

Christ Church Downend

Learning to Live the Life



Annual Report 2019-20

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The report and accounts for the annual church meeting for the Year 2019-20 are being finalised and checked and will be available shortly.

Christ Church is the Anglican (Church of England) Parish Church of Downend, serving a population of over 30,000 people including those living in the communities of Staple Hill, Oldbury Court, Downend, Blackhorse, Bromley Heath and part of Emersons Green. It is part of the Diocese of Bristol.

Our vision is to become a vibrant community that is 'Learning to Live the Life'.

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Many thanks to Helen Buick and Chris Dobson for providing the images.

Introduction

I am writing this introduction at the start of April; the contents of this review of 2019 at Christ Church was written at the start of March.



We are living in a different world, and as the now familiar saying goes, we are learning to do church differently!

Therefore, not only can we give thanks for the way the Lord has led us and blessed us through the past year but also how He is enabling us to adapt to the new reality we are experiencing as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

It is indeed a testimony to the love, resourcefulness and commitment of our leadership teams that the life of Christ Church is continuing to be taken forward. No doubt we shall

look back on 2020 and see new kinds of fruit that the Spirit has been growing, the kind that is more often nurtured in times of testing. It may be that God will grow in us a deeper reliance on his strength, a greater compassion for others whose suffering is beyond our capacity to imagine and a fresh admiration for those who serve sacrificially in our society. We may discover a renewed openness to try new things, especially technologies! We might know a fresh determination to make the most of every moment, and build into our lives more healthy rhythms of rest, work and play.

We began this year by asking the Lord to 'teach us to pray'. We certainly are in that school of prayer now, maybe learning to pray as never before. Is God shaping us into becoming a church on its knees for our nation and for the world?

2019 had many highlights, some of which have been shared in this Annual Report. Let us hold on to and celebrate those as we look back with thanksgiving. Most of all, may we give thanks and pray for one another as we continue learning to live out the life that Christ has given us for the sake of the world for which he gave himself up, so that all might share the living hope that the resurrection proclaims.

'Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, and into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade.' 1 Peter 1; 3,4

Jo and Shahne



About Christ Church Downend

Christ Church Downend, Parish Office, 57 North Street, Downend, Bristol. BS16 5SG
0117 908 9867 | office@christchurchdownend.com | www.christchurchdownend.com

Clergy: Rev Jonathan Vickery (Vicar), Rev Paul Peterson (Associate Minister and Chair of PCC), Rev Aidan Watson (Curate) and Rev Chris Dobson (Assistant Minister)

Churchwardens: Bryan Ashton and Maggie Nichols

PCC Elected Members from April 2019: Bryan Ashton, Julian Cox, Sally Green, Richard Hawkes, Eloise Phillips, Laura Powell, Deb Turpin and Richard Ward

Committee Structure: The PCC has delegated responsibilities as follows: The Giving 4 Life team oversee the church's finances and the Churchwardens take responsibility for general building issues. Separate committees oversee the fabric and function of the Parish Halls.

In addition the Ministry Heads team works with the Incumbent in setting and reviewing mission priorities and their effectiveness.

Elected posts

PCC Secretary: Caroline Plummer

Deanery Synod: Roger Cholmondeley and Richard Ward

Honorary Treasurer: Jamie Paddon

Health and Safety Officer: John Hudson and Churchwardens

Electoral Roll Officer: Elissa Wiltshire

Deputy Churchwardens (Church Centre Quakers Road): Sally Green and Mary Massey

Other office holders

Parish Safeguarding Officer: Laura Powell

Safeguarding Administrator: Elissa Wiltshire

Community Chaplain: Kathy Prosser

CAP Centre Manager: Leyla Fellows

CAP Debt Coaches: Rosie Brydon and Philip James

Parish Administrators: Elissa Wiltshire and Maggie Nichols

Administration Assistant: Miranda Mingay

Book keeper: Sally Coates

Verger: Andy McNeill

Christ Church Building Manager: Maggie Nichols

Ministry Heads (as at April 2020)

Children: Helen Buick

Creative Media: Jenny Rawling

Discipleship for all ages: Anita Dobson

Mission/Outreach: Paul Peterson

Wholeness and Pastoral Care: Care co-ordinators' team

Worship/Leadership Development: Jo Vickery

Youth: Diane Paddon

Report from the PCC

The Parochial Church Council (PCC) held six meetings during 2019/20 plus an away day in November to look at maximising income from our buildings and to explore the House of Bishops' Pastoral Principles.

At the start of each meeting, PCC members spent time in prayer, reflection and discussion.

Following this a number of proposals were approved, including:

- Various items relating to the re-ordering project and associated finances
- To continue to set the Parish Share at £90,000 for 2020 to enable us to prioritise the repayment of Building 4 Life loans
- The setting of a break even general fund Budget for 2020
- Anita Dobson to take three months sabbatical from mid-May to mid-August 2020. This has now been cancelled due to the COVID-19 situation.

The Mission Partners for 2020-22 were agreed as follows:

- Mission Direct
- Christians Against Poverty
- Haven Home India
- Open Doors
- Ben and Katy Ray (CMS)
- Transform Europe Network (TEN) and the ministry of Misa Hiorescu

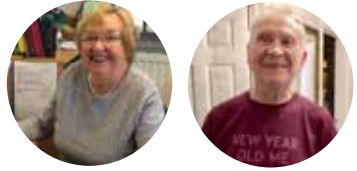
- The reallocation of some of the bookkeeper's hours. Sally Coates reduced her monthly working hours with Christ Church from 55 to 39. Elissa Wiltshire has taken up these 16 hours on a three month trial from 1st January
- The health and safety policy was reviewed
- The safeguarding policy was reviewed
- We have a total of 121 church members who hold a DBS
- And 20 DBS applications have been processed since April 2019.

The PCC also received regular reports from Ministry Heads and began the process of working towards an eco church award.

Caroline Plummer | PCC Secretary



Churchwardens



Maggie and Bryan were privileged to be elected as your Churchwardens and were able to attend the Archdeacons' Visitation at Holy Trinity Church, Kingswood, where we were officially admitted to the role by Christopher Bryan, the Archdeacon of Malmesbury. We have attended various trainings and meetings where we learnt much about Churchwarden duties, legal responsibilities and safeguarding, a steep learning curve indeed.

So, what are churchwardens and what do they do?

The office of Churchwarden is one of the most ancient in this country. As both a Bishop's officer and a respected and influential member of the local congregation, the Churchwarden shares with the Bishop, Archdeacon and Incumbent, in the care of the benefice or parish. Here are a few of the Churchwarden duties.

Buildings and maintenance

We have to inspect the fabric of the church every year and make a report about the state of the building to the PCC and to the annual parochial church meeting, ensure the PCC commissions a Quinquennial (five yearly) Inspection Report of the church and act upon its recommendations. The Churchwardens need to make sure that the church obtains a faculty whenever necessary and keep the church Inventory and Log Book up to date.

Health and safety

This has been a high priority for us and we thank John Hudson, our health and safety officer, for his valuable advice and help in our endeavour to make Christ Church and its other buildings safe. Our aim is to make sure that Christ Church as a whole is welcoming, friendly, comfortable and a safe place to worship.

Contents of the church

The Churchwardens and incumbent are custodians of the contents of the church i.e. the furniture, plate and books. It is the duty of the PCC to preserve and to insure them. Here is more information about the [Churchwardens' duties](#). Happy reading!

In July we hosted the Churchwardens' forum at Christ Church, a time for networking and learning together, with a focus on church buildings. Maggie gave a presentation on the re-ordering of our church which was well received.

We are indebted to our deputy and assistant Churchwardens for their hard work and dedication especially with the various worship setups which include thousands of chair movements over a year. Our thanks also to Colin Cooper and Ray Hackney who keep the service rotas up to date and ensure there are always people on duty. Special thanks must also go to Mary Massey and Sally Green who continue their hard work at the Church Centre in Quakers Road. Christ Church always offers a wonderful welcome to everyone thanks to our dedicated team of friendly welcomers and refreshment team.

We are blessed indeed to work with so many selfless and dedicated people at Christ Church, the parish hall and office as well as the Church Centre.

Thank you all.

Our beautiful refurbished Church building has now been signed off by the project manager, which means all the snags have been completed. The only outstanding items are the boilers and the overdoor heater. We employed TSA, a design company, for the mechanical and electrical elements of the refurbishment and this is where the problems lie. The boilers will not produce heat at the right temperature to ensure the overdoor heater works. We are now looking at replacing the overdoor heater with an electric model which means it will be independent of the heating system, which is what we had expected to happen from the beginning. Hopefully this will happen in the not too distant future.

What a pleasure it is to serve God in this way!

Maggie Nichols and **Bryan Ashton** | Churchwardens



Church structure

Vicar, PCC and

Children's ministry

Helen Buick

- Crèche
- Sparklers
- Connect
- Connect+
- Primary Schools
- Messy Church
- Uniforms
- Events

Creative media

Jenny Rawling

- Comms team
- Social media
- Website

Discipleship for all ages

Anita Dobson

- Newcomers
- Life Groups
- Discipleship triplets/triads
- Mentoring
 - Jigsaw
 - MU
- Church Fellowship
- Women's Ministry

Leadership development and Worship

Jo Vickery

- Lay ministers
 - Services
- Open Church
- Welcome team
 - Creativity in worship
- Projection
 - Sound
- Church school ethos

Churchwardens

Mission and Outreach

Paul Peterson

- Mission partners
 - CAP
 - Chaplaincy (including home communions, care homes/hospital visiting)
 - Alpha
- Nurture groups
- Occasional offices
- Baptism preparation
 - Care4Creation

Resources

Various

- Parish office (admin, personnel, conferences, buildings' management, committees, cleaning and finance)
- Financial planning
- Giving4Life

Wholeness

Care co-ordinators team

- Pastoral care and equipping
 - Bereavement
- Prayer ministry

Youth

Diane Paddon

- Faith
- Ignite
- Elev8
- Youth drop in
 - Detached work
- Secondary Schools

Rooted in prayer

Ministry priorities 2019-20

Worship

It really has been a year of significant growth in the worshipping life of Christ Church. The light, bright and contemporary feel of the 10.30, as well as the top quality children and youth ministries, have been a key factors in appealing to many younger families coming to worship. We even caught the attention of the BBC who have included our worship on various episodes of Songs of Praise. The strong sense of community and openness is without doubt one of the reasons why the service of Holy Communion on a Thursday morning is also continuing to grow.

A huge amount of preparation goes into our five weekly acts of worship and we are deeply grateful to the many who are part of making it all happen. To effectively plan and co-ordinate the content of the services we have created two new teams with very clear purposes:



Worship planning and review

Purpose: To prayerfully **discern** and **plan** the overall direction of travel for our worship so that it is in line with our vision to be a church that is learning to live the life (**Vision and Strategy**)

Leaders and Preachers

Purpose: To plan, review and develop the **way (how)** we deliver worship, growing in our gifts through feedback and training (**Implementation**)

The impact of these teams is being felt in the way that we have taken forward key themes over the year, none more important than when we asked the question: What does it mean to be Christ Church Downend? The series aimed to explore what our church was called to be at THIS time in THIS place, in the light of our vision of learning to live the life as Jesus' disciples - how can we more fully become the community Jesus wants us to be? Therefore, we asked, What does it look like to be a church that is passionate about such things as prayer, learning, social justice, being truly family, those feeling lost, living simply, reflecting God's grace and building one another up?

The series helped us to seek the Lord's guidance as to our direction of travel, and look ahead to the new decade with renewed faith, clarity and commitment. A third team is in the process of being formed - Christ Church Creatives, whose purpose will be to release

the creative potential of the church and deepen Christian Spirituality through the arts. 2020 has begun with us asking the Lord to teach us to pray. There is plenty of evidence to make us believe our God is doing just that!

Jo Vickery | Vicar

Care co-ordinators team



Purpose: To co-ordinate the response to pastoral needs within the church making use of existing structures and to extend these structures as necessary.

The team will affirm, encourage and build the culture of pastoral equipping and mutual care in every area of the church.

There are many people in the local community who, due to frailty or illness, are no longer able to come to church and loneliness is a great problem. Others may unexpectedly find themselves in difficult circumstances and would value a telephone call or a visit from a friend. As members of Christ Church it is essential that we should show God's love in practical ways. The care co-ordinators team works with other groups within Christ Church and continues to offer both practical support and loving care to members of our church community and others. The team consists of Francis Kirby, Liz Misselbrook, and Barbara Tooby. Jo chairs our meetings and is very supportive and keen that no-one, both members of the congregation and those from the wider community, feels neglected or unloved. His experience and help is greatly valued.

Frances Kirby co-ordinates any requests that are made for help and will assess ways we are able to offer support. This could be by visiting people in their homes, meeting someone for a coffee, finding someone who is willing to offer a lift to church or by arranging for a member of the home communion team to take communion to them.

Thanks are due to Deb Turpin who, as a member of the team, worked hard to set up a framework for DBS checking and training for the team and the pastoral care team. Deb left during the year due to other commitments.

The team has met Laura Powell, the Parish Safeguarding Officer twice during the year and has appreciated her advice to ensure that personal safety measures are carried out when visiting people in their own homes.

The team is very aware of existing groups within Christ Church such as the prayer link, home communion team, Mothers' Union, bereavement group, pastoral care team and home groups who look out for others. We are keen to work with all those who provide support to so many. We are grateful also to all those who keep us informed of anyone who may be needing a visit or some help.

Barbara Tooby | Care Co-ordinators Team

Children's ministry



One to one chats, standing barefoot on Lego, leading teams of talented volunteers. The exciting life of a Children's Leader:

Just for a brief few moments, put yourself into the shoes of one of our younger parents: It's Sunday morning, your children have been up since 6am, there's been a baby to feed, nappies to change, you stood barefoot on some Lego, ouch. One child is crying because they can't find their favourite truck. You struggle to dress a reluctant child and wipe toast crumbs from their face. A Sunday lie-in is a distant memory. Then it's time for shoes, coats, hats, grabbing a change bag, a drink and a snack before heading out the door to get along to Church. For many families, actually getting to church on a Sunday is a big effort. I know many of you have been there in the past even if this is not your reality now. So it is with great joy that I want to celebrate all the parents who make many sacrifices to get their family in through the doors of Church and to join in



with the four children's Sunday morning groups. Spaces have been reserved downstairs for the buggies, new mini flags have been made so we have enough for all the children to participate in the singing and we regularly see over 40 children at our 10.30am service.

The book "Sticky Faith" talks about how parents along with the whole church have a role to play in enabling our children and young people to have a faith that sticks as they grow into young adults. This is what we see at Christ Church and it is thrilling to see families coming back week after week, because they are loved by our whole church family. So thank you if you were the adult who shared a smile with a new mum, or if you moved seats to allow a family to sit together. These gestures really, really matter.



Sundays are a big part of Children's Ministry but midweek, there's a lot going on too. Tuesdays we have the Christ Church Infants lunchtime Bible Club with 20-30 children. Tuesday Move It Club is our after school outreach with 7-10 year olds. Once a month Christ Church Junior children come to William Court for the Friendship Group with older local residents. Friday Jigsaw Toddlers is thriving, and once a month there's Messy Church. In all these groups, building of relationships is key and showing the love of Jesus in the words and actions we make makes all the difference.

But alongside all the scheduled events, one to one chats is the biggest change I've made this year. Making time to share over a cuppa and to have more than a brief hello is such a rewarding thing. These precious times are where the real sense of family comes together, deeper friendships develop, children share with me their favourite toys or funny stories from school. But also it's a privilege to share worries and to be able to pray very specifically for each of our children's needs. So, parents, if you fancy a cuppa, tell me when you are free and we'll make a date. It's my favourite thing to do.

Helen Buick | Head of children's ministry

Youth ministry

Purpose – showing God's love to young people and providing young people with opportunities to encounter and respond to God.



I begin with huge thanks to our very special Youth Team, all volunteers, showing God's love to young people across the eleven groups we offer each week.

Thanks to Angela and Kath for lovingly providing beautiful creative and interactive prayer spaces in the Youth Hub – a very special space where young people encounter and respond to God.

Thank you, to everyone who shared testimony on Story Sundays, which remains the favourite Sunday each month. Maddie (16) said, "They are my favourite Sundays and I find them so inspirational to gain an insight into how Christ is working in the lives of other people in the church."

It was great to plant trees one Serving Sunday. Wonderful to get the whole Church involved in our first Summer Super Serving Sunday blessing Christ Church Infant School by painting their boundary fence. And of course, great to bless the community with a cream tea, a family fun afternoon, litter-picking, painting of the parish hall and Christ Church Junior School projects with The Noise. Wonderful to read Downend Voice reporting that we are showing God's love to the community.

Soul Survivor youth camp was a highlight. Several testimonies were shared in the powerful and inspiring youth service that followed.

The church was also encouraged and inspired by the stories our young people shared following the Christmas youth mission trip to Haven Home Orphanage India.



The feedback from the flourish identity/self-esteem courses at Downend Secondary School has been phenomenal and very moving. One girl wrote, 'Amazing! The best thing I have ever done in my life.' One girl said mid-course, "I can look in a mirror now without feeling bad about myself." There is a waiting list! The courage course for boys is currently being developed.



At Ignite and Ignite+ over 100 young people have fun, receive a strong Christian message and are led in prayer by leaders like Ellis (21) who came to faith in 2019. What a privilege to show the young people Liverpool striker Roberto Firmino's baptism. Who knows what impact Ignite is having?!

We are constantly blown away by the growth in our Elev8 and Elev8+ home groups. The mother of one girl, who had never been to church before, said, "It's so nice to see her so enthusiastic about something!" after her first visit. Another mum, from another un-churched family, was really excited about Youth Alpha and asked if there was an adult version. I love the story that when about 20 of us went to McDonalds for an end of term trip, we were mistaken by staff as family! Great that we present as family!

Finally, funding from Co-op, Downend Round Table and amazing generous hearted church members has meant that the youth ministry will not need to go to the church for funding in 2020.

Thank you for all your love, prayers and support for Christ Church youth ministry.

God bless you.

Diane Paddon | Head of youth ministry

Christ Church Schools

Over the past year the excellent relationship between Christ Church and our two Church schools has been demonstrated in various ways:



In each school the headteacher and deputy headteacher promote and prioritise the importance of that relationship and of Christian values being worked out in the day to day life of the school.

The Infant School celebrated the Church School Partnership award in the autumn term, and the Junior School is being assessed this term. Such an award gives recognition of the strong links, investment and mutual support. In addition, Christ Church Juniors was once again appraised as 'good' in the recent Ofsted inspection.

Church staff and foundation governors lead Collective Worship, there are regular visits of the children to the church, weekly Bible Clubs in the schools, and wider engagement with the community through for example the William Court visits organised by Helen Buick.

All of these things help the children to engage with a living Christian faith, and supports them in developing their own sense of God and his purposes.

We would value your prayers for the ongoing work of the Ethos committees in maintaining this relationship and monitoring the quality of Religious Education, Collective Worship, and Spirituality in the curriculum.

Belinda Stowe and **Paul Peterson** | On behalf of the Foundation Governor teams

Discipleship for all ages

Purpose of Discipleship for All Ages Ministry:

To facilitate, resource, encourage, signpost and celebrate the discipling of the congregation and any in the wider community who want to learn and grow in their faith.



This is done through:

- Life Groups – home groups, specialist groups and courses, prayer triads and triplets
- One to one meetings for prayer/ encouragement/ ideas/ advice
- Supporting, publicising and/ or facilitating activities which foster discipleship for individuals and families: Forest Family Day; Messy Church; Jigsaw; newcomers' welcome and settling in; prayer activities and opportunities; Quiet Days; seasonal events and services
- Contributing to the planning and implementation of sermon and service series
- Fostering a whole life Monday to Sunday approach to discipleship



This is seen in:

A new family comes to church through the compassionate and friendly evangelism of another family. They are welcomed, attend the newcomers tea, get to know different members of the congregation; learn about prayer and faith; attend a small group; connect with activities. Faith is growing, thanks to the many people in the church family who play their parts.

Someone who has not really prayed before outside of church services comes to the prayer labyrinth laid out on the church floor and discovers peace. People try a quiet day for the first time ever and find that spending time alone with God is a joy not a trial.

In a Life group someone breaks down and tells the others of a personal struggle at the moment. The group listen without judgement; pray; encourage; keep on supporting them.

Someone is asked what they would like us to pray for them on their frontlines. They suddenly realise that God wants to partner with them in their daily life. That their workplace matters to God and that he wants to work there through them.

Families who have never been to a church service before come to Messy Church. They join in the worship time and eat together as a family for the only time that month. They keep coming back and find acceptance and care. The leaders pray that they will find Jesus in the mess.

Discipleship is not something you can easily point to: it's more than an event, or a group, or an activity. It is the reaching of a hungry soul towards God himself, only to discover that he is right there beside us. It's a journey that I am humbled to take part in alongside so many who play their unique roles in helping to accompany others on the road.

Anita Dobson | Discipleship for All Ages



Mission and outreach



The A-Z of Mission and Outreach

- **A**lpha providing an accessible space for people to explore and find faith in Jesus once again this year. We had 12 group members, seven of whom continue to meet regularly to go deeper in faith.
- **B**en and Katy Ray continuing to empower and equip people with disabilities through Neema Craft. They had their third child in 2019.
- **C**AP bringing hope to people struggling with debt and making a real difference through the new CAP Café initiative, the foodbank and the work of befrienders.
- **D**ihlabeng Christian School where Sarah Dunmall is volunteering and Andy Woodage has taken on the role of Principal in 2019.
- **E**nvironmental issues – from plastic bag recycling to this term’s teaching series – loving the world God created.
- **F**rontlines – our primary place of mission. Serving Christ faithfully wherever he’s called us to be.
- **G**enerosity of church members enabling us to give over £16 000 to external mission projects in 2019.
- **H**aven Home India - another youth team visit in 2019, and an inspirational example of Christian service.
- **I**ntentional investment in projects we believe in and which are genuinely making a difference.
- **J**oint church initiatives – notably C in the Park blessing the local community and proclaiming the good news.
- **K**athy Prosser leading our chaplaincy ministry in local care homes and through home communions.
- **L**eyla our CAP Centre Manager, who with Rosie and Philip our new debt coaches are impacting many lives.
- **M**ission Direct Kumi with Richard and Jan Bacon leading teams and serving the community.
- **N**oise – sharing God’s love in word and action. Our young people leading the way in practical service.
- **O**pen Doors – supporting persecuted believers across the world. The prayer group meets monthly.
- **P**rayer – at the heart of all of our mission initiatives as we seek to join in with what God is doing.
- **Q**uiet but faithful witness to friends, neighbours and colleagues.
- **R**egular updates in our services and through social media on the work of our mission partners.
- **S**tories of individuals serving God on their frontlines.

- **T**ransformation in individuals' lives and communities through the work of our mission partners and through local initiatives.
- **U**rsoaia, Moldova where our mission partner Misa Hiorescu has seen growth in numbers and impact in the church plant this year.
- **V**iv our Bishop leading Bristol Diocese to be the first to declare a Climate Emergency and call all parishes to take action.
- **W**eddings, Baptisms and Funerals – serving the wider community and sharing God's love.
- **X**mas – bringing Christ to the wider community through our Christmas services and activities.
- **Y**oung people and older ones serving on mission teams in India, Moldova, Uganda and beyond.
- **Z**ephaniah and his colleagues from the Uganda Choir, with us in October and January to mark the 50th Anniversary of the Diocesan Uganda link.

All of this enables us to communicate the love of Jesus in word and action, and to encourage every member of the Christ Church family to play their part.

More information on [Christ Church's Mission Partners for 2020-22](#).

Paul Peterson | Head of mission and outreach ministry

Chaplaincy in the community

Recently, when I was visiting a group within a local sheltered complex, someone asked 'Why does a church need a Chaplain?' Good question. Well, it is not so much a need as a role designated to a specific mission outreach to the local care homes and sheltered complexes in our parish.



I believe it is God's initiative that has brought creation into being and life; God's intention to redeem, renew, restore; God reaching out to his people in compassion, forgiveness, salvation and life in all fullness. God is, as such, a missionary; becoming human among us, to save us from a destiny without Him, to love us and bring us into restored relationship with Him through Jesus Christ; all are included.

It is from this basis that I and the communion team, go into the community to bring the good news of Jesus, to offer pastoral and spiritual care, to encourage new faith, to grow discipleship, to encourage growth of Christian community and witness in the context of local care homes and sheltered accommodation complexes; as such to take our part in God's mission of renewal of these public institutions. As a team we visit Britannia Court, Badminton Gardens, Woodlands Court, Cleeve Lodge and, Edgcombe Lodge. We also sustain a communion visiting ministry to people who live in their own homes but who are no longer able to attend church. My thanks to Barbara Tooby, Pauline Pearce, Norman Low, May Ann Taylor, Val Henderson, Liz Misselbrook, Sally Grier, Ruth McNeill

and, Ian Freestone for their consistent, loving ministry alongside me. In practice, this has taken the form of regular visits to individuals and care homes, meeting and 'being with' residents, staff and their families; leading services, with communion at their heart; the ministry of prayer with anointing; and most recently the commencement of a life group in one of the sheltered complexes we visit, where one resident commented:

"Thank you, for bringing us the good news."

Our mission outreach is becoming known in the wider community which is strengthening our relationships in the care homes but also bringing in new requests; most recently a local care home asked specifically for our team to visit and offer the sacrament of communion administered within a creative service pattern, one which makes connections with those who have confusion; we have begun this outreach and are encouraged by the impact of Jesus' presence among us as we serve in this smaller community.

Kathy Prosser | Community Chaplain

Christians Against Poverty (CAP)

CAP - always hope

We are on a mission to release families from grinding poverty through award winning debt counselling. By reaching out to those in need on our doorstep, we're bringing hope to local families every year.



Some of the highlights from our CAP Centre in 2019 include:

Defying The Odds

In April we had the pleasure of welcoming CAP evangelist Rod Williams who performed his new show, "Defying the Odds". We were inspired and amazed as Rod, a professional magician, performed some of his mind-boggling tricks and recounted how he turned from his life of drugs and crime to follow Jesus. Out of the 140 people who attended, we received 14 responses to Rod's message of hope and salvation.

New Debt Coaches

We're so thankful that our new Debt Coaches, Rosie Brydon & Philip James are now fully trained and seeing their own clients. Having Rosie & Philip on board not only means that we'll be doubling our caseload (to 40 families at any one time), but it's enabled us to get an exciting new project off the ground – read on to discover more!



CAP Cafe

Whilst our primary focus remains to help clients with their finances, we're also passionate about creating a sense of community for those we serve. Many of our clients lead isolated lives without the supportive network of friends and family. CAP Cafe enables us to bless our clients with a delicious home-cooked meal (thanks to Rosie's culinary skills!) and also welcome them into our church community. It's an opportunity to relax together, make friends and meet others who are also walking this journey out of debt. Other important aspects of CAP Cafe include: the self-service Food Bank (for which we're very grateful to Bryan Ashton) and the entertaining ice-breaker activities (dreamed up by Philip) at the start of each Cafe, bringing a sense of fun and camaraderie to this joyful fortnightly event.

Looking to 2020

One of the most rewarding aspects of my role is witnessing our clients become increasingly integrated into the Christ Church family. Over the past year we've seen clients join the Alpha Course, become a volunteer leader in Jigsaw playgroup and join the CAP Cafe team. As we look to 2020, we hope to build on this sense of community and stay focused on creating a CAP family characterised by genuine welcome, love and care for those we serve.

Leyla Fellows | CAP centre manager

Creative media

Christ Church has kept the creative media team busy this year with a full calendar of events to promote, making full use of the newly refurbished building. The various teams within church are continually thinking of new ways to draw people in so they can experience both God's love and Church as family, and it is our job to promote those events through the website, posters, the projected adverts before the services and our social media (Facebook and Instagram)



Aidan has brought with him a new way to reach a wider audience with the Christ Church podcast now available on all the major platforms to, potentially, a worldwide audience. Closer to home, we are particularly indebted to Downend Voice who publish two or three articles every month about the various activities at Christ Church – we want to continue to be known as a church that is active in our local community.

Ian Brown hosted another successful Downend Soup event in the autumn of 2019 and is giving his dedicated chefs, bakers and supporters a break this spring to revive the event

in the autumn of 2020. He has recently been 'spotted' by the Soil Association for his work running a successful citizen engagement project.

If there are things that are happening within Christ Church that we are not sharing, please get in touch – we welcome submissions for Downend Voice every month, or messages to comms@christchurchdownend.com about any events you would like us to promote.

Jenny Rawling | Comms team leader

Diocesan Synod report

The Diocesan Synod, which is the primary, elected representative body drawn from across the Diocese of Bristol, met three times in 2019: in March, June and November. As well as hearing about and discussing a wide range of areas of the Church's work, it helps formulate and approve policy and the diocesan budget and debates important local and national issues affecting the Church.



Environment and climate justice

The Diocese's response to care for creation (the fifth mark of Anglican Mission) and climate change started and ended the synod's year. In March, Sarah Wiggins, Global Advocacy Leader with Tearfund, talked about what individuals and churches can do to care for creation and the Synod commissioned a new Environmental and Climate Justice Policy.

The policy, which forms a framework for activity ranging from worship to buildings to campaigns, was brought back for debate and approved unanimously at the November Synod. The November Synod also debated a motion from City Deanery to declare a Climate Emergency and commit the Diocese to net zero emissions by 2030. In passing the motion, Bristol Diocese became the first to make both commitments and subsequently influenced the General Synod to do the same. For further information please see [Bristol Diocese's Environment and Climate Justice](#).

Pastoral Principles for Living Well Together

Ed Shaw, Licensed Lay Minister at Emmanuel Bristol and General Synod member on Pastoral Advisory Group, presented and led a facilitated session on the Pastoral Principles, a resource which invites church communities to consider and discuss their life together as a diverse community. The resources focus on LGBTI+ issues but apply to wider issues of diversity that the churches find difficult to discuss. The Pastoral Principles were commended for use and the Synod will discuss Living in Love and Faith later in 2020. For more information see [the Pastoral Advisory Group](#).

Diocesan finances

The Synod's role approving the financial plans of the Diocesan Board of Finance was part of both the June and November meetings. In June Andrew Lucas, Chair

of the Diocesan Board of Finance, presented the 2018 Annual Report and Financial Statements and gave an update on the Financial Plan. In November, he presented the 2020 Budget for approval.

Over the last few years, the Diocesan Board of Finance has increased its investment in ministry and support as part of the Creating Connections vision and strategic plan that supports it. This has included a significant growth in ordinands and curates to lead the Church of the future. As a result, the Synod approved budgeted expenditure of £10.2m in 2020.

However, as Parish Share has not increased as planned, operating deficits have increased from £291,000 in 2018 to a budgeted deficit of £658,000. If the Diocese is to sustain ministry, Parish Share will need to increase in 2020.

Other reports and discussions included:

The Bristol-Uganda Link celebrated its 50th anniversary in 2019 and Synod heard from Rev Chris Dobson in March about the continuing ministry between the two places, with contributions from those who had experienced it.

Giving the Annual Safeguarding Report in June, Mal Munday, Interim Independent Chair spoke passionately to synod about the need to move to a culture within our churches where everyone understands how vital safe practices are in order to get to a place where abuse stops happening.

Meeting at the newly opened Deanery Church of England Academy in Swindon in November, Liz Townend, newly appointed Diocesan Director of Education invited discussion about engaging younger generations through schools. Synod then reflected on how the diocese as a whole can value and support its church schools further and how the church community can increase its impact in schools.

Roger Cholmondeley and **Richard Ward** | Deanery Synod representatives

A curate's eye view

The day the moving truck arrived to help us pack to move to Downend, Cathie and I were in hospital discovering that our son was not growing as fast as was hoped and that he would need to be induced a few days later. From hearing this calls went out and despite not knowing anyone in the area people from Christ Church descended the next day on our new house to unpack boxes, build flatpack furniture, stock up the food cupboard and do a few extra Ikea trips. The next few months were not always easy, but the welcome and love that Christ Church has shown us will never be forgotten and is for us the best demonstration of Church being family that we have ever known.



Since starting as Curate a little over a month later in July I have loved getting to know people in the church and just observing all that has gone on here. Working with Jo, Paul and the rest of the team has been everything I could have hoped for and I am encouraged weekly by the faith and passion of our church. Some of the things I have been involved with have been familiar, such as preaching, leading services, music and leading the best homegroup in the church (I am biased). Other parts of ministry have been new to me including funeral and wedding visits, starting a podcast, visiting care homes and speaking at places like the Mothers' Union (who I discovered are very different to the Women's Institute!!).

My reflection regarding CCD is that we are heading in a really good direction and I just pray for more Lord! Everywhere you look people are caring for and being family to one another - more Lord! People are seeking to share Jesus on their frontlines - more Lord! We desire to learn about and from God - more Lord! And ultimately we are learning to live lives of love to the last, the least, and the lost in our world - more please Lord!

Aidan Watson | Curate

Christ Church Fellowship

For more than 60 years Christ Church Fellowship has been a successful organisation within the church, catering for the needs of many of its more mature members. The Fellowship has provided a monthly meeting where talks on a wide variety of subjects, both secular and church based, have informed and entertained.



The membership of the Fellowship, not only comes from our own church, but also from other churches and has been an outreach to the wider community. Our activities also include, a day out, a harvest supper, and a Christmas dinner. The Fellowship has also arranged a very popular and often oversubscribed all-inclusive four day weekend away to a resort somewhere along the south coast, and the year 2020 marks its 30th anniversary. Whether at home or away, the organised events have always been a source of 'fellowship and fun' and enjoyed by all.

Unfortunately all these activities have to be organised, and the hardworking committee have got to a point where many wish to stand down, and despite a search, have found no one to take over these responsibilities, and concluded that the Fellowship had now served its purpose. At a committee meeting held in February 2020 it was unanimously decided that the Fellowship monthly meetings would continue until September 8th, to complete its published programme. On October 13th there would be a celebration dinner to mark the end of a very significant season within the life of Christ Church which will then, sadly, come to a close.

Dave Tooby | Fellowship Chairperson

Finance Report



The PCC entered the 2019 year with some trepidation as the temporary move into Christ Church Juniors in 2018, combined with the Building 4 Life fundraising effort, had seen our General Fund donations income fall by nearly £27,000 compared to 2017. The move back into the refurbished Christ Church building in Autumn 2018 also meant some increases to our costs. As a result, the PCC set a deficit budget for 2019 of £22,805, meaning the anticipated shortfall would need to be funded from our already heavily depleted reserves.

However, we need not have worried as our good Lord provided – yet again! In 2019 donations into our General Fund, the pot from which the Church’s running costs are paid, were £20,000 higher than in 2018, with a slightly reduced cost base. This resulted in a small General Fund surplus of £3,510 being achieved for the year.

Of course the General Fund is only one small part of the Church’s overall financial picture, with separate funds being maintained in respect of the Church Centre Quaker’s Road, Youth Hub and Christ Church buildings, and for different ministries such as Discipleship, Worship, Youth, Childrens’, Fellowship, Open Church and CAP. All these funds were able to retain healthy year-end balances.

The recent Building 4 Life project has cost the Church approximately £1.4m over the past few years, with around £900,000 being funded by generous giving by members of our congregation. To supplement this, the Church took out a £100,000 loan from the Diocese and a £250,000 long-term interest free loan kindly made available by a member of our congregation. Additionally, 11 members of the congregation provided us with smaller, short-term, interest free loans totalling £61,000 to help us with cash flow as the project neared completion.

The good news is that during 2019, and the early part of 2020, we were able repay £44,000 of the short-term loans, and two loans totalling £7,000 were eventually gifted to the project. One outstanding short-term loan of £10,000 was kindly deferred to June 2020, and a further interest free loan of £20,000 was made available to us to help us meet the final payment due to the contractors. The Giving 4 Life team have agreed a loan repayment strategy which would see all short-term loans fully repaid by June 2020, the Diocese loan fully repaid by 2024, and the long-term loan from a member of the congregation fully repaid by 2027. In terms of the latter, we would anticipate using legacies wherever possible to accelerate repayment, and a commercial bridging loan to clear the balance by no later than 2037 if needed. So far, we are on track with this strategy, which also includes actions to increase income from the hire of our Church buildings.

In January 2020, the PCC set a break-even General Fund budget for the 2020 year, although the COVID-19 pandemic is likely to result in lower plate donations and hall bookings than budgeted, with limited opportunities to save costs. An early decision

was taken by the PCC to furlough two members of staff, to take advantage of the Government's offer to cover 80% of their wages, with only the remaining 20% to come from Church funds. The Giving 4 Life group will continue to monitor the situation and seek to reduce costs whenever possible. In the light of these significant challenges, we would encourage all members of the church family to sign up to give regularly to the Lord's work through the Parish Giving Scheme. This helps us massively in our planning and claiming of gift aid, with the added benefit provided by the inflationary increase option. Please contact Dave Tooby tel: 0117 956 0146 or email: giving@christchurchdownend.com for further information about a simple way to set this up.

All-in-all, the 2019 year has been a very positive one for our Church finances which is testament to the generosity of our congregation and the hard work and dedication of the huge team of people involved in the collection and banking of income, raising money through grants, taking bookings and collecting money from hirers of our buildings, administering Gift Aid and legacies, maintaining accounts, setting budgets and financial strategy, and providing sound governance and scrutiny of our activities. Special thanks to our bookkeeper, Sally Coates, the office team, our Planned Giving Secretary, Dave Tooby, and the members of the Giving 4 Life team, Dave Green, Debra Turpin, Sally Bartram, Dave Tooby, Sally Coates and Rev Paul Peterson.

Jamie Paddon | Treasurer and Chair of Giving 4 Life

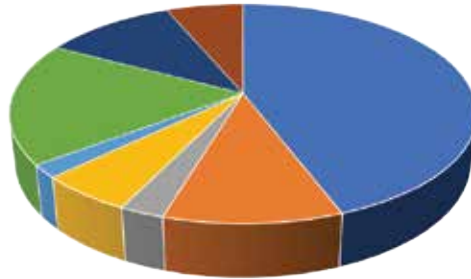
Christ Church Downend Income and Expenditure 2019

Income	£		Expenditure	£	
Planned giving donations	177,175	44%	Gathered Church	21,513	7%
Gift Aid received	41,845	10%	Children's and Youth Ministry	23,482	7%
Plate collections	10,423	3%	Discipleship and Pastoral Care	11,882	4%
Additional donations	22,417	6%	Local and Overseas Mission	47,857	15%
Legacies	7,500	2%	Parish Share	90,000	28%
Grants	72,291	18%	Support costs and salaries	126,615	39%
Lettings, weddings and funerals	43,602	11%			
Other	25,498	6%			
Total	400,751		Total	321,349	

Surplus of £79,402 carried forward in the respective designated, restricted and unrestricted funds.

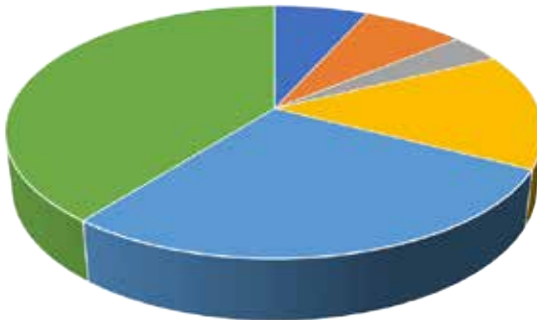
For a more detailed breakdown of these figures, see our Annual Accounts.

Sources of Income 2019



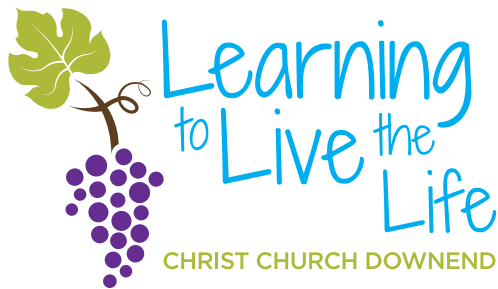
- Planned giving donations (£1771175)
- Gift Aid received (£418485)
- Plate collections (£104233)
- Additional donations (£224177)
- Legacies (£7500)
- Grants (£722291)
- Lettings, weddings & funerals (£436022)
- Other (£254988)

How we spent our income 2019



- Gathered Church (£215133)
- Children's & Youth Ministry (£234822)
- Discipleship & Pastoral Care (£118822)
- Local & Overseas Mission (£478577)
- Parish Share (£90000)
- Support costs & salaries (£1266153)

Notes



A version with larger print is available. Please contact the Parish Office.

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