



Annual Report & Accounts, 2021

Charity Number NIC 102119

Draft

To be adopted at the Annual General Vestry

**The church ANNUAL GENERAL VESTRY will be held on
Sunday , 3 April 2022 at 12:30pm**

Select Vestry

3 April 2022

<i>Rector:</i>	Rev James W. Cheshire
<i>Curate:</i>	Rev Noel Gordon

Members of outgoing Select Vestry

<i>Rector's Church Warden:</i>	Jim Myles
<i>Rector's Glebe Warden:</i>	Sam Elliott
<i>People's Church Warden:</i>	Freda Rutherford
<i>People's Glebe Warden:</i>	Chris Adair

Daniel Crawford	Karen Magee
Elaine Edwards	David Manning
Dawn Ferguson	Ruth Manning
Jon Gunning	Karen Myles
Stephen Harris	Joanne Rice
Jon Judge	Megan Ross

Financial Report 2021

What a difference our refurbished buildings have made for worship and ministry in St. Mary's! It is so good to be able to enjoy the refurbished premises in person and see ministry start to grow again. We are so thankful to God for his provision, enabling and timing, and also in the faithful giving of His people to His work here in Ballybeen, especially through these very difficult times.

In summary

- We finished the year with
£9,587 in our Housekeeping Fund
£18,038 in our Development Fund
and with loans of £226,611 for our refurbishment programme.
- For a second year we have been blessed by God through the receipt of grants from outside bodies. In our No.1 Account we have recorded a grant of £15,000 towards the support of Lorcan – our Intern, and this has been promised for another two years. In our No.2 Account we have recorded £27,650 from the Church of Ireland Church Fabric and Development Fund towards the refurbishment work. These have been a big help, but it is the consistent and faithful giving of many people – our giving - that continues to see the work of God continue through the ministries of our church.
- Our No.1 Account – which is used to run the church - finished with an in-year deficit of £4,354. However, a truer end of year position would have been a surplus of £10,486; this was because we spent £21,091 towards the refurbishment costs and £6,250 of the grant for our Intern actually covers the first 5 months of 2022. This is a great result although it does demonstrate how vital grants are to help us meet our running costs. We need to grow our own giving for this account.
- Our No.2 Account – Development Fund - finished with an overall deficit of £208,573 since the bulk of the payment from building works come from this account. Extra donations and regular and faithful giving continue to support this fund. Currently our repayments for the loan are not inconsiderable at £1,938 per month so do please consider giving (or increasing your giving) to the Development Fund as well as the No.1 Account so we will get the loan paid off quickly and have the funds to expand the ministry of St. Mary's.
- To date we have spent £577,356 on the extension and refurbishment with a last payment of £14,270 due this year. We had a facility to borrow £250,000 over 15 years for our building work but in the end, we borrowed £210,000. We thank God that we were able to do more work and borrow less money than was originally planned!

I hope you can see from this summary and the accounts on the following pages that our finances give us another reason to sing with conviction; "What a faithful God have I!".

David Manning
Hon. Treasurer

Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of St Mary's Parish Church, Ballybeen

I report on the accounts of the charity for the year ended 31st December 2021 which are set out on pages 1 to 6.

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

As the charity's trustees you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the Charities Act (Northern Ireland) 2008.

It is my responsibility to:

- examine the accounts under section 65 of the Charities Act;
- follow the procedures laid down in the general Directions given by the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland under section 65(9)(b) of the Charities Act; and
- state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of independent examiner's report

I have examined your charity accounts as required under section 65 of the Charities Act and my examination was carried out in accordance with the general Directions given by the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland under section 65(9)(b) of the Charities Act.

My examination included a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also included consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from you as charity trustees concerning any such matters.

My role is to state whether any material matters have come to my attention giving me cause to believe:

1. That accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 63 of the Charities Act
2. That the accounts do not accord with those accounting records
3. That the accounts do not comply with the accounting requirements of the Charities Act
4. That there is further information needed for a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Independent examiner's statement

I have completed my examination and have no concerns in respect of the matters (1) to (4) listed above and, in connection with following the Directions of the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland, I have found no matters that require drawing to your attention.



C Michael McCarter FCA
Chartered Accountants Ireland

For and on behalf of Jackson Andrews
Chartered Accountants & Statutory Auditor

6 Mandeville Mews
Portadown
Co Armagh
BT62 3NS

25th Jan 2022

No.1 Account - 'Housekeeping' fund for year ended 31 December 2021

No 1 Account	2021	2020
Receipts	£	£
Recorded giving Envelopes	33,774.10	53,053.42
Recorded giving Standing Orders	71,189.37	52,180.00
Gift Aid	21,278.36	14,207.27
Cash collections	1,242.10	1,228.86
Donations general	47.29	1,845.41
Donations H&L, SS, DVDs and Minibus	780.00	30.00
Earmarked donations (funeral catering etc)	100.00	1,285.00
Grants	17,122.00	20,881.00
National Ins. Rebate	4,683.99	3,185.82
TOTAL	150,217.21	147,896.78
	2021	2020
Payments	£	£
Staff costs	66,819.26	57,173.52
Mission & Missionary account	14,860.00	13,920.00
Children's & youth work	516.34	485.25
Diocese	12,288.00	11,212.80
Electricity	3,659.85	2,683.33
Oil & Gas	1,093.55	420.11
Church water rates	404.92	407.09
Cleaning costs	1,542.72	2,621.88
Cleaning materials	783.63	57.56
Church & Hall Repairs & maintenance	3,390.47	2,801.05
Rectory Repairs, maintenance, rates	2,020.73	1,839.46
Minibus expenses	2,261.34	270.00
Insurance	3,410.88	3,594.90
Bank & audit charges	1,140.72	1,105.50
Telephone/Broadband/Licences	4,782.22	2,872.17
Office/printing expenses	1,443.77	1,083.84
Equipment	4,740.91	1,144.04
Events / catering	273.02	298.68
Support/materials for church/groups	4,409.48	7,405.74
Visiting speakers /gifts volunteers	1,122.18	200.00
Sundry expenses	394.93	129.99
Outreach events	2,122.00	114.16
Church building programme	21,091.14	36,380.95
TOTAL	154,572.06	148,222.02
Surplus / (Deficit) for the year	(4,354.85)	(325.24)
less Funds transferred out		30.00
Add opening cash balance (incl Petty Cash)	13,941.89	14,297.13
Closing balance	9,587.04	13,941.89

No.2 Account - Development Fund for year ended 31 December 2021

	2021	2020
RECEIPTS	£	£
Development fund envelopes	11,106.90	14,750.76
Standing orders	16,390.00	6,922.00
Donations	8,693.00	14,710.00
Gift Aid	9,097.00	4,677.42
Legacies & Bequests	460.00	
Fundraising	769.46	1,428.72
Gift Day for Dev. Fund	4,111.25	6,577.00
Grants received	27,650.00	20,000.00
Bank Interest	553.03	1,704.56
TOTAL	78,830.64	70,770.46

	2021	2020
PAYMENTS	£	£
Professional fees	1,428.00	
Builder payments	380,141.27	116,700.00
Technology in refurb.	21,615.09	
Bank charges	1,256.00	18.00
Loan Interest	4,946.35	
Miscellaneous	201.00	187.00
TOTAL	409,587.71	116,905.00

Surplus / (Deficit) for the year	(330,757.07)	(46,134.54)
add Funds transferred in		0.71
less Funds transferred out		
Add opening cash balance	122,184.21	168,318.04
Closing balance	(208,572.86)	122,184.21

Missionary Giving for year ended 31 December 2021

RECEIPTS	Church giving	Donations	2021	2020
	£	£	£	£
No.1 Account	14,860.00		14,860.00	13,920.00
Donations			0.00	0.00
Special Collections		709.31	709.31	1,073.00
Open Doors - Money Jar		434.05	434.05	275.86
TOTAL	14,860.00	1,143.36	16,003.36	15,268.86

PAYMENTS

YWAM I Matchett	3,000.00		3,000.00	3,000.00
YWAM J Judge	2,400.00		2,400.00	2,400.00
Wycliffe Bible Translators	900.00		900.00	900.00
YWAM W McGirr	1,680.00		1,680.00	1,680.00
EMI A Gordon	1,200.00		1,200.00	1,200.00
Mission Aviation Fellowship	660.00		660.00	720.00
Tear Fund	900.00		900.00	900.00
Illyrain Trust	720.00		720.00	720.00
New Wine Ireland	600.00		600.00	600.00
Abaana	600.00		600.00	600.00
Open Doors	600.00		600.00	930.00
Release International	600.00		600.00	600.00
M Ross (EMI)	1,000.00		1,000.00	
Gift Day		700.00	700.00	1,075.00
TOTAL	14,860.00	700.00	15,560.00	15,325.00
Surplus / (Deficit) for the year			443.36	(56.14)
Add opening balance			2.41	58.55
Closing balance			445.77	2.41

Note. £436.28 is still to be paid to Open Doors leaving a balance of £9.49

Summary for Diocesan Return	2021	2020
World Mission (eg. Missionary Societies)	£11,860	£12,750
Bishop's Appeal	£0	£1,075
Other Development Agencies (eg Tearfund)	£3,700	£1,500
Other Charities (eg Hospice)		
	£15,560	£15,325

Outreach Account - for year ended 31 December 2020

	2021	2020
Receipts	£	£
Donations	0.00	0.00
TOTAL	0.00	0.00
Payments	2021	2020
	£	£
Miscellaneous gifts		
Bank charges	16.00	16.00
TOTAL	16.00	16.00
Surplus / (Deficit) for the year	(16.00)	(16.00)
Add opening cash balance	710.00	726.00
Closing balance	694.00	710.00

ACTS Ballybeen Account - for year ended 31 December 2021

Account was closed during the year

	2021	2020
Receipts	£	£
Donations	2.36	0
TOTAL	2.36	0.00
Payments	2021	2020
	£	£
Bank charges	16.00	32.98
TOTAL	16.00	32.98
Surplus / (Deficit) for the year	(13.64)	(32.98)
add Funds transferred in		30.00
less Funds transferred out		
Add opening cash balance	13.64	16.62
Closing balance	0.00	13.64

Restricted Gifts/Collections Fund - for year ended 31 Dec. 2021

	2021	2020
Receipts	£	£
Earmarked donations		
Contra income	0.00	477.00
TOTAL	0.00	477.00
 Payments	 2021	 2020
	£	£
From Bequest	223.5	
Earmarked expenditure		
Contra expenditure	0	294.45
TOTAL	223.50	294.45
Surplus / (Deficit) for the year	(223.50)	182.55
Add opening cash balance	2,050.56	1,868.01
Closing balance	1,827.06	2,050.56

This fund is included in the No.1 Bank Account

Reconciliation of Bank accounts to Funds

As at 31 December 2021

The church operates 9 banks accounts (year end balances shown in BOLD below) plus Petty Cash

Loans

Purpose of the Loan		Balance
Interest free loan	Church build/refurbishment	-£ 10,000.00
Interest free loan	Church build/refurbishment	-£ 10,000.00
1 Business Term Loan* (base+4%)	Church build/refurbishment	-£ 206,611.09
		-£ 226,611.09

* Due for repayment by August 2034 and at Jan. 2022 monthly repayments are £1,918 (£23,016 pa)

Other Bank accounts

Title of Account	Purpose	Balance
2 No.2 reconciled	Development Fund - working account	£ 17,707.85
2 No.2 unreconciled transactions	Nov. Gift Aid from No.1	£ 318.75
3 Nationwide 95day notice	Development Fund - Interest earning	£ -
4 Nationwide Instant notice	Development Fund - Interest earning	£ 10.92
5 30-Day Business Reserve	Development Fund - Interest earning	£ 0.71
		£ 18,038.23
Less loan totals		-£ 226,611.09
Net position on Development Fund		-£ 208,572.86
6 No.1 reconciled	Housekeeping	£ 11,665.99
6 No.1 unreconciled transactions	Nov. Gift Aid to No.2	-£ 318.75
Petty cash	Housekeeping	£ 6.86
7 Missionary Account	For missionary receipts and payments	£ 505.77
		£ 11,859.87
No.1 Housekeeping Fund		£ 9,587.04
Missionary Fund		£ 445.77
Restricted gifts/ collections Fund		£ 1,827.06
		£ 11,859.87
8 Outreach Account	Restricted for Outreach	£ 694.00
9 Acts Ballybeen	Closed - was for community grants	£ -

DECLARATION OF DISCLOSURE

We confirm that all accounts operating under the auspices of the Select Vestry have been disclosed in this Annual Financial Return.

Signed: David Manning 25.03.2022
Honorary Treasurer Date

Signed: James W. Chubb 25.03.2022
Incumbent/Area Dean Date

Signed: C. J. O'Connell 25.3.2022
Independent Examiner/Auditor Date

Please note that this form is available electronically by emailing Tracey Taggart - ttaggart@downmorediocese.org

FREEWILL OFFERING Contributions

Envelopes, Standing Orders and Bank Transfers

for the year ended 31 December 2021

No.	Amount £	No.	Amount £	No.	Amount £
2	2,098.00	59	200.00	115	900.00
5	336.00	61	2,400.00	116	1,640.00
6	1,665.00	62	70.00	117	230.00
7	185.00	63	76.00	118	15.00
8	535.00	64	530.00	120	600.00
10	10.00	65	145.00	121	820.00
11	255.10	66	480.00	126	60.00
12	2,385.00	67	315.00	127	50.00
16	25.00	68	225.00		
17	1,060.00	70	260.00	201	2,600.00
19	500.00	71	1,200.00	202	1,200.00
20	560.00	72	140.00	203	1,920.00
21	260.00	73	1,260.00	204	4,620.00
22	2,200.00	74	260.00	205	3,480.00
23	365.00	75	255.00	206	3,600.00
25	139.10	80	90.00	207	2,400.00
26	39.30	81	500.00	208	2,610.00
30	190.00	82	470.00	209	420.00
31	1,510.00	84	900.00	210	270.00
33	475.00	86	2,030.00	212	3,360.00
34	535.00	88	240.00	214	3,270.00
35	600.00	89	3,640.00	215	900.00
36	1,000.00	90	240.00	217	4,200.00
38	620.00	93	2,720.00	218	60.00
41	1,426.50	94	2,110.00	219	1,400.00
42	210.00	95	375.00	220	498.00
43	2,080.00	97	965.00	221	960.00
44	490.00	98	270.00	222	5.00
46	70.00	99	30.00	224	36.37
47	1,040.00	100	485.00	225	730.00
48	525.00	101	480.00	226	1,800.00
50	550.00	102	500.00	227	980.00
52	423.00	103	770.00	228	1,100.00
53	120.00	106	340.00	229	260.00
54	3,520.00	108	55.00	230	35.00
55	96.00	109	350.00	231	480.00
57	200.00	112	51.10	235	1,000.00
58	2,280.00	113	1,058.00		

Please note that amounts are allocated against numbers which may have changed during 2021.

If you are unsure of your FWO number please contact the treasurer or check in Churchsuite.

DEVELOPMENT FUND Contributions

Envelopes, Standing Orders and Bank Transfers

for the year ended 31 December 2021

No.	Amount £	No.	Amount £
2 (329)	510.00	90 (314)	245.00
6 (307)	1,575.00	93	61.80
7 (343)	32.50	94 (319)	2,645.00
8 (328)	265.00	95 (360)	375.00
12 (316)	844.60	98 (323)	270.00
17 (355)	550.00	99 (349)	30.00
20 (320)	560.00	101 (325)	240.00
22	600.00	108 (357)	95.00
26 (345)	38.30	109 (324)	305.00
31 (342)	300.60	113	132.00
33 (335)	200.00	116	400.00
34 (300)	190.00	120	172.20
35 (331)	105.00	121	60.00
41 (305)	1,408.00	181 (327)	25.00
43 (311)	780.00	183	3,290.00
47 (353)	1,200.00	202	106.25
48 (336)	1,730.00	203	2,000.00
50 (347)	280.00	204	2,600.00
54	10.00	205	750.00
59	150.00	206	100.00
63 (350)	18.10	208	600.00
64 (356)	1,685.00	212	600.00
65 (351)	115.00	214	240.00
66 (344)	300.00	215	1,480.00
72 (332)	207.00	217	910.00
73 (315)	735.00	219	175.00
79 (334)	360.00	226	3,600.00
84	300.00	229	260.00
88	240.00	231	40.00
89 (306)	1,525.40	232	480.00

Please note the Development Fund numbers (in brackets) are changing to the same as the FWO numbers.
If you are unsure of your DF number please contact the treasurer or check in Churchsuite.

ST MARY'S PARISH CHURCH, BALLYBEEN

Boys' Brigade Company

Accounts for the year ended 31st December 2021

Receipts	£
Total	-
Payments	£
Total	-
Surplus (deficit) for the year	0.00
Opening Balance	835.06
Closing Balance	835.06

194th St. Mary's Girls' Brigade Company

Accounts for the year ended 31st December 2021

Receipts	£
Weekly dues	1,101.20
Uniforms	1,295.65
Total	2,396.85
Payments	£
Uniforms/Crawdford's	552.70
Outings	439.00
Gifts	140.00
Christmas/Easter	497.00
Crafts	23.90
HQ Assessments/fees/training	89.30
Sundries	261.73
Total	2,003.63
Surplus (deficit) for the year	393.22
Opening Balance	1,091.98
Closing Balance	1,485.20

ST MARY'S PARISH CHURCH, BALLYBEEN

BEENIES TODDLER GROUP

Accounts for the year ended 31st December 2021

Receipts	£
Subscriptions	202.00
Surplus cash from 2020	23.53
Donations	0.60
Bank Interest	0.89
Total	227.02
Payments	£
Food	100.91
General expenses	43.00
Party expenses	55.22
Christmas presents	97.50
Donation to Zion Fund	250.00
Bank charges	17.74
Total	564.37
Surplus (deficit) for the year	(337.35)
Opening Balance	1,179.67
Closing Balance	842.32

OUTREACH TO THE BELFAST HOMELESS

Accounts for the year ended 31st December 2021

Receipts	£
Donations	570.00
Repayment from Silver Threads	243.15
Total	813.15
Payments	£
Expenditure on Rehousing Needs	170.00
Items for homeless	139.76
Total	309.76
Deficit for the year	503.39
Opening balance	890.19
Closing balance	1,393.58

ST MARY'S PARISH CHURCH, BALLYBEEN

SILVER THREADS

Accounts for the year ended 31st December 2021

Receipts	£
Subscriptions	752.00
Donations	200.00
Donations for mission	60.52
Total	1,012.52

Payments	£
Groceries	89.52
Cards & Postage	68.85
Bank Charges	41.04
Donation in lieu of flowers	50.00
Fuel for minibus	80.00
Gift for Audit Services	25.00
Repayment to Homeless cash for 2020 Christmas boxes	243.15
Christmas lunch	121.00
Christmas lunch	867.90
Miscellaneous Expenses	36.91
Total	1,623.37

Surplus (deficit) for the year	(610.85)
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Opening Balance	2,531.87
Closing Balance	1,921.02

ST MARY'S PARISH CHURCH, BALLYBEEN

SIXTY PLUS

Accounts for the year ended 31st December 2021

Receipts	£
Donations	235.50
From Silver Threads for Christmas dinner	127.23
Total	362.73
Payments	£
Food for supper	184.22
Christmas Dinner Costs	628.80
Donation to Chest, Heart & Stroke Associtaion	50.00
Christmas Gift Boxes	
Sundry Expenses	
	863.02
Surplus (deficit) for the year	(500.29)
Opening Balance	500.29
Closing Balance	-

St. Mary's Parish Church, Ballybeen
Minutes of the Annual General Vestry
held on Wednesday 21st April 2021 at Dundonald Methodist

Welcome / Prayer: Jim welcomed everyone and opened in prayer

Worship: Led by Colin Stitt

Reading: Rev Anna Williams read from 1 Peter 2:1-10

Address: Jim gave his address, and this is attached to the minutes at the end.

The meeting was chaired by Rev. Jim Cheshire and 30 people were present.
(Numbers were restricted due to COVID-19 regulations).

Present:

Rev Jim Cheshire (Chair), Chris Adair, Diane Cheshire, Eva Cheshire, Daniel Crawford, Elaine Edwards, Simon Edwards, Sam Elliott, Dawn Ferguson, Rev. Noel Gordon, Linda Gordon, Rachel Haaijer, Tony Hadley, Catherine Hadley, Stephen Harris, Elizabeth Harris, Brian Hobbs, Jon Judge, Karen Magee, David Manning, Jim Myles, Karen Myles, Donna Neill, Joanne Rice, Carol Ross, Megan Ross, Freda Rutherford, Colin Stitt, Rev. Anna Williams.

Apologies:

Adrian & Melita Torrans, Leah Judge, Kyle Ross, Rebecca Adair, Ruth Meneely, John Gunning, Ruth Manning.

Minutes:

The minutes of the last AGV meeting held on 1st October 2020 were reviewed and confirmed to be an accurate reflection. They were adopted and approved. To be signed by Rev Jim Cheshire. Proposed by Stephen Harris and seconded by Jim Myles.

Rector's Report:

Rev. Jim gave his report, and this is attached to the end of the minutes.

Honorary Treasurer's Report:

David Manning gave his report and update on the building works.

This is attached to the end of the minutes.

Rev Jim thanked David for all his work and in particular for the grant applications. He also gave thanks to God and God's people for the good health of our accounts.

David's report was adopted and proposed by Joanne Rice, seconded by Karen Myles.

At this point in the meeting Rev. Jim thanked Joanne Rice for stepping in and taking the minutes on behalf of Ruth Manning who was unavailable.

Elections:

The post of Rector's Church Warden is still held by Jim Myles and he will remain.
The post of People's Glebe Warden is still held by Chris Adair and he will remain.

Jim explained that the posts of People's Church Warden and People's Glebe Warden are up for election.

Dawn Ferguson has stepped down as Rector's Glebe Warden.

The names forward for People's Church Warden are Stephen Harris and Freda Rutherford.

Freda Rutherford was proposed by Dawn Ferguson and seconded by Joanne Rice

The only name for Rector's Glebe Warden is Sam Elliott.

Sam Elliott was proposed by Chris Adair and seconded by Jim Myles.

Voting papers were given out for the post of People's Church Warden and Freda Rutherford was duly elected.

Jim thanked Dawn Ferguson for all her help and support over her years serving as Rector's Glebe Warden.

Votes for the following positions also took place and positions were filled:-

Supplemental Parochial Nominators:-

(2) Elaine Edwards – Nominated by Joanne Rice, seconded by Karen Magee

(3) Jon Judge – Nominated by Megan Ross, seconded by Simon Edwards

(4) Karen Myles – Nominated by Stephen Harris, seconded by Donna Neill

Supplemental Under 30 Diocesan Synod Representative:-

Eva Cheshire – Nominated by Ruth Manning, seconded by Megan Ross.

Select Vestry

Jim thanked the members of the outgoing Select Vestry. Nominations were taken and voted on. The following were elected to serve for the incoming year:-

Rector's Church Warden:	Jim Myles
People's Church Warden:	Freda Rutherford
Rector's Glebe Warden:	Sam Elliott
People's Glebe Warden:	Chris Adair

Select Vestry:	Daniel Crawford	Karen Magee
	Elaine Edwards	David Manning
	Dawn Ferguson	Ruth Manning
	Jon Gunning	Karen Myles
	Stephen Harris	Joanne Rice
	Jon Judge	Megan Ross

Jim thanked everyone for coming and closed the meeting with prayer.

2021 Easter Vestry

21 April

Reading: Anna (1 Peter 2:1-10)

Address: Rev Jim Cheshire

It's interesting how the value of working together as a team stands at the heart of 1 Peter 2:1-10. As I often remind us, it's Teamwork that makes the dream work. And this value has been written clearly across the pages of our life together this past year. In this passage, Peter talks about Christ as the living stone, chosen by God the Father and precious in his sight, he then talks about us in the same way. He says we're like Jesus - precious stones, each person with their own purpose and calling - and that together God is piling us up in such a way as to build a spiritual house, a temple of the Holy Spirit, and part of the reason he's doing this is so that you and I can be a holy priesthood in his service.

Peter first tells us we are a chosen people, members of God's family. Secondly, as a loved member of God's royal priesthood or team, you're called to a purpose - to serve and worship God with whatever gifts God has given you, and this is part of your life of worship. Thirdly, we are a holy nation, set apart for God so we can sign post to others to Christ and greater Christlikeness as well. Finally, as God's special possession, we have a purpose - we are to share the good news we have received with others. And this is something we can all do, as we work together to shine the light of Christ into the darkness of our world. And the amazing thing is that when we do that together, our combined light shines even more brightly as one bigger light in the darkness. That's teamwork, at it's best.

Over the course of this past year we have faced a great darkness, and the biggest health crisis of our generation. To face the many challenges that have arisen, we quickly realised that teamwork was the only way forward, working together not just as a church, but also in partnership with members of the wider community, too. And so, with the other local churches and members of our local community, including the Ballybeen Improvement group and a number of its member groups, as well as with our local councillors and representatives from the council, we formed the BT16 Covid Relief Group, designed to pull our resources and coordinate our volunteer efforts to assist in our area.

To organise and lead this, I was part of the core leadership team representing the church in his role as rector, but also the wider community as the chairperson for the Ballybeen Improvement Group. Working together with that core leadership team, and with the many volunteers who came forward both from our own church and from the wider community, we were able to turn the crisis into an opportunity to help those who needed it most.

Very quickly into the pandemic St Mary's became the area Covid-19 Response Relief Centre, and as such we facilitated the delivery of 1,450 food parcels into our community and the wider area. At one stage, 176 food parcels were coming in and going out of our hall weekly. In addition to food boxes, we also delivered 944 stews/soups, 319 roast dinners and 524 meat parcels, which were all given out to vulnerable members of the community. In addition to keeping an emergency dry food store in the hall, so that we could quickly respond to need, we also worked closely with the Dundonald Foodbank, making referrals when necessary and helping with food donations as well. Through the efforts of volunteers, we

helped to pick up and deliver 312 prescriptions to residents who were self isolating or who were unable to make alternative arrangements to get them.

Realising that the need was wider than just food and medicine, the group also facilitated the payment of essential utilities for those who either could not get out or who found themselves in financial hardship as a result of the pandemic. We set up a telephone befriending service, manned by 44 volunteers, aimed at reducing social isolation and bringing emotional support. In some cases we were able to make referrals to professional and statutory agencies to get people the help they needed. We also kept in touch with local care homes and sheltered accommodations, to ensure they had what they needed. Along with supplying them with hand sanitisers, we also supplied one local care home with a food supply when we discovered they had somehow become cut off from those resources. On behalf of schools we delivered school packs for local post and pre-primary schools right to the homes of local pupils. At Christmas, we helped supply children's toys to the Ballybeen Women's Centre and the Salvation Army. And we worked with the PSNI Community Policing Partnership Programme to highlight topics such as scams and crime prevention for our community. To provide all of this help, in addition to the government food boxes we also managed to attract grant funding of nearly £5,000.

And we know that all of this made a real difference in people's lives, bringing help and hope where it was needed most. As a result of its combined efforts to assist our community, the BT16 Covid Response Team has been acknowledged by attendance at the Lisburn & Castlereagh Mayor's Reception, it came runner up for the Mayor's Community Award, and was nominated for the Pride of Place Ireland Award.

In addition to all of these coordinated efforts, we were also busy as a parish with our own unique initiatives. At Easter time last year, our own ladies created and then delivered 150 Easter gifts into our community to schools and key workers and so on. A little later we gave away over 100 gifts of hand cream to Key Workers in our community. Then at Christmas, since we couldn't meet for our annual seniors' Christmas dinner, we gave out 100 Christmas hampers instead. More recently, at St Patrick's Day we helped distribute Irish Strews to 30 members of our church and around 400 total in our community. Then during Holy Week this year, we delivered another 107 Afternoon Tea boxes to some of our older parishioners and to those connected with our Silver Threads and 60s Plus ministries, along with 180 make your own pizza boxes to children and young people connected to our children's and youth ministries. In addition to putting a lot of smiles on people's faces, our efforts also made it to the Diocesan News Page.

In addition to these practical gifts, the spiritual life of the church has continued to be nourished as well, even though there were large parts of this year that we were unable to physically meet together. Life Groups continued to meet over this new innovation called Zoom, an application that I had never heard of before this pandemic, but which is now a household name. And right from the beginning of the pandemic, our services and our Sunday worship has been recorded weekly and put out online via YouTube and Facebook, along with my weekly Saturday News and Prayer updates. Our Kids' Church Ministry also went online, and thanks to the faithful work of those volunteers there's been something there for our kids nearly every week, in addition to the once a month live Zoom Kids' Church as well. Youth Ministry has also continued through this time, both in person when possible and over Zoom during lockdown. The same is true for our Men's ministry, which also continued into the summer months, as well as Boiler Room Prayer, which started up again in the

autumn and now runs every Sunday morning online. More recently, we started a new ministry called Connect, giving people space to catch up and spend time with one another over Zoom, along with the opportunity to share concerns and pray together at the end.

Of course one of the biggest good news stories for St Mary's this past year has been the brave and faith filled decision the Select Vestry took last summer, when having heard God's call we stepped out in faith and took the decision to begin a building programme during lockdown. Having received a very favourable tender quote we could clearly see God's hand in this, and we moved forward. In October we handed the keys of our buildings over to the builders. Since then, God's faithfulness and goodness have been so apparent - from the generosity of God's people in giving to help cover costs and to close the gap between the loan and the money we had already saved in our development fund, to the fact that our ministries and services have been widely unaffected by being out of the building for this period because of lockdown measures. Not to mention the fact that when we were able to meet, in-person services were able to continued in Dundonald Methodist Church on Sunday afternoons. And at this stage I want to officially note our thanks to Rev. Paul Maxwell and our brothers and sisters of the Methodist Church for their hospitality in making this possible. We are also thankful to the staff of the Stormont Hotel, who hosted our Remembrance Day Service this past year. I'm delighted to say that the works are going well, and although it looks like we've just lost another week due to an issue with the gas, we hope to now be back in our own building on the 16th of May.

But of course, none of these initiatives or ministries that have continued through this year of pandemic have happened by chance or on their own. The thing I want to end with and highlight about them all, is that each and every initiative, from food boxes and afternoon tea parcels to ministries that were enabled to continue through this time - well they all happened through teamwork. There are of course a few people I'd like to mention in particular, but even before I say their names I want to highlight that they were not working alone, but together we were operating as a team to make all of these things happen. I want to of course thank David Manning and Noel Gordon for their continued support for me in my ministry in leading the church through this crisis. And I want to thank Diane for standing with me in ministry as well. I also want to thank our current Select Vestry for their encouragement and faithful support for the initiatives we have undertaken as well as the hard work they have done this past year, particularly in getting us safely back into the building last autumn as well as in bringing the building plans to life, with the help of the building development team, whom I also want to mention. And at this point, I want to say a big thank you to David Manning in particular. I think it is safe to say that without him, we would not be where we are today with the building project. So thank you David for your help and wisdom in dealing with both the financial and the operational aspects of these works.

I've thanked Susannah Harris before, but I want to thank her again for leading us in worship through this pandemic - and Kyle as well for helping with our Men's Ministry. They are both missed but we bless them and pray for God's blessing on their ministry now in Moira Parish.

I also want to thank Karen Magee at this stage, in particular for the IT support, time and hard work she offered this past year in helping to put our recorded content up online and dealing with all the challenges this brings.

I want to thank Ellen Boyd and Ruth Meneely, who have helped to head up our Kids' Church ministry over the course of this past year, and Linda Gordon for helping to facilitate

our Youth Ministry along with Megan and Kyle Ross. I also want to thank Sylvia Clarke, who graciously allowed her work among us to be adapted to focus on pastoral care and phoning the elderly and those in particular need, from home in line with our changing circumstances. That has been such a blessing to many and a real blessing to me, knowing that these folks are being covered pastorally. As has been the support that all of our pastoral care team have been, in trying to keep in touch with all of our parishioners this past year. I think a particular thanks too, goes to Sam Elliott in helping me get the stewarding team up and going, to enable us to meet together safely in person, as well as to all who serve as stewards in this way.

We've also been blessed this past year in that God sent us the Rev'd Anna Williams to serve her Deacon-Intern year among us. Although this turned out to be a deacon year like no other, and although she has not been able to interact with us in all the normal ways she may have done in normal circumstances, she came to us at just the right time - as there were a number of things that we would simply not have been able to accomplish this year without the extra capacity, leadership, creativity, encouragement and skills that she brings to the table. Thank you Anna. I have already heard a number of you saying how sorry we will be when it is time for you to move on at the end of June. That, I think, is high praise.

This has been a tough year for all of us. In a very short space of time, we had to learn how to do things differently, and we've had to deal with the ever changing lockdown restrictions along the way. But God has been faithful. And even though lives have been lost over the course of this year due to the pandemic, and all of our lives have been affected, things could have been far worse, and we need to remember this and give thanks to God for his protection and provision for us, even while we continue to remember those who are no longer with us, and as we continue to remember and pray for their families and loved ones.

But I want us also to remember the part that team work played in our story over this past year, as a church and as a community. Tonight we give thanks for the gift of one another, we give thanks for the opportunity to serve one another and our community together in these ways. But we also look forward to a new year, with new buildings and new possibilities. And as we move back to reopening the church and as we move in time to restarting and rebuilding ministries that have been put on pause or that have had to run differently through the pandemic, I have to take us back to that simple challenge. As God's people, we have a high calling to be different, to serve and worship him and to point others to him, through our lives, our church and in our community. If we want to be effective in doing this again this year, we can never forget, that as we follow Christ and move forward in the power of His Spirit, it's Teamwork that makes the dreamwork.