

Draft

Trustees Report for Annual Parish Meeting 2021

St Thomas the Apostle Finsbury Park

Annual Parish Meeting 9th May 2021

At St Thomas's in Covid Days

Coming to serve at St Thomas's during the interregnum seemed a natural thing for me to do as I had been trained there and thought I knew what was likely to be needed. In the event, when I arrived in April 2020 Covid days had begun, the building was closed and we all found out that keeping things going meant doing just about everything differently. I am very grateful for the support I have received from the church community and for the willingness of clergy and reader colleagues to come to preach and preside for St Thomas's online and in person.

The immediate challenge was to maintain worship and the life of prayer during church closure. With the help of Briony Murray, Nik Myers, now based in Ireland, the teams of readers and prayer leaders led by Chris Higgins and Jenni McMillan and my daughter's technical help at home, we were able to start a regular Service of the Word on the 19th of April. Within this, the habit of intercession has been faithfully maintained as Justice Konneh has gathered the prayers of the people week by week. This has also been an important way of keeping in touch and reflecting on the needs of the community. We added a 'Spiritual Communion' once a month – a prayer designed to help people feel God's presence in times such as these. 'Supporting people on their spiritual journey' is also part of the church's mission. The regular Bible Study has continued and there have been the Lent groups. I think it will be important to offer preparation for First Communion to children before they move onto secondary school.

Opening church on the 26th of July was the next big challenge as everyone adapted to the safety needs and we became used to receiving communion in one kind only. It has been tough but over time we have become familiar with the drill. The wardens and the risk assessment group have kept us safe. It has been very good to see attendance in church grow from around 27 – 40, with a particularly encouraging response on Easter Day when we had 65 people (of whom 4 were children) and with 38 on the Sunday following. We have to leave quickly and still miss conversation and hospitality time. We have yet to find a way to replace the after service zoom coffee.

As I look at participation, it is clear that both online and in church the main difficulty has been involving children and this is going to continue for as long the rules on keeping children in 'pods' and of safe-distancing apply. We have had a series of all-age days, online and in church with Rowan Howard's leadership and the aid of the new database which makes it easy to stay in contact with families. There has been some very good participation (for Covid days), notably on the Harvest festival, when we had 9 family bubbles and 61 attending overall. A good many children have contributed to services, online and in church, with readings, prayers, pictures and mini plays, particularly in 'The Christmas Story'. Making this happen depends on a lot of work and, even so, a look at figures shows how much ground there is to make up. In 2019, of a typical attendance of 100, between 25 to 40 would be children.

Dorothy Newton and the Thursday Tea at St Thomas's team and other volunteers have been keeping in touch with guests, some of whom are isolated and for whom Covid days have

been very limiting. Other volunteers from the congregation have kept in touch with older members and found ways of staying in touch at a time when the open hospitality which is part of the church's mission has been restricted.

Contacts with our friends in the Finsbury Park Mosque and Muslim Welfare House have continued through the regular 'Conversations' meetings which the Reverend Stephen Coles established with local faith leaders and which I now convene. Sadly we have also been unable to share hospitality in open events as we usually do. I hope the Finsbury Park Sisters will be able to meet this summer.

A number of factors are in play during interregnums. Attendance quite often declines, partly because people miss the vicar they love and because it's a time when people think of making a change. There are new roles to fill and decisions about the future demand attention at a time when there is less capacity for following people up or for holding activities to draw them in. Just now these factors are compounded by lockdown rules and shielding.

In spite of and because of Covid, there have been innovations. The Communications group has brought us the biweekly Newsletter and weekly emails that keep us informed, both benefitting from the new database with Mailchimp that has also supported work with children. And online worship has some plusses. Participation has not been fully analysed yet, but we can see that YouTube figures on the first day have usually doubled by the end of week 1, indicating a need for worship at other times than Sunday morning. There are reasons for keeping up the online offer and not only because we are still living with Covid. There have always been housebound people and others whose family or work situations make it difficult to come regularly on Sunday, or even at all. Also, online worship allows new people to have a look at the local church without having to cross the threshold - if they know it is on offer.

Thinking of the challenges of the times and uncertainties about the future, I very much appreciate what the church community has achieved. Maybe this is a good time to connect with the Parish old-style by delivering an invitation door to door?

Rev. Pauline Nashashibi 10.4.2021

Church Wardens Report

We have had two further church closures since the last church warden's report was issued in October. We had a severely curtailed Christmas offering and many of our key people including myself caught COVID. The third church closure, though not mandatory, was requested by Islington council, supported by local faith groups, due to the severity of the infection rate within the Borough.

After three months, we reopened our door on Palm Sunday and had a very successful Holy Week given the circumstances. The church also had a much needed clean on Saturday Saturday, which was testament to the hard work and dedication of our volunteers.

Many thanks to everyone who has supported us during the past difficult year. Those who have helped with ensuring a safe opening of the Church. Members of the PCC and Sub Groups.

From my previous report, our main priorities were:

- Maintaining Sunday Worship
- Engaging with the Diocese and Deanery re the appointment of a new incumbent
- Allowing playgroup to continue and serve the community

I believe we have been successful in managing priorities, and we are now on a firmer footing, due to the on-going and successful roll-out of the NHS vaccine programme. It is important to remember that we had two key challenges during the past year, COVID and the on-going situation with the vacancy. Not having an incumbent or a Priest in Charge has gone on far longer than I anticipated.

Sunday Worship

Like all churches, we face some uncertainty regarding how many of our regular worshippers will continue to join us for services. This is the great unknown, there may be some who have formed new habits during COVID. Conversely, there are those who may now place greater emphasis on human engagement with the community, of which our church is an important part.

As a church we have done some outreach, sending out palm crosses to signal we are here reminding people of our presence and relevance. I urge the PCC to consider other activities to showcase to the wider community that St Thomas' is open and welcomes all.

As I write, it seems as though all restrictions will be lifted mid June. We look forward to removing the red tape and allowing access to all of our pews.

Vacancy

As yet, we have no incumbent, though conversations are continuing with the Diocese and we have appointed four people from the PCC to lead this effort including both current church wardens. This is one of our key priorities and I will play my part in helping to move things forward.

Playgroup

We have reached agreement with the playgroup to pay 75% of the rent due during the first COVID lockdown, Sandra has sent the invoice and we are expecting payment in the usual fashion. They continue to work under stringent COVID measures and we need to support them as best we can. I don't expect the other hall users, Girl Guides and others to return before the autumn school term.

Finally

I said my previous report was my last as Church Warden, that was wrong. This is my last report as Church Warden. Heather and my newly elected replacement will form the new team with my support, when called on.

Justice

Electoral Roll Report 2021

The Electoral Roll was revised between 31st March 2021 and 21st April 2021.

There were 155 people on the roll in 2020. One name has been removed and there have been no additions.

The number on the Roll now stands at 154.

In this challenging year it has been unclear who should be removed as the congregation has not been in church often and it is likely that many have been shielding and participating online. Therefore, we have only been looking to remove anyone who has moved away from the area or has died.

Similarly, it has been difficult to ascertain new regular worshippers in the parish.

Now that we have begun to re-open church, we will continue to revise the roll until the date of the Annual Parish Meeting.

Anne Lambourne

Electoral Roll Officer

Secretary's Report

In the six months since we had the last APM, the PCC has continued to hold its meetings on Zoom, having now been doing so for over a year and continuing to meet almost once per month, having done so since beginning on Zoom too.

We have continued to discuss matters relating to the pandemic and how we can provide church for as many as we can. We have continued with our social distancing when we have been in the building and have also had to make decisions to close the building and move worship online.

To this end, providing church for all, and sometimes needing to be fully online, we successfully applied for a further grant from Cloudsley which was offered as further emergency funds to help churches provide their online services. We have now had our video equipment installed and we have had a few volunteers interested in training, more are welcome as this becomes an integral part of our Sunday morning routines. Could you think about joining a new rota to help with this? Full training will be given.

The PCC has also discussed matters relating to the interregnum which are detailed more fully elsewhere.

We have discussed how we are able to help the playgroup to meet their needs, seeking to work together with them to help them provide their service to our local community.

We have discussed our provisions for the 2 major church festivals, Christmas and Easter, and have offered a range of provisions online and in person as the situation allowed at the time. We have implemented our Lent / Easter collection and have communicated this to our congregation, setting up an online giving link to assist with the collection.

We have discussed our financial situation, detailed further in the report below.

We are now back in the building, have installed a proper video recording solution and services are now able to be recorded and uploaded for additional viewers to see later in the day, thereby reaching beyond those in the community who can come to the building, but being accessible to those not yet willing or able to return to church, and those who are engaged with us but too distant to attend regularly.

Briony Murray – Secretary

Treasurer's Report

Accounts for the Year ending 31st December 2020.

This has been a very challenging year with the PCC's main sources of offerings from the generosity of the congregation of St. Thomas's and visitors.

Your generosity has again enabled the church to grow in so many ways, to pay our bills, fund our commitments and support our mission partners both here and overseas.

My thanks go to Iain McSevery for his invaluable help in producing the final accounts for 2020; Alex Sergeant for again carrying out the independent examination of the accounts and Stav Stavrou claiming back Gift Aid from collections received.

General Fund:

Giving to the church increased slightly despite the closure of the building in March 2020 due to covid. This is encouraging news for the church as we found ways to survive and even thrive in the midst of all the challenges that the pandemic has thrown our way.

The church had to adapt to an online presence, embrace social media, innovate and change.

I wish to thank Briony Murray, who assisted in setting up online giving via the website and Facebook. Also, Justice Konneh, for organising card and contactless payment via the digital device.

Building Fund:

Since 2018 to 2020 numerous building projects having been undertaken. We now operate several restricted funds for building works: LED lighting and solar panels.

Every five years the church carries out an audit called a Quinquennial on the building works required. In 2020 we applied for and received grants from Richard Cloudesley Charity, which has covered some of the expenditure. We have also claimed back £7750 VAT refund.

Restricted Funds: (Collections for charities etc)

Total amount collected and sent amounted to £4815 for charities, including Akwaaba, CARIS- Cold Winter Shelter, Medical Aid for Palestine and Diocese Mozambique Emergency Appeal.

Reserves:

Our general fund reserves stand at £10,317 (2019: £9783), the building fund reserve - £5,755 (2019: £664) and other restricted reserves £24,153 (2019: £21,825).

Conclusion:

St. Thomas is a thriving, outward looking church. We have continued to meet our Parish Share commitment to the Diocese of £56,076 (2019: £71,000) as well as our commitment of our mission partners. I appeal to those who may not be doing so already, to please consider making a commitment to regular giving by way of direct debit under the Parish Giving Scheme which enables the church to claim back an extra 25% from HMRC automatically. Forms are available from Stav.

Next year is likely to be both demanding and testing during our interregnum and the coronavirus pandemic. Accordingly, I stress the need for us as congregants to press on and continue being supportive. Our church is not just the building and clergy but all the people who attend, each equally valuable but unique.

Thank you & God bless you.

Sandra Hall

Reserves Policy

It is the PCC's policy to maintain unrestricted reserves to cover the loss of income from the playgroup over a period of twelve months. On this basis, as at 31st December 2020, the required amount of reserves was £13,000. Unrestricted reserves fell during the year from £8,000 to £5,000. The trustees have noted the shortfall on required reserves, are taking action to increase the level of reserves, and will review the policy on reserves during 2021.

St. Thomas the apostle, Finsbury Park Income and expenditure account 12 months to 31st December 2020	General Funds Actual 2020 £	Building Fund Actual 2020 £	Restricted Funds Actual 2020 £	TOTAL 2020 £	General Funds Budget 2020 £	General Funds Budget 2021 £
Planned Giving						
Monthly Standing Orders	17,018	-	-	17,018		14,500
Parish Giving Scheme	34,203	-	-	34,203	50,000	35,500
Weekly Envelopes	266	-	-	266	650	500
General Collections (Plate)	952	-	-	952	3,000	2,500
Collections for Charities	-	-	2,262	2,262		
Other Giving	1,902	4,295	-	6,197	1,350	1,500
Parish Giving Scheme - Gift Aid reclaims	7,393	-	-	7,393	11,500	4,500
Other Gift Aid Reclaims	9,056	-	-	9,056		9,500
	<u>70,790</u>	<u>4,295</u>	<u>2,262</u>	<u>77,348</u>	<u>66,500</u>	<u>68,500</u>
Other Income						
Hire of Church Hall	10,928	-	-	10,928	16,500	12,500
Listed Place of Worship	-	-	-	-		
Candles/Fees to PCC etc	765	-	-	765	2,000	2,000
	<u>11,693</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>11,693</u>	<u>18,500</u>	<u>14,500</u>
Grant Income						
London Borough of Islington	-	4,711	-	4,711	-	
Richard Cloudesley Charity	-	-	5,000	5,000		
Grant Income	<u>-</u>	<u>4,711</u>	<u>5,000</u>	<u>9,711</u>		
TOTAL INCOME	<u>82,484</u>	<u>9,006</u>	<u>7,262</u>	<u>98,752</u>	<u>85,000</u>	<u>83,000</u>
The Ministry						
Clergy Expenses	2,107	-	-	2,107	3,000	2,500
Mission	125	-	-	125	500	250
	<u>2,231</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>2,231</u>	<u>3,500</u>	<u>2,750</u>
The Church						
Gas & Electricity	3,916	-	-	3,916	4,000	4,000
Facilities (water rates,towels etc)	1,342	-	-	1,342	1,500	1,500
Cleaner	2,048	-	-	2,048	3,750	3,000
Church Insurance	4,632	-	-	4,632	5,000	5,000
Minor Repairs	1,253	-	-	1,253	3,500	1,000
Building Works	-	12,856	-	12,856	-	
	<u>13,191</u>	<u>12,856</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>26,047</u>	<u>17,750</u>	<u>14,500</u>
Services						
Vestry, Altar & Candles	1,261	-	-	1,261	2,000	2,000
Organist, Choir & Music	2,525	-	-	2,525	4,250	4,000
Weekly Magazine	402	-	-	402	1,250	500
	<u>4,188</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>4,188</u>	<u>7,500</u>	<u>6,500</u>
Other Ordinary Expenditure						
Miscellaneous	748	-	-	748	500	500
	<u>748</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>748</u>	<u>500</u>	<u>500</u>
Payments Outside the Parish						
Diocese Fair Shares	85,200	-	-	85,200	85,200	85,200
Subsidy from other Parishoners in our Diocese	(24,700)	-	-	(24,700)	(14,200)	(25,200)
Charities	250	-	4,814	5,064	-	
	<u>60,750</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>4,814</u>	<u>65,564</u>	<u>71,000</u>	<u>60,000</u>
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	<u>81,109</u>	<u>12,856</u>	<u>4,814</u>	<u>98,779</u>	<u>100,250</u>	<u>84,250</u>
Surplus/(deficit) to 31st December 2020	<u>1,375</u>	<u>(3,850)</u>	<u>2,448</u>	<u>(27)</u>	<u>(15,250)</u>	<u>(1,250)</u>
Reserves b/fwd at 1st January 2020	8,174	5,388	21,825	35,387		
Transfer between funds	(4,295)	4,295				
Reserves c/fwd 31st December 2020	<u>5,254</u>	<u>5,833</u>	<u>24,273</u>	<u>35,360</u>		

**St. Thomas the apostle, Finsbury Park
Balance Sheet
At 31st December 2020**

	General December 2020 £	Restricted December 2020 £	Total December 2020 £
Cash at bank and in Hand			
Deposit Account	-	273	273
Current Account	253	24,174	24,427
London Credit Union Deposit	-	5,059	5,059
Cash in hand	-	600	600
Debtors			
Unclaimed Gift Aid	5,000	-	5,000
Accrued Income			-
Total Assets	<u>5,254</u>	<u>30,106</u>	<u>35,360</u>
Liabilities			
Creditors	-	-	-
Net Assets	<u>5,254</u>	<u>30,106</u>	<u>35,360</u>
Represented by			
General Reserves	5,254		5,254
Restricted Reserves: see below			
: Building funds		5,833	5,833
: Other restricted funds		24,273	24,273
	<u>5,254</u>	<u>30,106</u>	<u>35,360</u>

Restricted Reserves:

Building funds	b/f Jan 20	Inc. 2020	LPOW	Due 2020	Paid 2020	Transfers	c/f Dec 20
General	791	844		1,635		791	844
Quniquennial	0			0	4,915	-4,915	0
Frontals	650	3,452		4,102	3,452		650
Solar	4,538			4,538	198		4,340
Railings	-591	4,711		4,120	4,291	(171)	0
Total	5,388	9,006	0	14,394	12,856	-4,295	5,833

Other restricted funds	b/f Jan 20	Inc. 2020	LPOW	Due 2020	Paid 2020	Transfers	c/f Dec 20
Discretionary	1,887	1,383		3,270		-330	3,600
Organ Fund	16,631			16,631	96		16,535
LDF Fees	313	427		740	741		
DRC Mozambique	931	59		990			990
Akwaaba	690	166		856	856		0
Medical Aid for Palestinians	282			282	282		0
Cold Winter Shelter	761			761	761		0
Alma Lent appeal		228		228			228
Cludesley - IT		5,000		5,000	2,079		2,921
Pilgrimage	330			330		330	0
Total	21,825	7,262	0	29,087	4,815	0	24,273

Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults Report to the PCC for the APCM 9th May 2021

- This is the fourth report from Helena Konneh (HK), Church Safeguarding Officer (CSO), St Thomas the Apostle Finsbury Park to the PCC for the APCM on 9th May 2021.
- The 2020 Parish Safeguarding Self-Audit action plan was reviewed, and the new 2021 self-audit completed by the following on 2nd February 2021: Helena Konneh (Church Safeguarding Officer), Rowan Howard (Sunday School Coordinator), Heather Pascall (Churchwarden) and Marcia Sinclair (DBS Checker).
- The completed self-audit was shared with PCC members by email with a request for questions to be submitted to Helena in advance of the PCC meeting. One PCC member raised two points. A further discussion was also had at the PCC meeting on 10th March 2021.
- Both the Parish Safeguarding Self- Audit and revised action plan were approved at the PCC meeting, also the Safeguarding Policy Statement 2021, which was signed by the churchwardens and Helena Konneh.
- A new Church Safeguarding Officer was appointed at the PCC meeting on 10th March 2021, we welcome and thank Cassie Dummett for taking over this role. A planned handover starts with the first meeting in early April 2021. This will cover the role, training and key activities of the role holder.
- The agreed self-audit, Safeguarding Policy Statement 2021 and a notification of Cassie's new appointment was emailed to the Diocese of London on 10th March 2021. A question was also raised to clarify the need for a First Aider at church activities.
- With the retirement of Stephen Coles in April 2020, the intention was for all Safeguarding actions to be prioritised. However, due to Covid-19 and restrictions coming into place in March 2020 work towards the actions had to be put on hold. As we lift out of lockdown, we will resume our plans.
- Some progress has been made against the 2020 action plan. Notably:
 - DBS checks for all PCC members.
 - Safeguarding training is undertaken by all PCC members and some Sunday School leaders/helpers.
 - A role description for the Lead Recruiter is now in place.
- There are several outstanding points (from 2019 and 2020) that have been carried forward to 2021, these will need to be addressed as we plan to return to our face-to-face activities:
 - Further Safeguarding reporting guidelines for the Thursday Group / Sunday School Leaders.
 - Health and Safety risk assessment for Thursday Group (to now reflect Covid-19 considerations).
 - Review the DBS recruitment process (changes have since been reflected in the Safe recruitment flow chart).
- Helena would like to take this opportunity to thank the continued hard work and commitment of all volunteers, and especially: Rowan Howard, Sunday School Coordinator, Dorothy Newton, Thursday Teas Leader; Marcia Sinclair, DBS Checker

and those who support the church activities as they relate to working with vulnerable adults. Also, a special thank you to Cassie Dummett who will be taking over the Church Safeguarding Lead role shortly.

Helena Konneh, Church Safeguarding Officer: 21/03/2021

Children's and young people's report 2021

This year of the pandemic has meant that our usual ways of being together and providing activities for children and young people at St Thomas's have been hugely disrupted.

At the start of the first lockdown, in March 2020, we had limited ways to stay in touch, with the Church closed and no facility for online services. We kept in touch with Sunday School volunteers by email and delivered Easter eggs to all of the children from the congregation who live in or close to the Parish. Lots of the children made farewell cards or pictures for Stephen, that formed part of the delivery he found on his doorstep on Easter morning, when we sadly said a virtual goodbye and thankyou.

We then developed an email data base and created a families' email list that we could use to stay in touch with families with children and young people. This helped us with inviting contributions of prayers and pictures from our children in our first all-age online service in June.

Once we were able to be back in Church, it was clear that we would not be able to re-commence Sunday School classes or creche within Government guidelines. So, children and young people would need to stay in the main service with their families. We therefore started planning regular all-age services, starting with Harvest on 4th October, at which we encourage attendance and participation by children and young people. We were delighted to welcome 9 family bubbles at the Harvest service and collected bountiful contributions for the St John's Brownswood Park foodbank. One parent commented *"It was really nice to be able to come to church. I don't think I'd realised - or had time to realise- how much I missed it."*

We also planned a socially distanced picnic – but that was sadly stymied by changes to lockdown rules.

The all age services have continued both in Church - 13th December for the story of Zechariah and Elizabeth - and online - Christmas Eve with a wonderful nativity narrative that many members of the congregation contributed to, Candlemas on 31st January and Mothering Sunday on 14th March. We have had lovely contributions of readings, prayers and pictures from a broad range of families.

Our youth band were able to rehearse during the Autumn and contribute to our Advent worship.

We conducted a youth Re-engagement survey whereby the 10 youths age 8-18, listed possible activities that would engage the youth at St Thomas. The report was sent to the PCC and communication committee.

In 2021, we have included a weekly activity sheet from Roots in the notices with a range of activities for all ages to help families to engage with the Gospel themes during the week.

We look forward to being able to be together in Church once again and to re-start our weekly children's activities.

Rowan Howard: Sunday School co-ordinator

Marcia Sinclair and Andrew Greer: Youth

Report of the Deanery Synod representatives 2021

The representatives from St Thomas's are: Rowan Howard, Marcia Sinclair and Anthony Dass, who were all re-elected in 2020 for a 3 year term to 2023.

This year, there were 3 meetings (up to March 2021). Paul Zaphiriou is Area Dean.

The themes of the meetings were:

21st April 2020: How the Deanery and Area might develop:

22nd December 2020: Welcome to new Parish Representatives. Discussions around church in lockdown, working with other faiths through Islington Faith Forum, and engagement with community through foodbanks, refugee drop-in centre, memory café, cold weather shelter (some activities suspended due to lockdown). What have churches learnt through the pandemic? What insights can we share?

27th January 2021: Capital Vision 2030: Presentation from Paul Zaphiriou around 3 themes of creating confident disciples, compassionate communities and creative growth. The three top priorities for the Diocese are younger, safer and more racially just. As a Parish, we will be engaging with these themes and priorities as we develop our mission action plan for the coming years.

Music Report

Unfortunately, music took a bit of a back seat in the past year due to COVID19. As a high singing church, this was devastating. We managed to provide services for parishioners online until we opened again, and since then we have been rather 'in and out' until just recently. We are glad to have singers from the Singing Group sing some responses in the service now and we hope to increase the sung liturgy soon. I also hope to resume rehearsals for the Youth Music group in the coming month, with the Singing Group not far behind.

Andrew Greer – Director of Music

Tea at St Thomas's - Report to Annual Parish Meeting of St Thomas the Apostle Finsbury Park, May 2021

Sadly, Tea at St Thomas's has not been able to meet for a year now. Our last meeting was in March 2020, so we have missed the whole of our ninth year (we'd met every week since St David's Day in 2012).

Almost none of the guests have a computer or are familiar with Zoom, so we could not transfer our meetings to virtual ones. However, we have done our best to keep in touch with most of our regular guests – 10 have been phoned each week by at least one of the hosts. Guests have appreciated the regular – and occasional - phone calls: "talking on the phone really cheers me up". They have been very grateful for a chat – but, of course, say how much they miss the pleasure of sitting together round the tea table and chatting informally with the hosts and other guests.

The phone conversations have sometimes been stressful - we've heard about people's lives in lockdown and about their isolation and loneliness - and about some difficult circumstances and illnesses: "What life is this? – it's like being in a prison cell" - "It's hell on earth - this isn't life, this is bare existence"

At Christmas we arranged between us to deliver cards and small gifts to those guests who live nearby. We had hoped to do this in a group but, as Tier 4 regulations then came into force, we had to visit individually. We divided the task between us, each agreeing with the guest a suitable time on Christmas Eve and then, wearing our masks, we put the parcel on their doorstep, rang the doorbell and stepped back to their gate – from where we had a brief conversation and passed on Christmas greetings from all of us from Tea at St Thomas's.

We very much hope that Tea at St Thomas's will meet again as soon as regulations allow.

Dorothy, Christine, Pat, Rowan, Anita

March 2021

Monday Night Movies report for APCM May 2021

The last film shown at Monday Night Movies was *In Bruges* on 16 March 2020. Additionally, Stephen Coles had requested to have one last film shown before his retirement, *My Own Private Idaho*, which was due to be screened on 30 March.

Sadly the outbreak of Covid-19 then meant that the first lockdown occurred, and all of our activities including Sunday services were stopped. As nobody knew how this situation would progress, I had hoped that we could start film night again in the autumn of 2020, but alas, it was not to be, and like other cinemas, theatres and community groups we remain dark.

However, as the situation is improving now with the success of mass vaccinations as well as lockdowns, I have hopes that we may be able to start up again in the autumn. At the time of writing it is planned to reopen the church for Sunday services on Palm Sunday, 28 March. All being well, I can see no reason why our other activities should not reopen in due course when safe to do so. Our film night always has a summer break anyway, as many people are away, and the light evenings make it difficult to screen movies, so reopening in September would be good.

For those who may not know, Monday Movies were held on Monday evenings at 7pm for 7.30pm in the hall, or occasionally in the church during May/June (because of the lighter evenings). These were open to all, were free of charge (basket for donations available), and we had some - often substantial! - refreshments together to start the evening off.

In 2020 we screened two films of time, mystery and loss, *Arrival* (with Amy Adams), and *The Jacket* (Adrien Brody and Keira Knightley); the first in a season of three murder and revenge movies: the classic Hitchcock film from 1951 *Strangers on a Train*; followed by *Cape Fear* from 1961 starring Gregory Peck and Robert Mitchum; and the comedy/crime drama *In Bruges* from 2008, with Colin Farrell, Brendan Gleeson and Ralph Fiennes – mentioned above.

I had planned a programme of film noir, mystery drama, and a horror or two for Halloween. If we can open again this September I would like to pick up where we left off, with this programme, or maybe an Oscar winner...

We look forward to seeing you!

Anne Rose