could no longer meet to sing in groups of more than six, and mixed groups of adults and children were similarly constrained.

Irritating though this development initially was, it did, again, offer us a wonderful opportunity to re-think how the choirs operate. The adult choir enjoyed the opportunity to sing in smaller consort groups, the choristers enjoyed having charge of a greater number of services, and, thanks to the number and confidence of the teenage singers, we were able to form them into a youth choir, which had been an aspiration of mine for years. Since there were no teenagers singing tenor this year, this group had to assemble a distinctive new repertory of its own, for upper voices and baritones, including canticles, anthems, mass settings and a set of responses adapted by me from some three-part metrical psalm tunes by Haydn.

As summer approached, and we sang our first hymns together for many months, Great St Mary's started to look towards a new pattern of services, with fewer purely-online ones, and a greater proportion of the live ones to be streamed. This gave occasion to explore different forms of service, and to consider how best to serve different groups of worshippers; some of whom might attend regularly on Sunday, others of whom might drop in off the street on a weekday afternoon, looking for a glimpse of the divine. Encouraged by Devin, Benedict and I adjusted the timings of the choristers' weekly rehearsals (for a second time) to incorporate a fortnightly evensong on Wednesday and Thursday, sung alternately by boys and girls (sometimes joined by the adults), and a monthly choral compline on Wednesday nights, sung by the youth choir, which we tested out at the end of the summer term. These proved successful in terms of numbers of worshippers, and to be of great benefit and enjoyment for the choirs. Choral Mattins returned in September, but only around once a month. Whilst it was sad, on the one hand, not to be able to re-establish the regular ministry of weekly Choral Mattins (where so many other churches had already abandoned it), it did allow us to make more of an occasion of the service on the Sundays it was celebrated.

In the summer we were delighted to be able to resume rehearsals of the Junior Choir, starting with the oldest singers, and for these rehearsals to be able to take place Great St Mary's (they had previously been at Michaelhouse). We hope this change of rehearsal venue will strengthen the link between the Junior Choir families and the church of which they are such a valued part. After a joyful try-out evensong in June, we were able to welcome four junior choristers into the main part of the choir in September, plus two talented youngsters from outside. This, plus two older choristers who had joined earlier in the year, and a new baritone who joined in the autumn, is, I think, not bad going for a choir which had not been able to sing together or actively recruit in the local community for some time. By the end of the year, we had even managed to reconvene the Occasional Choir, and it is hoped that we can incorporate more regular meetings of this group of adult singers into our choral calendar in 2022.

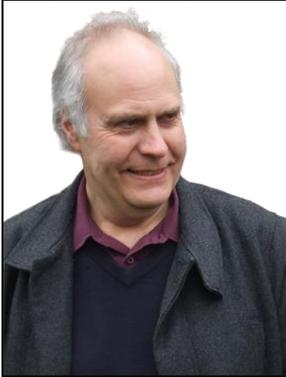
In Michaelmas term, even though the choir continued to sing in the South Gallery, the special seasonal liturgies, including All Souls, Remembrance, Advent and Christmas, all regained much of the musical character they had had before the pandemic, adding the best of the practices we had developed in 2020, and there were many really memorable offerings of music over the course of the autumn. Thanks to the camera system, Benedict was able to play from either organ and for the ensemble to work perfectly, and it was great to have the variety of colours this flexibility was able to bring.

But, inevitably, all this success comes at a cost: by September, the activity of the choirs felt, from an administrative point of view, to have returned, or exceeded, the level from before the pandemic and the loss of dedicated administrative support in the department became, and continues to be, particularly acutely felt. The team of choir stewards continues to work tirelessly to look after the children, and I am hugely grateful for this but the team is still too small in number to really comfortably cover all the slots, and still leave capacity in case of unplanned absence. There is a real urgency to increase the staffing resources of the department if the current musical model is to be maintained without over-stretching the remaining staff.

I look forward to being able to spread the load, and our collective wings, a little more in 2022, but I remain hugely grateful to the choirs, their families, and to Benedict and Helen for pulling through a hugely challenging, yet very rewarding year.

Onwards and upwards...

Samuel Hayes, University Organist and Director of Music



Academy of Great St. Mary's Orchestra

It was wonderful to be able to resume rehearsing in Great St. Mary's with full orchestra in September, though with strict protocols because of COVID-19. Our concert on 25 September was on the University Alumni Weekend and we appreciated the strong support from the Alumni office. We had a splendid programme with Mendelssohn's *Hebrides* overture, Interludes from *Syn*, the seascape opera written by Adam Pounds (and performed in 2005 in the Mumford Theatre and Great St. Mary's), followed by Haydn's *London* Symphony. This was followed on 30 October by a Saturday afternoon concert featuring Beethoven's *Coriolan* Overture, Elgar's *Dream Children*, and Schubert's 6th Symphony.

Our Christmas concert on 5 December was, as usual, with the choirs. The orchestral works included Mozart's Overture to *Così fan tutte*, the beautiful *Elegie* by Faure, with 'cello soloist Ann Sheffield, and Beethoven's Symphony No. 7. The choir performed an inspirational selection of seasonal choral works 'In praise of Our Lady' including music by Britten, Mozart, Tavener, Faure, Joubert, and Stravinsky, and the magnificent Magnificat in G by Herbert Sumsion.

The orchestra very much enjoys rehearsing and performing in the very special ambience of Great St. Mary's, and draws players from across Cambridge and beyond. We also draw wide audiences to the church as part of our outreach ministry.



Adam Pounds – Conductor, Academy of Great St. Mary's Orchestra

PASTORAL WORK



It is a great joy to know how much care and love there is between members of our church family, especially when a particular need arises, as in illness. It has also been lovely to be able to be together regularly since the COVID-19 restrictions have eased and the buzz at coffee in Michaelhouse after the 10 o'clock services is heart-warming.

There are, of course, members who are unable to join us physically, due to the challenges of older years or the continuing need to be cautious because COVID-19 has not gone away. These friends are often isolated and lonely, but clergy and lay visitors try to see them regularly, taking Communion when that is helpful, and using the phone and Zoom, if a visit is unsuitable.

The clergy are always available to visit those who would like us to, or those who are ill and, although we may seem busy, you come first and we really welcome opportunities to spend time chatting and praying with anyone who asks - you don't have to be in any particular need, because it is good to spend time with one another.

Last summer we held some Garden Gatherings, and we are very grateful for those who hosted these. We trust that there will be more this coming summer.

The Home Groups have continued and are very much appreciated by all members. They are a great way of getting to know others and in the last year a number of those new to Great St Mary's have been able to feel a greater sense of belonging by joining a group, in person or on Zoom. Groups decide what they will study and the leading of discussion is shared by those who volunteer, before prayer together.

I would like to thank everyone who has cared for others in the past year and especially those who have responded to our requests to be involved in visiting and those who have co-ordinated the Home Groups.

Revd Shirley Holder, Curate

SACRISTRY



I have often quoted the hymn writer George Herbert for the best insight into the work of the Sacristan - especially the verse that says:

*'Who sweeps a room as for thy laws,
Makes that and the action fine.'*

But I have been less appreciative of a later verse which says:

*'nothing can be so mean,
Which with this tincture, "for thy sake",
will not go bright and clean.'*

It takes more than elevated words to keep the vessels, altar cloths and other linen used at the Communion Table in a fit state for use in worship!

However, this last year the work has been much less than usual because of the strange impact of the pandemic.

As we approach something more normal, things will pick up, I am sure

I would particularly like to thank Gillian Crossan, Head Server, and the Vergers. Without their co-operation, things would be much more difficult.

Catherine Smart, Sacristan

SERVERS



Serving was gradually re-introduced during 2021. Because of the COVID-19 restrictions, Servers' duties were fairly limited, and we are looking forward to returning to our full duties when this is possible.

Many of our former serving team either resigned due to health concerns, or found that they were having to juggle other duties at Great St Mary's, or, in the case of younger servers, having to cope with online learning and exam commitments.

We were very fortunate to have had a wonderful team of Ordinands join us, but sadly they will mostly be moving on in the summer. I would like to take this opportunity to thank them for their valuable and positive contribution. Thanks also to Thomas who has joined the team and recently been trained as a Lead Server. We will soon welcome the return of Karen (Lead Server) to the team, and look forward to Juliet joining us in June.

Anyone who feels that they might like to become a Server would be most welcome, and I'd be happy to meet with you and talk through what is involved (gillcrossan@hotmail.com).

Thank you so much to everyone in the current team for your support and flexibility during these difficult times. You have been amazing, stepping in at short notice when COVID-19 has struck, and attending extra "rehearsals", especially at Christmas and Easter, when we had so many wonderful Services to cover.

Gillian Crossan, Head Server

VERGERS



Old friends left Great St Mary's last year, but in April after a stuttering start, things finally began getting back to normal, as both old and new staff returned, and visitors' numbers steadily grew.

During lockdown, the maintenance and servicing at both Great St Mary's and Michaelhouse continued; this included plant and machinery, fire alarms, fire extinguisher maintenance, access control systems, CCTV systems, and intruder alarms, all of which, obviously, continued throughout the year.

The kitchen at Michaelhouse received its annual deep clean and usual maintenance checks.

The maintenance also continued outside, with our abseiling company clearing the roofs and gutters at both Great St Mary's and Michaelhouse.

At Great St Mary's, the tower, stairs, and decking were cleaned and re-painted; the tower stairs being numbered, and signage put in place to aid staff and emergency services in the event of an emergency.

As the year progressed services, memorials, weddings, and events all returned to both Great St Mary's and Michaelhouse. The visitor footfall was very encouraging, and things were looking good for the shop and tower.

The shop and tower team, led by Lorraine, continued to show great fortitude and resilience under some difficult situations, with visitor numbers and social distancing being very problematic.

And as for the Verging team, what can I say? Always happy to help and go the extra mile.

Thank you all so much.

Robert Smyth, Head Verger; Estates and Facilities Manager

WIDER CONCERNS



The Wider Concerns Committee (WCC) is most appreciative of the wonderful support of the congregation over the last difficult year. Our major partnership projects at home and abroad have continued with their remarkable work during the pandemic with much fortitude and resilience. Many overseas are also impacted by climate change leading to crop failure and advancement of desert areas, and by very high inflation.

1. Allocations

£4,075	Cambridge Aid (including £2,500 from a local company)
£364	Foodbank – Advent (2020); + Harvest food
£300	Goodwill Children’s homes, S. India; Jenny’s marmalade sales!
£1,660	Easter - Christian Blind Mission (+matched Government funding)
£1,194	Christian Aid garden parties!
£562	Peter-tide – Kigali Theological College, Rwanda
£575	Zimbabwe School – epap porridge (+£500 from the Sansom bequest)
£824	CCHP Homelessness Sunday
£2,460	Harvest - Red Cross/Red Crescent – Humanitarian Aid for Afghanistan
£150	Christmas card sales for Afghanistan aid
£11,914	Total

2. Sansom Bequest

On the recommendation of the Wider Concerns Committee, the PCC made allocations totalling £15,500 for the following projects, particularly taking into account the impact of the pandemic and of climate change on projects overseas.

£1,000	Red Hen Project working with very poor families in Cambridge
£1,000	Wintercomfort for the Homeless – working with the homeless in Cambridge
£1,000	Centre 33 – supporting vulnerable young people in Cambridge
£1,000	Romsey Mill – supporting vulnerable families in Cambridge
£4,000	Zimbabwe School - providing vital facilities
£2,000	Phoenix India - working with street children providing shelter and skills
£2,000	Kids for Kids N. Darfur – working with children in abject poverty
£2,000	Rural Health Studies, India – providing vital health care in poor villages
£1,000	Ethiopian refugees fleeing the fierce fighting – via UNHRC
£500	Zimbabwe School e-pap porridge – for children suffering from malnutrition
£15,500	Total

3. Christian Aid coffee mornings

In May, larger gatherings were still prohibited and so Lorna Atwell came up with the inspired suggestion of holding coffee mornings in people's gardens for six people. These raised £1,194. They also provided wonderful get-togethers after so many months of isolation.

4. Afghanistan humanitarian crisis

Our main concern at Harvest was for the humanitarian crisis in Afghanistan and £2,460 was raised which was channelled through the Red Cross/Red Crescent which have well established work on the ground there. Christmas cards were also sold by Lorna which raised a further £150. We are in contact with the City Council and Cambridge Refugee Resettlement Campaign (CRRC) about help for Afghan refugees coming to Cambridge.

5. St. Peter-tide –Kigali Diocese in Rwanda

Our Peter-tide collection of £562 was for the Diocese in Rwanda where there are fruitful links through David Bagnall. During the genocide in 1994 the Church was largely destroyed and priests were killed or fled into exile. The Kigali Theological College is an ecumenical Christian training college with around 200 ordinands, half men and half women. The campus is run as a co-operative and the ordinands help with the animals, and each has their own patch for growing food.

6. Social Justice

Homelessness

Through its Homelessness Group, WCC has continued to keep abreast of the situation in Cambridge. It is heartening that there is much help ongoing with rough sleepers (currently about 30-40 in Cambridge), with fruitful collaboration between the various agencies and the City Council, and with the NHS (for mental health problems).

On 10 October a special service for Homelessness Sunday was held with inspirational address by Selwyn Image. There was a retiring collection for the Cambridge Churches Homelessness Project (CCHP) which raised £824. A leaflet about opportunities to help with homelessness and poverty was distributed at the end of the service and also featured in e-Mag.

Cambridge Churches Homelessness Project (CCHP)

This winter, with the pandemic, the previous arrangement of hosting overnight accommodation and supper on a rotating basis around churches was no longer possible. Instead, ITAC (It Takes a City -the partnership of Jimmy's Nightshelter and Wintercomfort and other help agencies) and the Cambridge City Council rented a large house – Crossways - to provide accommodation for 20 homeless people. This is an excellent location enabling guests to be inside throughout the day as necessary, with a day centre with craft and other activities, and much professional support help and advice. Our involvement is in providing six suppers with the help of Gonville and Caius, Magdalene and Lucy Cavendish Colleges. It is likely that similar arrangements will be made for next winter.

Cambridge City Foodbank - regular collections were made, especially at Harvest, and Jane Image's beautiful greetings cards were sold in our gift shop in aid of the Foodbank.



Margaret Johnston, Chair, Wider Concerns Committee

WORSHIP



2021 was a year that shifted the dance of our liturgy from a stately strathspey to a more complex reel, and on occasion some post-modern jazz, as we adjusted to changing lockdown rules and restrictions as well as the repercussions of having shifted our Sunday worship times and pattern at the outset of pandemic. The need for greater time between services led to an opportunity to try holding our principal Sunday service at 10am, and to not putting Mattins directly after the Sunday eucharist weekly. However, these decisions had to be made sometimes on the fly, often triggered by external matters such as COVID-19 and the University rather than our own mission planning, and often in the absence of the vicar. Several times I told our ordinands in group reflections “there are lots of way to change Sunday worship schedules. What we’re going through now is not how anyone would choose to do it.” Thank you to everyone for your patience and tolerance.

There are no ways to change the pattern of worship without causing some disappointment. Behavioural economists will talk about ‘status quo bias’, but the basic fact is that for every church the current schedule is likely to be the one that works best for the people already present — because we are the people already coming to those services. I feel strongly that the PCC and clergy have come to a pattern of worship that better fits our mission as a parish and University church. There are advantages for young families, for students, for those coming by bus, for rehearsal time before services, and for coming together for prayer without frantic rushing or turn-overs between services. But I know there are also costs, and that moving Choral Mattins monthly from weekly is a big change, as is starting a half-hour later. I’m glad that from the next Academic year the University Sermons will take place at 11.30am, and I’m very glad to have plans afoot to move the choir back to the chancel and to rediscover the ways we come together in prayer.

Weekday evensong and monthly choral Compline have been beautiful additions to our worship life, and I would appreciate your thoughts on how we can best grow the congregation for these beautiful times of prayer and music. And it has been wonderful to see how vibrant our midweek Communion has become, how constant and nourishing daily weekday morning prayer has been for staff and congregation, and to see The Ark beginning to grow once again.

During lockdown, new members of the congregation had the chance to lead prayers and do readings, and I encourage you to consider how you might participate in our congregational worship together. There is always more room for readers, intercessors, servers, musicians, and soon even chalice administrators. And there is always a need for faithful, prayerful, quiet presence in the pews as well.

Revd Devin McLachlan, Associate Vicar