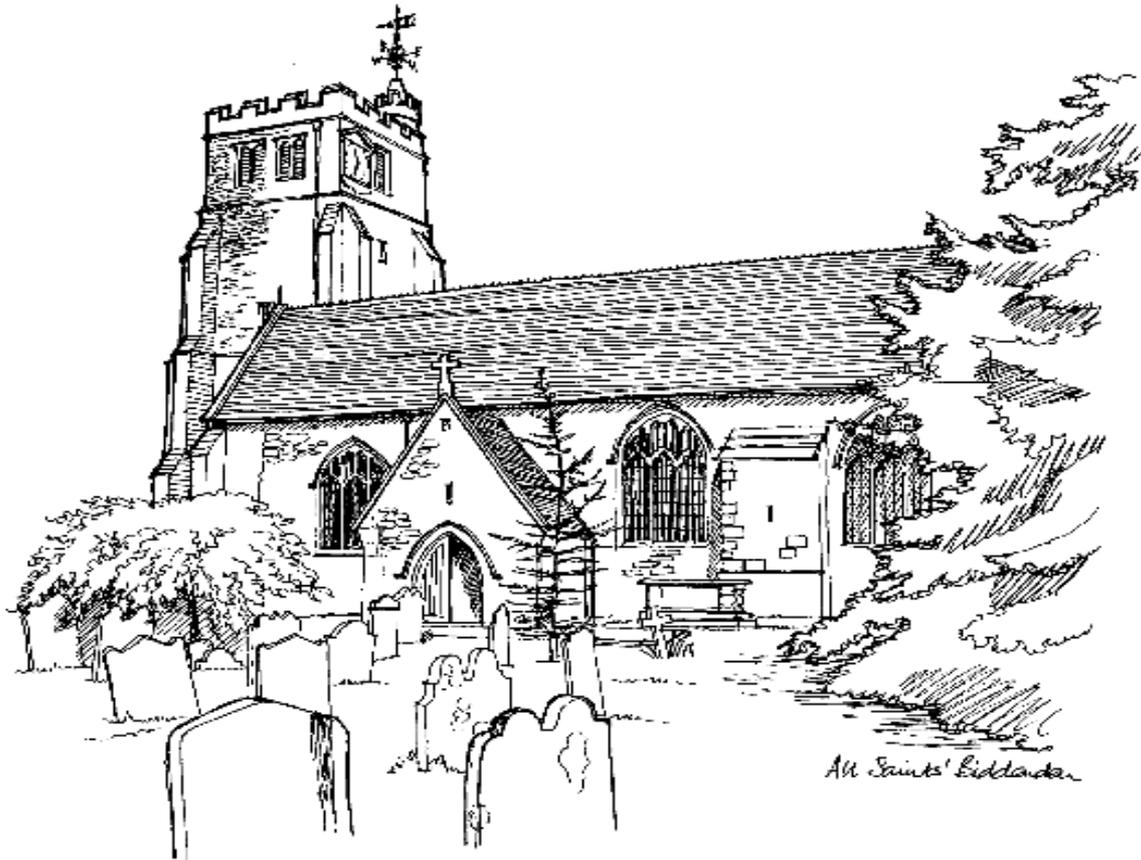


ALL SAINTS, BIDDENDEN



Annual Parochial Church Meeting and the Vestry Meeting 2019

ALL SAINTS CHURCH BIDDENDEN

ANNUAL CHURCH MEETINGS

Monday 19th October 2020 at All Saints Church and on Zoom
at 7:00pm for 7.30pm

Zoom ID 852 0470 6487, Pass code 976369

Opening prayers

Extraordinary meeting

1. Resolution to opt out of the 6 year restriction for church-wardens term as set in the Churchwardens Measure 2001

Vestry meeting

1. Appointment of Clerk
2. Apologies for Absence
3. Minutes of Vestry Meeting held on 25th March 2019
4. Election of Churchwardens.

Annual Parochial Church Meeting

1. Minutes of APCM 2019 held on 25th March 2019
2. Matters arising
3. Reports:
 1. Electoral Roll
 2. Churchwardens report
 3. PCC Members Report
 4. Other reports
 5. Financial Review & Statement
4. Reading of Bequests
5. Election of:
 - Electoral Roll Officer
 - PCC Members
 - Deanery Synod Representatives
 - Sides-persons
 - Independent Examiner
6. Presentation of the Terrier
7. Rector's remarks
8. Discussion & Close of Meeting

From the Churchwarden

We are certainly in a different place from where we were at last year's annual meeting, with 2020, I am sure, being a very unusual and memorable one.

2019 was a good year, with many events taking place, such as the flower festival, fete and big breakfast, and we are so grateful for the events committee in ensuring that these days run so well and help to bring much needed funds into our church.

We also had some notable evenings of fun run by the Friends of Biddenden Church, which included a Jazz concert. We thank Paul Webster and the other members of the committee for arranging these.

Our services have continued throughout the year, with service numbers remaining about the same, but with some services, such as the Christingle service, seeing a wonderful number of families attending.

There are so many people that ensure that the church remains a living church, from the sacristans, sides people, servers, readers, choir, organist, bakers, flower arrangers, magazine distributors, bell ringers and grass cutters – I thank them all for their hard work and dedication.

It continues to be a challenging year, not just because of coronavirus, but also the church building, finances and the interregnum. I would like to thank Alex for delaying his departure and staying on to see us through these last few months.

Lastly, I would like to say a big thank you to Peter, Abi and Emma.

Ann Courtness

Churchwarden of All Saint's Church, Biddenden.

October 2020

Annual report and financial statements

All Saints Biddenden Parochial Church Council 2019.

Administrative Information

Address: All Saints Church, Biddenden, High Street, Biddenden TN27 8AH. The parish is a joint benefice with St. Michael the Archangel Smarden. As of 1st February 2012, it became formally part of a Group Ministry with the parishes of Bethersden, High Halden and Woodchurch, within the Diocese of Canterbury, Church of England.

All Saints Parochial Church Council (PCC) has the responsibility of co-operating with the Incumbent, the Reverend Alexander Bienfait, in promoting in the ecclesiastical parish, the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical. The PCC is also responsible for the maintenance of All Saints Church, Biddenden.

Objectives and Activities

When planning our activities for the year, the incumbent and the PCC have considered the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit, and in particular, the specific guidance on charities for the advancement of religion.

The PCC objectives and activities are guided by our Church plan.

We want our Church first and foremost to be a community of Christian Action.

Our Vision

- We will grow a Church that is open to all
- We will develop and display confidence as Christians
- We will seek to serve the community

Our Mission

- To provide a warm welcome
- To support each other in our spiritual growth
- To be visible, capable and available as Christian helpers in our community
- To encourage the spiritual development of young people

PCC Membership:

PCC members who have served from 1st January 2019 to the date on which this report was approved are:

Incumbent:	Reverend Alex Bienfait.
Churchwarden:	Ann Courtness (appointed in 2014)
Representative to Deanery Synod:	Vacant - No appointment made in 2019
PCC Members:	Paul Webster (2 nd term, from April 2019)
	Peter Cutts (from December 2016)
	Joanna Winston (from May 2017)
	Julie Lupton (from May 2017)

During 2019, the PCC met on 7 occasions, and 2 times in conjunction with Smarden PCC. Attendance was 92%

PCC business - main topics covered:

Combined PCC

- Benefice, Group Ministry and Deanery matters
- Safeguarding
- Welcomers leaflet
- 5 Year Church Plan
- Use of Church Buildings in the Future
- Allocation of Parish Share between Smarden and Biddenden

Biddenden PCC

- Deanery matters
- Maintenance of church fabric
- Churchyard maintenance and improvement
- Health & Safety
- Mission Plan
- Worship patterns
- Pastoral care
- Child and Vulnerable Adult Protection Policy
- Parish Safeguarding Policy
- Finance, Budgets,
- Charitable giving
- Fund-raising and social events
- Stewardship
- Parish Magazine
- John Mayne School
- Friends of All Saints Biddenden

Achievement and Performance 2019

(Demonstration of public benefit)

Ministry is led by the **Rev'd Alexander Bienfait**, Priest in Charge. **All Saints Biddenden** has a **lay worship team** consisting of **Ann Courtness, Martin Giles and Julie Lupton**. We also enjoy the valued support of the **Rev'd Pearl Anderson**, a retired priest living in Headcorn and **Rev'd Keith Fazzani**, a retired priest living Appledore.

Administration

The Benefice office operates from a 20 sq.m cabin constructed in December 2014, located in the front garden of Biddenden Rectory. The cabin, which was financed jointly by the Diocese and the Benefice, provides a separate work base for the part-time Benefice Administrator Tanya Ling, Alex Bienfait, and a Benefice meeting venue.

We have implemented our GDPR policy: all computer records are password protected. All paper records are stored in locked offices.

Our Church Plan (Mission Plan)

The PCC's main priorities for 2019, arising out of the Church Plan, were:

- *To continue to address the financial situation*
- *Develop the use of the "In Need fund"*
- *Increase the Opening of the Church*
- *The availability of spaces in the graveyard*

Good progress is being made on most of the items. It is gratifying to see the improvement in our financial situation. The ongoing financial support of the Friends of All Saints Biddenden and a successful Stewardship campaign in 2018 both contributed significantly to this positive position.

Statistics for Biddenden Parish	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013
Baptisms	6	7	8	15	9	5	9
Weddings & Blessings	3	2	7	6	4	7	2
Funerals	12	17	19	11	5	10	16
Estimated Usual Sunday Attendance	34	33	37	45	44	44	44
Electoral roll	61	59	80	83	82	82	82

The service and rota planning team

A service and rota planning team formed of licensed ministers, representatives of the PCC and choir and the organist meets about four times year. Its principal task is to plan and review the worship rota.

Worship

We aim to offer a range of worship to suit different ages and preferences for worship. The scope of worship at All Saints includes Sunday morning Parish Eucharist using Common Worship (CW), 8am Communion from the Book of Common Prayer (BCP) Lay-led Morning Worship (third Sunday of the month) and for families and children a monthly Messy church (see below). BCP Evensong is offered on the third Sunday of the month.

The PCC were grateful to be able to replace the church Pew Bibles following a generous anonymous bequest.

Breakfast Church has been very popular in 2019 with a monthly service led by various lay team members and includes tea, coffee, bacon sandwiches, etc.

Active Church (launched in April 2012) is a monthly "Messy Church" style of service that takes place in Smarden. Sessions start with activities, all of which are designed to link in with the theme of the day. Everybody comes together at the end for a summary and retelling of the main theme/story. Numbers in 2019 held steady/increased two families from Biddenden regularly take part, and help lead.

Walk Church is a monthly outdoor service or gathering and might be described as a kind of rambler's church. Gatherings take place over a relatively wide geographic area, within the Diocese of Canterbury. It has a core congregation. Numbers who come range from 12-27, about a quarter at any one time are not involved in any other worship. This Fresh Expressions congregation is currently registered with All Saints Biddenden, but attracts people from a wide geographic area, including Smarden.

Children and Young People

The Church continues to maintain close links with John Mayne School; Alex and Julie Lupton were joined by Lindi Harman in taking the weekly 'Church' assemblies. The children come to church for special events and festivals, and it is always a pleasure to welcome them, the staff, and the parents who support these events. See the note regarding Active Church in the 'Worship' section above.

Music and choir

Organist duties at St Michael's were led by Bob Barnes up to May 2019 when Bob had to retire for health reasons after which Mark Wilson took over. The choir has helped lead worship in both churches, mainly focusing as a combined choir on Mattins and the monthly evensong services.

Choir practices are held weekly on Friday evenings either at Biddenden or Smarden. As well as hymn practice this time is used for the learning of new anthems to be sung throughout the year. Jane Whiteley has played at Smarden once a month and covered any weddings or funerals Mark can't play for. Anyone who is interested in joining us will be most welcome.

The PCC is very grateful to Mark Wilson for leading the music and choir groups.

Biddenden Bell ringers

The ringing band has increased in size, and on a Thursday practice night we have up to 16 ringers who regularly attend. For Sunday services we regularly have 6 to 8 bells. We have rung for a number of weddings this year and have mainly used ringers from Biddenden for them, plus two quarter peels and to see the new year in.

We have visited some other towers this year, which helps to broaden our own knowledge of bell ringing, as well as having a good social day out. The tower's aim is always to be welcoming to both new and experienced ringers and travelling bands from other towers, and we are always looking for new ringers, any age, to join us. We hope 2020-21 year will be as good, even with all the challenges that we are facing due to the Coronavirus pandemic.

The PCC is very grateful to Peter Courtness – Tower Captain – leading the Bell ringing team and preparing this report.

Sidespeople

Once again, we are most grateful to our teams of sidespeople, all those who assist at the services, added occasions & regularly at the 08:00am services. They do a splendid job of preparing the church in readiness for the congregation to arrive prior to their duties of welcoming, followed by presentation of the sacraments to the Officiant. After the service they put everything back in its place & ensure all is safely shut down. At the present time we are short of two sidespeople which places an added pressure on existing helpers. It would be excellent if anyone else felt able to join the team.

The PCC is very grateful to Joanna Winston who co-ordinates the Sidespeople team.

Learning

The home study group met as usual on the 2nd and 4th Wednesday of each month throughout 2019, with a break in August. We now have 13 regular members, and meet in various houses from 8pm to 9.30pm, finishing with coffee and chat. Most members come from Biddenden, but we also welcome people from Smarden.

During the year we undertook a series of studies on the book of Hebrews, which though interesting, was felt by most of the group to be somewhat heavy-going. We also viewed the film I, Daniel Blake, which challenged us on the question of how society treats the disadvantaged, and whether the welfare system is fit for purpose. It was a moving and well-acted film, which left a lasting impression on us all. There is a lighter side to bible study – we held two very enjoyable social events; a BBQ in July, and a Christmas party in December. Sessions are led by Martin Giles and Julie Lupton and occasionally by other members of the group. If you are interested in joining (or starting) a group, please contact Julie or Martin for information.

The PCC is very grateful to Martin Giles and Julie for their excellent and dedicated leadership of the study group and preparing this report.

Children and Vulnerable Adults' Protection - Safeguarding

This PCC takes seriously the responsibility to protect children and vulnerable adults. Diocesan guidelines on the protection of both are followed. The PCC adopts annually the Child and the Vulnerable Adult Protection Policy and ensures it is prominently displayed in the church along with other statutory notices of important contact numbers. These also appear on the church website alongside copies of the safeguarding statement and policies.

Training: there has been a lull in the training of people within the church as those who required training have completed it. However, there are revised guidelines for 2020 outlining the appropriate training for various roles within the church and these are to be drawn to everyone's attention. The Safeguarding Officer is responsible for ensuring adequate training has been carried out.

Disclosure and Barring Service checks: are carried out on everyone who is in a position of responsibility according to Diocesan guidelines. The diocese no longer updates the PDO as to when checks need to be renewed. This responsibility now lies with the PDO. All disclosures issued in 2014 were renewed by the end of 2020.

If you would like any more information relating to our policies, please contact the person/ people below. The Parish Disclosure Officer, Julie Lupton, also processes DBS checks for Smarden Parish.

The PCC is grateful to our Safeguarding PDO officer and Julie Lupton, for keeping up to date with training, and preparing this report.

Collaboration: Other Churches and the Community

The Benefice of Biddenden and Smarden is part of a Group ministry which also includes the parishes of Bethersden, High Halden and Woodchurch. When there is a 5th Sunday in the month, we hold a group service and encourage the congregations to worship together, visiting a different parish within the group each 5th Sunday. In 2019, as in previous years, a Marriage Preparation Morning was organised to which all couples getting married in any of the Group churches are invited.

There is a level of collaboration with Zion Baptist Church in Smarden this year, as we worked together on a number of events including Palm Sunday. Smarden and Biddenden churches are members of Churches Together in Tenterden and District, and contribute to the food collections taken to Ashford Foodbank.

All Saints Biddenden support and help fund the Apollos Trust, a charity founded by the former Tenterden Deanery which provides Christian pastoral and mentoring support to young people at Homewood School in Tenterden. In 2019 the trust was the focus of our fundraising appeal, and we had a target of raising £1000.

Deanery

All Saints Biddenden is part of the Romney and Tenterden Deanery. Deanery Synod representatives vote at Deanery Synod meetings, and also vote to elect representatives to General Synod of the Church of England. Currently the parish does not have a Deanery Synod Representative. Rev'd Alex Bienfait was appointed Area Dean in May 2019.

Diocesan Synod has sent on a motion to the General Synod of the Church of England, a motion originally proposed by Smarden PCC in 2018 and passed by the Deanery Synod. The motion seeks a change to the church representation rules, to enable non communicant, electoral roll members to be elected to the PCC, and calls for the design of the Electoral Roll application form to be overhauled.

Fund-raising and Events

The Events committee met 3 times in 2019, in January, April and September. These meetings are held in order to ensure there is a reasonably well spaced out programme of events each year. While each separate event has its own organiser or team of organisers, the committee oversees the diary, supports the organisers if need be and offers feedback to the PCC on all Events.

In 2019 the following events contributed towards Church Funds and to the nominated charities.

- Candlemas supper
- Lent lunches and Lent Appeal for The Apollos Trust Registered Charity no 1148017.
- Christian Aid week, including a coffee morning and Die Alte Knaben Concert raised £718.59 before Gift Aid
- Flower Festival
- July Summer Fete
- The Tractorfest. Members of the congregation supported the Village Tea Tent and the church is most grateful for the subsequent donation of £1000 towards church funds.
- The Big Biddenden Breakfast
- The Gift stall/ shop raises funds for the church. As it's an unmanned stall and as we can't guarantee where people put their money, it's not possible to give an accurate figure for sales

See accounts for funds raised and the costs of fundraising.

The PCC is very grateful to the Events and Fund-raising team of Liz Rickwood, Jeannette Oatway, Gillian Burtenshaw, Sally Giles and Julie Lupton, who were on the committee in 2019.

Thursday Coffee Call-in

Coffee Call-in takes place every Thursday morning throughout the year, 10:00 am to 11:15am, for tea, coffee, and chat. It remains popular with an average of ten people every week.

As from January 2019 we have welcomed four pupils from John Mayne School who have hosted the morning and chatted to us all and helped clear up. This hopefully will be a regular occurrence, the first Thursday of the month.

The PCC is very grateful to Sally Giles who co-ordinates the Thursday Coffee call in rota.

Homemakers

Our year started with a lunch at the Weald of Kent Golf Club; well attended by our members. Talks have been varied, with a very interesting talk and slides on Canterbury Cathedral by Pam Waite. We also had interesting talks on "Edith Cavell", "The Suffragettes", "Bother on the Hover" and "Quilting" with many samples to look at. We also had a talk on "Gin and Chocolate Truffles" and were able to sample them – very good they were too! Our BBQ at Barn Cottage was also well attended in the summer and in September we treated ourselves to tea at Ye Maydes – we were very well looked after by Sheila and her staff. Our visit to Boldshave Garden on a lovely evening, was greatly enjoyed by all and a guided tour by the owner was very interesting. The year ended with our AGM followed by a Quiz and John Aldington playing his guitar and singing his own songs.

The PCC is very grateful to Liz Rickwood, who co-ordinates the Homemakers group.

Church Welcomers - Keeping the church open

The church is kept open during daylight hours (CCTV was introduced in 2018), and we maintain a rota of Church Welcomers from Easter to September. Keeping track of visitor numbers is difficult, we are only able to count those who visit us when a Welcomer is present. Even with the relatively new policy of keeping the church open during day light hours, and with a reduced team, we feel it worthwhile maintaining a team of Welcomers to be able to talk to visitors, answer their questions &

share time with them. We are most grateful for their presence as it certainly enhances the visitor experience. Numbers actually counted in 2019 were 497 as opposed to 1409 in 2018. We were able to do a real count at our annual Flower Festival, these stood at 1123 for 2019 & 1098 for 2018. The team look forward to welcoming everyone back into All Saint's Church building soon, where they will receive a very warm reception.

The PCC is very grateful to Joanna Winston who co-ordinates the Welcomers team.

Church flowers

In 2019 we look back on the very successful flower festival "Treasured Memories", held during the end of May Bank holiday. It was particularly pleasing to welcome new flower arrangers to the festival. In 2019 the number of people attending the festival increased, due to the excellent publicity, and building on the strong reputation of the festival.

The Flower arranging team has a core of five arrangers, and who provides altar and flower decorations throughout the year. Our talented team of arrangers worked hard to ensure that personal dedications were completed as requested. The team not only spends hours arranging the flowers but also removing the arrangements. Sadly, we have lost a number of dedicated arrangers over the past year, and in order to retain a flower dedication rota, we are in need of extra volunteers to assist with these tasks and also someone to coordinate the rota. We would welcome anyone who has time to spare.

Once again, we were able to provide flowers for Easter, Harvest and Christmas. Thanks are also due to Chris Cox & Jim for once again erecting the Christmas tree and lights and Linda and Tony Webb for decorating the tree. Thanks are also due to Mr & Mrs Penfold for the donation of another stunning Christmas tree.

For 2020, it has been particularly challenging due to Covid 19, government legislation closing the church. This meant that sadly we were not able to decorate the church for Easter. We did however 50 posies for Mothering Sunday which looked delightful; particular thanks to Jane and Denise the people who kindly delivered them to parishioners who were delighted to receive a Mothering Sunday token.

We were proud to have a newly fabricated (by Charlie Ridley) Paschal candle stand completed and dedicated in time for Easter 2020. The Paschal candle has become a focus for some stunning flower dedications, but sadly, due age and disrepair we needed to commission a new one. Money was provided by the Tractorfest and an anonymous donor was donated by the flower account. So, the new stand is a lasting reminder of the good work and support of the Tractorfest in the village community.

Despite all the planning and plenty of volunteers we were not able to hold the Flower Festival in May 2020 this year. The theme was "Saints and Seasons!!" provided us with an opportunity to display Patron Saints in flowers and promote the liturgical seasons of the Church year. This was to be my last year coordinating the Flower Festival, however, I have agreed to organise next year's festival and hopefully work alongside a new coordinator. So please, if you are interested in taking on this rewarding task, please do not hesitate to contact me for further information. Hopefully we will use the same theme in 2021, provided lockdown has been lifted. The Flower Festival has clearly become a "must see" event on the Kent social calendar. However, Roger Martin and Paul Webster organised a "virtual Flower Festival" in the Parish Magazine, well done both of you. They provided an opportunity for the people of the parish to show their hidden talents and hopefully the photographs will be displayed at the Festival next year.

The PCC is very grateful to Jeanette Oatway for this report, and coordinating the Church flower team.

Magazine

The magazine remains a key channel of communication for the village. It is made up of material connected with the church, news and general items, along with articles and photos that people send in. Thank you, all contributors! We have increased the number of pages from 28 to 32 this year and the number of colour pages has also risen.

We reach around 420 households eight times a year, while the quarterly issues go to the all 1270 addresses (or so) in the parish, a figure which constantly creeps upward as more houses are built. The magazine continues to benefit church funds. We thank Biddenden Parish Council for paying the most of the printing costs of the quarterly issues. We have a healthy advertising income which greatly exceeds our sales income. Online payments, via Paypal and the church website, have been a success.

As ever, sincere thanks are due to my wife Anne, who works tirelessly on the advertising, the "bagging up" of magazines and the delivery of some of them, to Simon Burgess, who does a great job keeping track of the circulation and subscription payments, to Peter Cutts and Brian Bennewith for processing those payments and to everyone involved in the distribution, not least to Gillian Burtenshaw, who does a huge job running the delivery of the quarterly issues. We were pleased to be able to continue publishing and delivering the magazine during the lockdown, despite a small number of our faithful distributors having to withdraw because of shielding.

The PCC is very grateful to Paul Webster who edits the magazine, and who provided this report and to Anne Webster for her work on advertising for the magazine and Simon Burgess for his work on circulation.

Website

The website gets about 20-25 visits per day. Day to day management of the website is carried out by the church administrator, Tanya Ling and Alex Bienfait. In the past year we have added a PayPal button to enable Biddenden's parish magazine subscribers to renew online and this has been very popular. Walk Church blog posts continue to appear regularly.

The PCC is grateful to our Webmaster Stephanie Boucher, and for her report.

Fabric Report:

During 2019 the following annual inspections were carried out:

- Fire extinguishers £79.10
- Organ tuning in March and November @ £211.20 per tuning.
- Clock service: Brian Bennewith agreed to carry this out rather than our paying Smith of Derby as there were too many issues with the clock following the 2018 service.
- Gas boiler service £254.28
- Portable appliance testing completed but at no further cost.
- Regular testing of emergency exit lighting is done by Julie Lupton.
- Risk assessments prior to all events were completed and lodged with Mark Clixby. See Health and Safety report.

The following repairs were carried out:

- Tiles on the lychgate and the church roof were replaced or repaired in early 2019. £425.
- Removal of vegetation from the external walls of the tower and turret. £3,500. (Funded by anonymous bequest)

The following matters are being investigated and were still on-going:

- Monitoring of the movement in the north wall and the Tylden Pattenson chapel continued. The Diocese no longer provide the services of a structural engineer. This is now the responsibility of the PCC and all professional advice and subsequent work is at the church's expense. The PCC noted this but took the decision not to engage the services of an engineer at present. The window at the east end of the Tylden Pattenson remains badly warped as a result of movement. No further action has been taken in this matter. Investigation into the condition of the beams above the Tylden Pattenson chapel did not take place.
- The ramp entrance to the South porch door received Ashford Borough Planning permission and was granted a Faculty at the end of 2019. Work subsequently carried out in January 2020.
- Progress with the Lady Chapel and damp damage resulting from external issues on the east side of the church. The Church inspection architect drew up a job specification in 2019 and quotations for possible work were received from 3 contractors. One contractor was selected and a Faculty Application has been made to the Diocesan Advisory Committee. At the end of 2019 this had not yet been granted so no work had been done. While the total cost of this work has been underwritten by The Friends of All Saints (FAB) in early 2020, the PCC hopes to raise 50% of the cost through grant applications.
- The parking area immediately beyond the lychgate: the Parish Council continues to work on planning for improvements in this area. By the end of 2019 the Parish Council were reported to be drawing up accurate plans.
- Broken windows in the tower remain broken.
- Brasses: no further work has been done on these. The PCC would like to find someone who is interested in brasses to take on responsibility in this area.
- Mark Clixby carries out the Health and Safety inspection and his report is much appreciated as it helps us to put all the required checks into place with a system to monitor them.

The PCC is very grateful to Julie Lupton for her hard work on the Fabric of the church and for preparing this report.

Churchyard

The churchyard has been kept in reasonable condition thanks to the work of our seven volunteers. Michael Palmer has again cut the hedges well, for no charge. The eleven-year-old ALKO mower failed in July and the PCC kindly authorised the purchase of the new mower. The Biddenden Community Fund again donated £500 towards the churchyard upkeep.

The PCC continues to monitor the Graveyard to ensure graves are maintained in adherence of the Churchyard regulations. All families seeking a burial are asked to commit to keeping these rules by signing a form prior to any burial.

Space for burial at the bottom of the Church yard is now down to 3 plots. The PCC is seeking a faculty to be allowed to carry out burial in other parts of the church yard that are free from gravestones. (This was subsequently granted in 2020)

The PCC is very grateful to Chris Cox for co-ordinating the Churchyard volunteer team.

Health and Safety

2019 has been another busy year for the church and it is good to see a number of the requested actions being implemented from previous years. It should be noted that Health and Safety guidelines and requirements continually change and the church and PCC should be minded to keep up to date with current good practice. I believe there is still some outstanding work to be completed to make sure the Fire Risk Assessments are up to date and relevant for the church and PCC. At the time of writing the new tarmac ramp that allows easier and safer access into the church has been completed and looks excellent and in keeping with the surrounding area.

Health and Safety - Accidents The accident book reported 4 accidents related to the church. 2 were general falls/trips, with no serious injuries and 1 was a dog bite, again resulting in no serious injury. The fourth accident was apparently caused by a 'stay' that broke during bell ringing. Although this only resulted in minor injuries, it was suggested that it could have been worse as the injured person was lifted due to the bell rope rising up very sharply. I am aware that training has been updated to reduce the risk of this reoccurring, but it is important that this is documented please.

Health and Safety: Safety Inspections - please refer to the December 2019 inspection for more details

The H&S inspection report from January was presented to the PCC for discussion and action. The main actions are as follows: -

- Fire Risk Assessments - please can the PCC confirm if the requested actions have been carried out. This is outstanding from the previous year.
- The generic church risk assessment was updated in December 2019
- COSHH sheets, Lone working, Work at Height and Cash Handling documents should be reviewed and updated as a few years old.
- The dead tree has been removed.

Health and Safety: General observations

It is good to see that a number of 2018 items have been actioned and that the church is being kept clean and tidy. During the inspection it was noted that there were no trip hazards or other issues.

The key items for 2020 would be completion of the Fire risk assessment items and reviewing older documents such as COSHH, lone working and working at height.

I would also like to thank those responsible for adding all accidents into the accident book. This is important so that we can investigate where needed and keep a good understanding of any areas of concern. Thank you to all who complete event risk assessments.

The PCC is very grateful to Mark Clixby for co-ordinating H&S and for providing this report.

2019 Trustees Annual Financial Report and Accounts

Financial Review

The PCC's cash in bank at the start of the year was £23,015, and at 31st December stood at £21,446, representing a cash deficit of £1,569 for the year. It should be noted that the annual cash deficit would have been £6,705 had the transfer of funds from the Church's investment account in December not been made.

Through 2019, total receipts into the Church's bank accounts were £71,231 (£87,046 total in 2018). Of these, £11,408 represented restricted funds. £4,792 were recovered as Gift Aid from taxpayer donations.

Planned giving and collections through 2019 were broadly similar to that received in 2018. To cover insurance and help with some minor church maintenance, Friends of Biddenden (FAB) provided £4,930 (included in All Other Giving), for which the PCC is very grateful. In 2018, FAB had provided over £15,000 (included as Sundry Donations) to cover insurance and other fabric repairs, including the Lych Gate. This extra funding by FAB in 2018 largely explains the greater overall receipts accounted for in 2018 than in 2019.

Total payments in 2019 were £72,337, compared with £83,155 in 2018. This significant difference was caused by more spending on the Church upkeep in 2018 than in 2019, but most significantly by much greater Mission Giving in 2018. This latter was largely due to the timing of payments – funds raised in 2019 were paid in 2020. It should be said that significantly more money was raised for Mission Giving in 2018 than in 2019, perhaps the effect of the Remembrance Day commemorations in 2018.

As usual, the largest outgoing was the Parish Quota, at £40,231 for the year (a 3.5% increase on 2018).

I noted in last year's report that on an average monthly basis, the Church's "regular" income does not cover current fixed expenses (Parish Quota, utilities, insurance), let alone any extraordinary expenses. Despite the gallant efforts of all involved in fundraising activities, including FAB, in December the PCC decided it was necessary to transfer around £5,000 from our investment account reserves to lessen the impending deficit in the Church's current account. It is very likely that the PCC may be required to make the same decision again in 2020. In the meantime, I would like to give huge thanks to all who have provided support or financial donations to the PCC or have helped with fundraising activities in 2019.

Reserves Policy

It is the current PCC policy to try and maintain a balance of unrestricted funds equivalent to around three months of unrestricted payments. This is held to smooth out fluctuations in cash flow and to meet potential emergencies. The average for a three-month period of unrestricted payments in 2019 has been around £15,000, while the PCC cash balance of unrestricted funds at year-end was around £7,700. However, in a future emergency, the Church could draw on its investment assets, currently worth around £46,000.

The PCC is very grateful to Peter Cutts for his work as Treasurer and for providing this finance report and to David Spry, the independent examiner for this years accounts.

Statement of Receipts and Payments

(Year ending 31st December 2019)

	Note	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Endowment Funds £	Total 2019 £	Total 2018 £
RECEIPTS						
Voluntary Receipts :						
Planned giving		18,396	1,760	-	20,156	20,988
Collections at services		4,586	-	-	4,586	5,602
All other giving	8a	3,379	7,702	-	11,081	28,846
Gift Aid Recovered		4,177	615	-	4,792	4,966
		30,538	10,077	-	40,615	60,402
Fundraising activities	8b	7,001	-	-	7,001	7,680
Investment income	8c	6,629	-	-	6,629	1,456
Church activities	8d	15,656	1,331	-	16,987	17,509
Total receipts		59,824	11,408	-	71,231	87,046
PAYMENTS						
Church activities :						
Parish Share and fees	9a	40,733	1,000	-	41,733	41,302
Clergy and staffing costs	9b	7,920	-	-	7,920	7,241
Church running expenses	9c	5,358	11,175	-	16,533	22,383
Mission giving and donation	9d	155	-	-	155	6,090
		54,166	12,175	-	66,341	77,015
Cost of generating funds	9e	5,996	-	-	5,996	6,140
Total Payments		60,162	12,175	-	72,337	83,155
Excess of Receipts over Payments		(338)	(767)	-	(1,106)	3,891
Adjustments						
Less : Cheques recorded in 2018 but cashed in 2019		(2,125)	-	-	(2,125)	(44)
Plus : Cheques recorded in 2019 but cashed in 2020		566	-	-	566	2,192
Plus : Receipts from 2018 but banked in 2019		1,096	-	-	1,096	934
Less : Receipts from 2019 but banked in 2020		-	-	-	-	(1,096)
		(463)	-	-	(463)	1,986
Excess of receipts over payments - adjusted		(801)	(767)	-	(1,569)	5,877
Cash in bank and at hand at 01 January		8,485	14,530	-	23,015	17,138
Cash in bank and at hand at 31 December		7,683	13,763	-	21,446	23,015

Statement of Assets and Liabilities

(Year ending 31 December 2019)

	Note	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Endowment Funds £	Total 2019 £	Total 2018 £
Cash funds						
Bank current account balance		7,683	11,757	-	19,440	21,292
Flower account balance		-	2,006	-	2,006	1,723
Other		-	-	-	-	-
		7,683	13,763	-	21,446	23,015
Other Monetary Assets						
Gift Aid recoverable	4	1,587	-	-	1,587	1,526
Other		-	-	-	-	-
		1,587	-	-	1,587	1,526
Investment Assets						
PCC General Investment Fund	5	46,017	-	-	46,017	41,063
Mrs Agate Memorial Fund		-	-	-	-	2,079
		46,017	-	-	46,017	43,142
Assets retained for Church use						
Churchyard upkeep equipment	6	629	-	-	629	1,188
Other		-	-	-	-	-
		629	-	-	629	1,188
Liabilities						
		-	-	-	-	-
Net Assets						
		55,916	13,763	-	69,679	68,871

Notes to the Accounts

1. The financial statements of the PCC have been prepared, with the exception of some minor adjustments, in accordance with the Church Accounting Regulations 2006, using the Receipts and Payments basis, and is the method recommended by the Canterbury Diocesan Board of Finance (CDBF) for accounts of this type.
2. The format of these accounts follows, as far as possible, recent guidance from CDBF. The Receipts and Payments statement presented here is a simple record of monies received and payments made in Calendar Year 2019 and a reconciliation to bank account statements. It is not an accounting profit and loss statement. Similarly, the Statement of Assets and Liabilities is not a true accounting balance sheet.
3. The Statement of Receipts and Payments presented here reflect cash movements in (i) the All Saints Biddenden PCC General Fund bank account, and (ii) the Flower Account.

4. Gift Aid recoverable represents outstanding claims for September, October, November and December 2019, which will be paid in 2020. The delay is due to an unfortunate backlog of claims being processed by the Canterbury Finance office.
5. In December 2019, units to the value of £2,700 from the PCC General Investment Fund were sold and the proceeds transferred to the PCC General Fund bank account. At the same time, units to the value of £2,437 from the Mrs Agate Memorial Fund were sold and the proceeds transferred to the bank account. The latter sale has resulted in the closure of the Mrs Agate Memorial Fund. Despite this sale (£5,137 in total value), the portfolio value at year-end was still greater than at the end of 2018, being supported by strong capital growth in the latter part of 2019.
6. Churchyard upkeep equipment currently comprises only the new Honda mower, which was purchased for £1,048 in July 2018. Other equipment (mowers and strimmers) has been fully depreciated.
7. Movements and balances for restricted and designated funds during 2019 are summarised in the table below:

Restricted Funds	Bal. b/fwd	Receipts	Payments	Bal. c/fwd
	£	£	£	£
Church Fabric & Upkeep	4,747	1,537	3,950	2,335
Churchyard Upkeep	-	150	-	150
Insurance	4,385	4,505	4,422	4,467
Benefice and Choir	1,798	110	-	1,908
Tower and Bells	986	15	134	867
In Need!	1,720	-	-	1,720
Church Quota	-	1,000	1,000	-
Utilities	170	1,610	1,566	214
Church Flowers	1,723	1,385	1,102	2,006
Sri Lanka Appeal	-	496	-	496
Apollos Trust	-	599	-	599
Total	15,530	11,408	12,175	14,763

- The Church Fabric & Upkeep fund paid out £3,500 towards external repairs to the Church tower. A further £450 was paid out for new pew bibles.
- The Insurance fund receipt represents donations from the Friends of All Saints Biddenden, for which the PCC is very grateful.
- The Apollos Trust was the chosen charity for 2019. These funds have not yet been paid. Given that the Trust is being wound up in 2020, it is not clear at time of writing this report what the destination of these funds will be.
- The money raised for the Sri Lanka Appeal will be paid in 2020, once appropriate bank details have been confirmed.

1. Further break-down of Receipts:

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Endowment Funds £	Total 2019 £	Total 2018 £
8.a All other giving					
Sundry Donations *	1,431	150	-	1,581	25,070
Flower Account	-	1,385	-	1,385	1,275
General Fund	947	-	-	947	1,122
Preservation Fund	-	287	-	287	380
Friends of Biddenden (FAB) Donations	-	4,930	-	4,930	-
Parish Council Donations	-	950	-	950	-
Tractorfest Donation	1,000	-	-	1,000	1,000
	3,379	7,702	-	11,081	28,846
8.b Fundraising activities					
Candlemas Supper	118	-	-	118	393
Flower Festival	4,239	-	-	4,239	4,567
Church Fete	1,304	-	-	1,304	1,198
Ride and Stride	149	-	-	149	278
Big Breakfast	1,191	-	-	1,191	1,245
	7,001	-	-	7,001	7,680
8.c Investment income					
Transfer from investment funds	5,137	-	-	5,137	-
Dividends from investment funds	1,492	-	-	1,492	1,456
	6,629	-	-	6,629	1,456
8.d Church activities					
Book Stall	267	-	-	267	437
Parish Magazine	9,218	-	-	9,218	9,629
Weddings / Funerals / Memorials	5,771	-	-	5,771	5,594
Charity Appeals	155	921	-	1,075	1,074
Votive Candles	121	-	-	121	149
Floodlighting	-	410	-	410	555
Parish Share Refund	125	-	-	125	71
	15,656	1,331	-	16,987	17,509

* Of Sundry Donations in 2018, £15,939 represent donations from the Friends of All Saints Biddenden (FAB) to help the funding of lych-gate repairs, other fabric costs, a new mower and church insurance.

2. Further break-down of Payments:

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Endowment Funds £	Total 2019 £	Total 2018 £
9.a Parish Share and Fees					
Diocesan quota	39,231	1,000	-	40,231	38,871
CDBF Statutory Fees	1,502	-	-	1,502	2,431
	40,733	1,000	-	41,733	41,302
9.b Clergy and staffing costs					
Benefice Joint Account Contribution	7,920	-	-	7,920	7,200
Admin. / Support Costs	-	-	-	-	41
	7,920	-	-	7,920	7,241
9.c Church running expenses					
Flower Account	800	1,102	-	1,902	1,221
Cleaning Costs	832	-	-	832	1,560
Church Upkeep	731	3,950	-	4,681	9,716
Insurance	-	4,422	-	4,422	4,317
Utilities	1,730	1,566	-	3,296	2,119
Services Upkeep	1,049	134	-	1,183	1,924
Churchyard Upkeep	216	-	-	216	1,526
	5,358	11,175	-	16,533	22,383
9.d Mission giving and donation					
Royal British Legion - collection	-	-	-	-	1,120
Apollos Trust	-	-	-	-	1,000
Bishop's Advent Appeal	-	-	-	-	318
Children's Society (Christingle)	-	-	-	-	351
Sri Lanka Appeal	-	-	-	-	2,089
Other	155	-	-	155	1,213
	155	-	-	155	6,090
9.e Cost of generating funds					
Parish Magazine Costs	4,587	-	-	4,587	4,362
Fundraising	1,410	-	-	1,410	1,730
Bookstall / Gen. Trading	-	-	-	-	48
	5,996	-	-	5,996	6,140

Parochial Church Council of All Saints Church, Biddenden Independent Examiner's Report

To the Parochial Church Council, All Saints Church, Biddenden, Kent.

This report on the financial statements of the PCC for the year ended 31st December, 2019 which are set out in this document, is in respect of the examination carried out in accordance with the Church Accounting regulations 2006 ("the Regulations") and section 145 of the Charities Act 2011 ("the Act")

Respective responsibilities of the Trustees and examiner

The PCC members are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The PCC members consider that an audit, as set out in section 144 (2) of the Act, is not required for this year but that an independent examination is carried out.

Having satisfied myself that the charity is not subject to audit under the charity law but is eligible for independent examination, it has been my responsibility to:

- Examine the accounts under section 145 of the Act
- To follow the procedures laid down in the general Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145 (5)(b) of the Act and
- To state whether particular matters have come to my attention

Basis of Independent Examiner's Report

My examination was carried out in accordance with the General Directions given by the Charity Commission. The examination has included a review of the accounting records kept by the PCC and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It has also included consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and sought where necessary, explanations from you, as Trustees, concerning any such matters. As this has not been an audit, no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair view'; the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

Independent Examiner's Report

Following examination of the accounts, I can confirm the following:

- * Accounting records confirm the requirement for independent examination, rather than audit
- * Following analytical review, I have obtained an understanding of the PCC's organisation, accounting system, activities and nature of its assets, liabilities, incoming resources and application of resources for planning purposes
- * Accounting records are in accordance with sections 130 and 133 of the Act
- * Financial statements follow applicable rules on form and content
- * No particular matters have come to my attention

Thus, from the information supplied to me, these accounts, prima facie, represent an appropriate view of Income and Expenditure of the All Saints Church, Biddenden, for the year ended 31st December, 2019.

David Spry Esq.,
Little Crampton Farm,
High Halden,
Kent, TN26 3HR



Date:

26th March, 2020