



St Michael the Archangel, Mere, Wiltshire

Annual Parochial Church Meeting

9 May 2021

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THE PARISH CHURCH OF ST MICHAEL THE ARCHANGEL, MERE

ANNUAL VESTRY AND PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING

9 May 2021 at 10.30am in the Parish Church

A G E N D A

Chair Rev Carol Green with the Venerable Alan Jeans, Archdeacon of Sarum and Rev Pauline Reid
Rural Dean in attendance on Zoom

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82684817544?pwd=YWJ2TU5rVTlYVXRRYWpCQ3U5d2pqUT09>

Meeting ID: 826 8481 7544 Passcode: 459794 Dial by your location 0131 460 1196 United Kingdom

Welcome

Opening worship

ANNUAL VESTRY MEETING

1. Minutes of Last Annual Vestry Meeting – 11 October 2020
2. Election of Churchwardens

ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING

1. Apologies for Absence
2. Minutes of Last Annual Meeting – 11 October 2020
3. Matters Arising
4. Annual Report of the PCC
5. Treasurer's Report: 2019 Accounts see amended analysis
2020 Accounts
7. Election of members to the Deanery Synod – ex officio members of the PCC

To the Parochial Church Council

8. Appointment of Sidesmen
9. Appointment of Independent Examiner
10. AOB
11. Closing Prayers

Draft Minutes of the Annual Parochial Church Meeting held in the

**Parish Church of St. Michael the Archangel, Mere,
on Sunday 11 October 2020 at 10:30am**

There was a short act of worship at the beginning of the meeting led by Revd. Carol Green.

27 parishioners were present. Parish Administrator and Hon Treasurer in attendance.

ANNUAL VESTRY MEETING

Chaired by Revd. Carol

- 1. The Minutes of the Annual Vestry Meeting of 17 April 2018** were accepted and signed as a true record.
- 2. Election of Churchwardens**

Two candidates for the two posts of churchwarden were nominated. Mrs. Isabel Page and Richard Wilson; both were confirmed as eligible.

Mrs. Jean Knapp wished for it to be noted that she was opposed to Richard Wilson as churchwarden. Lt Gen. David Leakey, explained as he is not disqualified by the criteria read out by Rev. Carol, both were elected as churchwardens with no other objections.

Mrs. Lindy Elliott who is unable to carry on with the Church warden role due to poor health was thanked for her dedication and hard work and was presented with a card.

The Annual Vestry Meeting was declared closed.

Signed ...

Date ...

Mr Richard Wilson now takes lead as Chair of the meeting.

ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING

- 1. Apologies for absence:**
Mrs Jane Hurd, Mrs Patricia Stephenson, Anne Dethick
- 2. Minutes of APCM of 28 April 2019:**
Amendments by Mrs. Ann Dethick were pointed out and noted by Mr Richard Wilson.
Minutes were accepted and signed as a true record.
Proposed: Mrs. Isabelle Page
Seconded: Mrs. Christine March.
Nem con.
- 3. Matters Arising:** No points were raised.
- 4. Annual Report of the PCC:**

All reports were written in advance and circulated by email with a copy available in the church, taken as read.

5. Election of members to the Deanery Synod and Parochial Church Council:

The following members continue their term of office on the Deanery Synod:

<i>Name</i>	<i>Proposed by</i>	<i>Seconded by</i>
Revd. John Page	Mr. John Heap	Mrs. Julia Rankin
Mrs. Isabel Page	Mr. John Heap	Mrs. Julia Rankin

Elected unanimously

The following members continue their term of office on the PCC:

Mrs Christine Marsh, Mrs. Julia Rankin, Mrs Elisabeth Barrett, Mrs Lindy Elliott

The following new members were nominated:

<i>Name</i>	<i>Proposed by</i>	<i>Seconded by</i>
Mr. Derek Fisher	Mr. Tony Rankin	Mrs. Julie Bickerstaff

Elected unanimously.

Mrs. Pat Isom will be standing down from the PCC after over 20 years variously as PCC secretary, Church warden and a Licensed Pastoral Assistant. Rev Carol thanked her for her dedication and loyal service. She was given a unanimous vote of thanks.

6. Appointment of Sidesmen:

Due to the current situation with Covid-19 no one will be out on duty without first being asked safety being the priority.

For the list of people appointed as sidesmen see below:

Isabel Page	Myrene Coward	Pauline Andrews
Penny Fraser	Felicity Wilson	Kathy Herbert
Christine Marsh	Patricia Stephenson	Christopher Stephenson

7. Appointment Independent Examiner

Mr. David Corbin has agreed to serve again

Proposed: David Leaky

Seconded: Bill Price

8. Looking to the future

Rev Carol talked about the progress with the reordering which is now underway. Recognising the uncertainty on the future regarding Covid-19, there will be plans for the remembrance service and Christmas service which will need to be led by the Government guidelines at the time. The church is working with the 72-hour rule and will look at ways to overcome challenges as we have over the past 6 months,

9. AOB

Mrs. Julia Rankin raised that the Church use to donate £300 annually to Mere Matters. Mr. Alan Gristwood informed that a rate of £100 was agreed but no donations had been received

in 2019 or 2020. This will need to be voted for at the next PCC meeting, but a show of hands showed all in favour.

10. Brief Presentation of Kate Symonds Book being sold for the reordering project

Mrs. Kate Symonds was unable to attend the APCM, but Elisabeth Barrett had copies if anybody wished to buy a book, where all funds raised will go to the work on the pinnacles.

11. Closing Worship

The meeting closed with the grace by Revd. Carol Green.

Signed

Date



St Michael the Archangel, Mere, Wiltshire
Annual Reports for
Year Ending December 2020

Annual Report of the Parochial Church Council for the Year Ending 31 December 2020

St Michael the Archangel in Mere is the largest of the three churches in the Benefice that is part of the Heytesbury Deanery, in the Diocese of Salisbury.

The Parochial Church Council (PCC) is a charity excepted from registration with the Charity Commission

The Mission Statement of the Parish & PCC of St Michael's
We dedicate ourselves to God, sharing his love, encouraging others and nurturing faith in our world

Members of the PCC for the Year 2020

Incumbent & Chair: Revd. Carol Green

Churchwardens: Mrs Isabel Page
Mr Richard Wilson

Representatives to the

Deanery Synod: Mr. John Page, Mrs. Isabel Page

Elected Members: Christine Marsh
Julia Rankin
Elisabeth Barrett
Derek Fisher
Lindy Elliot

Co-opted member : Lesley Traves

Priest in Charge's Report

Most of 2020 was marked by constant adaptations to COVID precautions. The Pandemic has been a process of learning and digesting what we couldn't do, dating back to the government closure of places of worship in March 2020. But it has also been a process of imagining and putting into practice what we *could* do. The building may have been shut but the Holy Spirit continued to inspire us to acts of love and service in our community.

In the first shock of closing the building I was told about the problems of the Warminster Foodbank which had to scale down its operation to ensure Covid safety amongst its volunteers. With the Bishop Nicholas' permission the Friends' Corner of the church was turned into an emergency supply centre as a small committee of me, Mark Dunham, Richard Wilson and Penny Fennon who sorted and supplied foods in parcels to local people. There was an outpouring of support from the local community of goods and money amounting to over £3000 in the whole year with some people even making a standing order payment. Thank you to all those who contributed in any way. With so many restrictions on time out and with the church a venue on many people's daily hour long exercise a "Covid Snake" of over 300 stones grew in the churchyard with stones being painted in many and varied ways. A way to thank key workers, particularly NHS staff.

We learnt to respond to need when it arose and the Mother's Union was particularly adept at this. A phone call from an ill single mum with two young children and MU was there with cakes, comfort, toys and prayers. Many church members formed their own local support networks and supported Richard Jefferies and the Mere Resilience Team, making sure no one felt overlooked in lockdown. In the autumn a pastoral care group was made of church members who kept in touch with as many people as we could who are known to the church. Visits continued to outside of Fives Court Care Home with chats at the window to staff and residents to sing "Happy Birthday". Bramley Care Home said whenever they had a resident asking about church they were shown our online services which they also shared with other care homes around the area.

The online worship began following the encouragement of choir member David Bell who suggested that the Walk of Witness by the Vicarage family around Mere in Holy Week be filmed. This he undertook every day filming and producing high quality videos. On Easter Day we ascended Castle Hill at dawn to record the sunrise, first fire of Easter and communion too. Over a thousand people saw this and our Good Friday production drawing a wide audience from outside the parish and local people who wouldn't ordinarily have witnessed this special Church Together event. From then on David and I filmed services in different locations, often in the Vicarage garden David doing the editing. People learned to film themselves reading or intercessing and send it on via "We Transfer" or David or I would call to film them. Thanks to David Bell and Mel Wilkinson for their work in producing the films. These continued until July when the church could open again for onsite worship. The next project was live streaming from the church with the Mother's Union Carol service being put on this way to gather a good number of people who would otherwise have missed the chance to sing carols together.

The church opened again on 11th July after a careful risk assessment following C of E guidance. We used ribbons to mark areas to be used and opened Wednesdays and Sundays to allow any possible virus to die off after 72 hours. Although weddings and funerals were restricted to 30 people church services allowed as many as our risk assessment deemed safe for the building. Gradually everyone got used to the new normal and people have been very supportive and accepting of the restrictions just glad to be in the building...but not to sing, sadly! The Town Council, RBL and I had discussions about Remembrance Service it was not safe to hold it in the Square as usual and so we held a scaled down event in the churchyard around the cross made by Morgan and Eiluned with representatives from local organisations laying their wreath as usual. David again filmed the service editing in Patricia and Christopher Stephenson reading the names of the Fallen, Ben Carver gave a moving account of the Memorial to the Unknown warrior and Lt Gen David Leakey preached a homily.

It was something of an act of faith by the PCC – though backed up with good data – to decide to go ahead with building work in the church in the middle of a Pandemic when church income generally was down. There was a strong team of people headed up by Dr Bill Price (the chair) Elisabeth Barrett, Sherry Dixon and Maggie Durkee who complimented each other and worked well together they were assisted by David "please-help-the-church's-project" Leakey and David "I'll-just-ask-the-architect" Bett and Richard Wilson QC, Churchwarden willing to step in with wise counsel despite a demanding work schedule. Special thanks to David Bett who has crossed the Tiber (for a short time) to "project manage" our work his experience and patient persistence is much appreciated. There are so many people to thank for their part in making the project possible who generously gave money and time to help. We mustn't forget the original project team of Mike Marsh (CW), Rev Vicky Goodman, Vernon Philips and John Heap who kept things moving at a stage when you can lose the dream in the midst of

set-backs, paperwork and money concerns. I think we can say that the late Mike Marsh would have been delighted by the outcome for he truly believed that the church should be for the people and of the people – welcoming and user-friendly, which is what has been produced. It is amazing to think that this whole project started after the generous bequest of Lady Flavia Ebbisham to the Friends of St Michaels.

Christmas what was going to happen - would we have one? That was the concern in the autumn, but we rose to the challenge. We had a Lessons and Carols with singing around the church's outdoor Christmas tree thanks to Les and Sherry Dixon, we also had a beautiful crib handmade from recycled materials by Mark Dunham. MU again came up with ideas this time how to spoil people struggling financially and separated from their families at Christmas, plans expertly organised by Christabelle, Christine and Jenny. Christmas services went on pretty much as usual with music, the choir singing and many people appreciating more deeply than in past years the true meaning of the season. The crib service became a mobile service Trudy Maidment's donkey escorted Mary and Joseph around Mere gathering children and ending with a small act of worship in the churchyard.

This is my last report as Priest in Charge of the Benefice I am preparing to move on as I write. There are so many people to thank for their support of our church community over the years who have desired to follow God and serve their neighbours. The PCC too seeking to work with me to lead on care of the building, financial questions, worship and our outreach into the community. They work hard and have remained very motivated and patient even with the challenges of meeting on Zoom. Ryan and Graham who have continued to care for the fabric of our lovely buildings even when they weren't open. Thanks too to Nigel the treasurer for the last 2 years who has given his time to sort out our accounts – it has been a real labour of love. Also Tash Shaftoe our paid administrator who also donated more of her time as bookkeeper, PCC secretary and admin to me. In the last year Lindy continued as CW in to the autumn keeping up with all the changes to Government guidance in her inimitable good hearted way. She stood down due to problems with her eye sight Isabel very kindly stepped up and worked with Richard. I'm really grateful for their support and hard work. I wish you well for the future – May you be richly blessed by God as you serve Him and share His love in this lovely town of Mere.

Rev Carol Green, Priest in Charge Mere with West Knoyle and Maiden Bradley

PCC Summary for 2020

We held 7 meetings of the PCC in 2020 and only one of them on 14th January 2020 was physically together the others were on Zoom. At first this was a little frustrating as a free Zoom account only allows for a 40 minute discussion but a church subscription was taken which allowed longer meetings.

In the January meeting we had no idea of the impending large scale changes to our lives and were still looking at ways of having a Ministry Explorer to stay with us in September giving them a year's opportunity to learn about working in a rural parish to discern a calling to ordained ministry. Discussions continued about the availability of grants for the enhancement project and pinnacles. Payment of share arrears for 2019 was paid in full. A meeting due for 17th March had to be cancelled due to Covid. At that time an emergency "Foodbank for Mere and District" was set up responding to a generous collection of food by town's people and generous donations from well-wishers which amounted to £3343 over the year. The PCC acted as an umbrella organization to hold the funds as

fast action was needed when at the first lockdown Warminster Foodbank was temporarily suspended.(At the time of writing this report April 21 all funds have been passed to Warminster Foodbank and Anne Rich the local organizer).

April's meeting on Zoom was a detailed discussion about the affordability and viability of taking the enhancement project forward this year and whether the a short fall in funds could be made up. David Leakey and Bill Price were in attendance and said they were working on raising the last of the funds and felt the balance could be reached. The treasurer advised that work done by March 21 would definitely still qualify for VAT recovery. PCC voted unanimously to go ahead with a "letter of intent" to the builder but still had 6 months before work would commence.

June discussions raised finance issues concern being expressed at a fall in income due to no services the treasurer warned we wouldn't meet our approximate £47, 000 share. We discussed the "Covid Snake" built by the community hosted by us in the graveyard. The PCC agreed in principle to spend £1000 to fund a family worker, this turned out to be impractical to organize due to Covid. The Grove Building Committee was given the go ahead to obtain quotes for the painting of the windows up to £4000. The question of Wi-Fi for the church was discussed but thought to be too expensive. With lockdown soon to lift Rev Carol and Lindy (CW) made the first RA prior to opening the church on 11th July. Seating was 2 metres apart in alternate pews, people were to hand sanitize on entry, wear masks and prayer books etc were not permitted at this time.

At July's meeting the examined 2019 reports were presented to the PCC with no issues being raised and were passed unanimously. An anonymous donor had offered to pay for a new flag pole which the PCC thought would be incorporated in the pinnacles work when it happened, it was agreed that the architect be asked for his opinion. The result was that there would be considerably more and expensive work to rebuild a flag pole and questions over who would be responsible for the flag. Richard Wilson commended the work of Anne Rich's Foodbank and £1000 of the PCC holding was forwarded as the church was no longer practically involved in this.

At the delayed September APCM, Derek Fisher once again joined the PCC having stood down the previous year.

October meeting. After there were queries about the accounts for 2019 especially the labels given to outgoing. The PCC's attention was drawn to the annual payment to Mere Matters which was outstanding, this was made with a request that in future they send us an invoice so that payment isn't overlooked. Christine and members of the worship committee were commended for the harvest service. It was agreed that meetings would be held monthly as members weren't now meeting at church.

November meeting. Queries continued into the 2019 accounts. Sherry Dixon was asked to look into online giving and this was agreed in principle except that our current website would not be able to support this. Concern was again expressed at our Parish Share deficit. Thanks were expressed to David Leakey and Bill Price who had covered most of Mere with their appeal letter meaning that we had sufficient funds to cover the internal works. Christmas plans were discussed and thanks to Christine Marsh who donated 200+ Nativity Story booklets to Mere School. A Wi-Fi device called a dongle was obtained on a 2 year contract at £20pcm (instead of £65pcm currently paid for the office phone and internet link which was not being used) it will be used in the church for an internet link and

also in the Parish office where it is to be kept. There was a discussion over the pews now surplus to requirements and ready to be sold.

December, queries over the analysis of the 2019 accounts continued. The PCC heard a progress report of the reordering and expressed their thanks in particular to David Bett who is overseeing the project acting as the church's go between with the builders and architect. The church was being used occasionally at this time and for funerals but was cold, the PCC learnt that this was due to work in the church. The dongle was being used satisfactorily in church and had enable a Zoom MU Carol Service.

The Sub-Committees have met between PCC meetings and minutes of their deliberations were received by the full PCC and discussed, and approved where necessary.

Copies of the Minutes of PCC meetings online on the St Michael's website for examination.

Summary made by Rev Carol in lieu of PCC Secretary.

The **Electoral Roll of the Parish** has been duly revised. The number of names on the revised roll is 108, the number of names on the roll last year was 114. Thanks to Mr Christopher Stephenson who has stepped down this year after diligently keeping the details for many years and to Sherry Dixon who has stepped in to take this over.

Worship Committee

The committee continued to meet over the year consisting Lindy Elliott, Ben Carver, Meg Oliver, Christine Marsh LLM, Rev Carol and Canon Janet Smith from Energising Local Ministry. Once lock down began meetings resumed on Zoom, this was a forum to discuss service ideas, suggest readers and support those making the video services. Later there was discussion about re-opening the church in accordance with church and government guidelines as there was so much information for this the ideas of the group were helpful. Once on site services resumed the committee was a place for lay-led services to be discussed and prepared with original ideas coming and being put into practice. In particular the Harvest Service which Christine prepared involving a number of younger families which people greatly enjoyed. Canon Janet's help and encouragement was particularly appreciated.

Churchwarden's Report

2020 has, quite rightly, been described by many as 'unprecedented'.

The impact of the Covid-19 Pandemic on the work of the Church cannot be overstated. We were sadly forced to close the doors for long periods of the year, lifting the number of services we were able to hold in church. Fortunately, through the endeavours of Carol and others, it was possible to hold regular 'remote' services by Zoom which proved to be a great success.

Following the partial relaxation of the lockdown rules, we have begun to welcome the congregation back into church and look forward to a return to a greater degree of normality over the next few months.

As the Treasurer's report shows, the reduced activity has meant a reduction in income and a corresponding deficit. Taking all things into account, the church's finances have held up fairly well.

Nigel is standing down from the role of Treasurer at the APCM and we thank him for his hard work over the last two years.

Considerable thanks are also due to those involved in the reordering project. Many have given considerable assistance in all aspects of the project and I apologise to any whom I inadvertently omit from this list, but particular thanks are due to Bill Price, David Bett, Sherry Dixon, Elisabeth Barrett and David Leakey. I am sure all will agree that the works have greatly improved the church. At present, there is a need to clean the church following the conclusion of the works. The PCC is currently dealing with that issue.

Earlier this year, Carol announced that she is leaving us to take up a new appointment in Devon. We wish her all the very best for the future and thank her for her unfailing and indefatigable work as our priest in charge throughout her time with us, often in difficult circumstances. There will be a proper opportunity to say goodbye to Carol before she goes, and we hope she will remain in touch.

Carol's departure means that a new incumbent will have to be found. The usual processes will have to be followed, and it seems likely that there will be a wider discussion with the Diocese concerning the future of the benefice. Whatever decisions need to be made as part of this process, the PCC will ensure that the congregation are kept fully informed and consulted.

Finally, Isabel and I have decided that now is an appropriate time for us both to step down as Churchwardens. We both decided on this course before the announcement of Carol's departure, but felt we were unable to do so without a replacement being willing to take over. Derek Fisher has recently indicated that he will seek election at the forthcoming Vestry meeting, and therefore both Isabel and I can now step down.

Richard Wilson & Isabel Page

Mothers' Union

Report of Mere MU 2020/21 Activities and response to Diocesan theme 'Building Hope and Confidence' for St Michael the Archangel APCM

As a result of the Covid 19 Lockdown in March 2020 Mere MU was unable to hold usual meetings, along with its AGM, in the Grove building.

As lockdown progressed, we tried to ensure that all members were phoned by Branch Leaders and each other. This was simply a natural outcome to our group ethic of friendship, fellowship and support of each other. As it happened this initiative could also be said to link to MU theme of building Hope and confidence. Later in the year as many of us became more adept at technology we were able to hold Zoom meetings. These were hosted by our incumbent. Where possible members joined these meetings. If they had no computer access, they were often able to join via a phone link.

In December we managed to hold a successful Zoom Deanery Carol Service whilst in February we were able to join the MU Wave of Prayer through Zoom . We hope to continue Zoom meetings until we can meet again face to face. We are now trying to have speakers at our Zoom meeting starting on March 9 when Rev Janet Smith gave an interesting and entertaining talk on her life and work in Quebec province , Canada.

At Christmas Mere MU were a leading force in provision of Christmas Day lunches for those in need within Mere and surrounding area. We also developed an initiative in which funds were raised to provide vouchers to enable people to have the treat of a take away meal or afternoon tea over the Christmas period. We linked up with the Walnut Tree Pub and Angel Café Tea Room To ensure we reached as many people as possible who were in need of help we worked with Mere Food Bank and Mere Surgery. In this way we tried to bring a light of hope to our local community and build up community confidence in the Christian ethic.

At Easter, with permission from the school, we provided Bible Society Easter Story Booklets and Easter Bunny Choc bars for all the children at Mere School. This builds on the school involvement achieved by the St Michael's Open the Book Team prior to Covid restrictions.

We have not yet been able to hold our AGM for 2021/22 but we hope to hold a Zoom meeting in April where we bring before our members AGM items.

We are a more elderly MU thus we need to be absolutely sure that we follow Govt guidelines to the letter and ensure that the Covid threat has reduced more considerably before we begin face to face meetings. Hopefully in the summer months we will be able to hold Garden Meetings and create a fuller programme of future events.

All we do will be underpinned by the MU theme of 'Rebuilding Hope and Confidence'. We will continue to develop this theme not just in our meetings but in our fellowship within the group and by taking the light of friendship into the wider community.

Christine Marsh, MU Branch Leader

Fundraising Appeal Committee

The fundraising committee launched an appeal for funds for re-ordering the Church and for repairing the pinnacles in September 2019 .

The Towns response has been magnificent with 108 donations of over £50 of which 20 were for 4 figure sums. The total donations including gift aid was £98.5K

Whilst the Church is primarily a place of worship, it is also a historic monument and has a place within the town as a community space, as envisaged in the Taylor Review 2017 .

The breadth of donors covered people of all faiths and those of none.

In addition to local donations we have succeeded in being given grants of £20,000 from Garfield Weston, £5,000 from the Fudge Trust in Warminster, and £1,000 from both the Baer Trust & the Tanner Trust. We have also been pledged £2,500 for reordering and a further £3,000 for the pinnacles by the Wiltshire Historic Churches Trust.

The builders have completed the work to a very high standard going only about 1% over budget.

We have ringfenced £15,681 for the pinnacles & it is likely that this figure will rise slightly once the final VAT rebate is obtained from the re-ordering by the PCC.

We made a provisional application to the Heritage fund for a grant explaining that we had one appeal for two different projects. They replied that the Pinnacles fitted in with their remit and they would be

happy to consider an application for the cost of the pinnacle repairs, however they require a QQ report and the granting of the faculty first. Shortly after this they closed for all new applications due to the Covid pandemic.

The DAC has given approval for the pinnacle repairs & the faculty will be applied for shortly. Once the QQ has been done we will be able to reapply to them & I am hopeful that they will look favourably on us because they acknowledge that the community has already paid for over half of the combined projects.

I would like to thank all of you who have contributed so generously to this Appeal.

I would also like to thank Elisabeth Barrett, Sherry Dixon & Maggie Durkee for their invaluable help on the fundraising committee.

I want to thank a wider advisory group which has included the vicar, David Bett, who has liaised patiently and diplomatically between the Architect, Builders the PCC & ourselves, Felicity & Richard Wilson for their wise counsel, for allowing their beautiful garden to be used for the concert and for helping with delivering the brochures. Lastly but by no means least is David Leakey, without whom this Appeal wouldn't have taken off. He has been a constant source of advice & has personally delivered 800 brochures around the locality. Thank you all.

Bill Price, Chair

Fabric Committee

There have been no Fabric Committee meetings since February 2020 because of Covid, but care for the church continues.

1. In November slates had to be fixed and the gutters cleared.
2. The sump pump is a great improvement and the outflow pipe has been realigned thus looking neat and tidy.
3. The drainage channel around the church has been kept clean and the weeds treated with round up.
4. A decision on a new lock/safe for the ambry cupboard will be needed, if it is considered necessary to be secure.

Ryan George, Chair

Friends of St Michael's

The Friends' year started well with fund-raising events; a Quiz Night and Ploughman's Supper and a Table Top Sale, both being well supported and much-enjoyed by the local community. A stall was also held at the One World Fair.

From March 2020 Covid-19 restrictions curtailed any more events being held.

In September 2020 our Treasurer submitted the Accounts to the Committee for acceptance. The Churchwarden (and thereby an ex-officio member of the Committee,) pointed out that our long-standing examiner could not be classed as independent as he was married to a member of the committee. Under Charity Commission Guidelines, it is not permitted for a person with a personal close relationship with a Trustee of a charity to act as an independent examiner of the charity's accounts.

Despite protracted email correspondence concerning the steps that needed to be taken to rectify matters in a way that complied with the Constitution, no practical solution could be agreed. All but one of the elected committee members then tendered their resignations.

In conclusion, I would like to thank our Examiner for his work and put on record the cheerful enthusiasm, incredibly hard work, innovative ideas and community spirit that this committee showed, benefiting both St Michael's Church and the community of Mere.

Ann Dethick, ex Chair

Grove Building

I am the chair of the Grove Building Committee and have been helping out for almost 4 years initially supporting Lindy when she was churchwarden overseeing the other committee members Derek, Judy, Rev Carol, Lindy also Clare the cleaner. I'm a volunteer. We closed the Building in March 2020 due to Government advice but I continued to go in regularly to check things over. I am severely sight impaired but I switched the thermostat down extremely low but the timer was still on, this as well as the meter not being read properly in 2019 pushed up gas costs. Once we could start to open up a bit again we prepared a risk assessment which was necessary also I oversaw installing hand sanitiser units. In June the PCC agreed for the windows in the Grove Building to be repainted as they had got into a very poor state, this was arranged.

The job of chair has been more like being a caretaker who lives nearby as I deal with day to day queries, see people into the hall and tidy up afterwards. My thanks go to Derek who was very efficient at taking the bookings and constructing and following through the accounts. Unfortunately I didn't receive the booking confirmation forms of people's requirements. In September the Vicar and Churchwarden decided to disband the Committee for the time being because each of the tiny number of bookings needed me to do a risk assessment and I hadn't previously been receiving the booking sheets.

Once the Church reopened in July and could no longer be used to store Foodbank items we permitted Anne Rich of the Tiddlers and Toddlers Foodbank (who worked closely with the church) to use the office to store much-needed food boxes and some frozen stuffs. We continued to make a few bookings but overall takings were down.

Graham Ward, Chair