

- Deanery Synod Representative : Mrs Jennifer MacCallum

Elected members:

- Mrs Anne Matthews, Secretary
- Mr Richard Gough, Treasurer
- Dr Jan Rogan, Vice Chairman
- Mrs Barbara Rush, Safeguarding Officer
- Mrs Wendy Doncaster, Electoral Roll Officer
- Mr Keith Rush
- Mr Mark Wingate
- Mr John Pitts
- Mrs Linda Davis
- Mrs Mags Newton

Signed by Revd Ian Scott-Thompson on behalf of the PCC on 14 February 2022

*Ian Scott-Thompson*



## St Margaret's and St Catherines's



Annual Report  
2021

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The method of appointment of PCC members is set out in the Church Representation Rules. Our PCC consists of the incumbent who acts as Chairman, churchwardens, the reader and members elected at the Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM) by those members of the congregation who are on the electoral role of the church.

The PCC members are responsible for making decisions on all matters of general concern and importance to the parish including deciding on how the funds of the PCC are to be spent. New PCC members receive initial briefing.

**Standing Committee:** This committee is required by law. It is made up of the Rector, churchwardens, Secretary and Treasurer. It has the power to transact the business of the PCC between its meetings, subject to any directions given by the PCC. The Rector is the Chairman.

**Leadership Team:** This group, led by the Rector and consisting of the Reader, Churchwardens and a small number of other members, meets on a regular basis to consider all aspects of church life. Another group meets quarterly to plan All-Age worship and other special celebratory occasions.

**Fabric and Churchyard:** Mr Ken Thompson, churchwarden, is the lead maintainer of both the churchyard and fabric of the building. Many volunteers help with maintenance and cleaning on a regular basis. They cut the grass in the churchyard on a regular basis and assist on a one-off church yard maintenance morning and on other ad hoc occasions.

**Fund raising:** The establishment of the Friends of Aldham Church has already been referred to. However, the PCC and church members will continue to plan and organise other fund raising activities in the future.

**Other Rotas:** some 50-60 volunteers, amongst other things, welcome worshippers to church, read and lead the prayers in services, provide flower arrangements, serve coffee after church, clean the church, print and distribute the monthly newsletter, assist with logistics and cater for special occasions.

## Administrative information

St Margaret and St Catherine Church is situated at the cross roads of Tey Road, New Road and Green Lane, in the centre of the village. The correspondence address is The PCC Secretary, 18 Scott Drive, Colchester, CO3 4JD.

PCC members who have served at any time from 1st January 2021 until the date this report was approved are:

Ex officio members:

- Incumbent: Revd Ian Scott-Thompson (Chairman)
- Reader and Deanery Synod Representative: Mr Iain MacCallum
- Wardens: Mrs Coral Wingate, Mr Ken Thompson

The poor state of this fund over the last seven years is shown in the table on page 13. Note that figures in brackets are negative balances.

### **Budget 2021**

In December 2020 the PCC agreed a deficit budget of £3,097 for both the General and Fabric Fund combined. But by the end of the year, that deficit has become a surplus of £3,535, for which we are truly thankful.

How come? Our combined income (£35,268) was well over budget (£30,900), due to a large number of one off donations, including very generous contributions to the Gift Day. Our combined expenditure (£31,734) was under budget (£33,997) by £3,535, mainly due to low spending on heating and Minister's expenses.

### **Budget 2022**

A budget for 2022 shows that with a Gift Day of about £4,000 and a Parish Share of £24,000 we should end the year with a surplus of £488.

### **Mission and Charity Giving**

Mission and Charity giving are included in the General Fund.

It continues to be our financial policy that we should seriously support the wider church. Members accept that 10% of their regular giving to Aldham Church will go as direct giving to external Christian causes. See table on page 13,

### **Tom Holme Legacy Fund (designated)**

There was no movement on this fund during 2021. It stands at £10,649.

### **Structure, governance and management**

Since October 2011 the Parish of St Margaret and St Catherine, Aldham, in the Benefice of Marks Tey and Aldham, has been in the Deanery of Colchester and in the Colchester Episcopal Area of the Diocese of Chelmsford.

The PCC is the body corporate (PCC Powers Measure 1956, Church Representation Rules 2006) and a charity currently excepted from registration with the Charity Commission and exempt from tax under sections 505, 506 or 508 of the Income and Corporation Taxes Act 1988. It has no financially related trusts or charities. It met six times during the year.

# **2021 Report and Accounts for the Parochial Church Council of St Margaret's and St Catherine's Aldham**

Incumbent: Revd Ian Scott-Thompson  
The Rectory, Church Lane, Marks Tey  
Colchester, CO6 1LW

Reader: Mr Iain MacCallum,  
9 Handford Place, Queens Road  
Colchester, CO3 3NY

Bank: CAF Bank Limited  
25 Kings Hill Avenue, Kings Hill  
West Malling, Kent, ME19 4JQ

Independent Examiner: Mr Colin Smith  
18 Reynards Copse, Highwoods  
Colchester, CO4 9UR

Website: [www.aldham-church.co.uk](http://www.aldham-church.co.uk)

## Aims and purposes

Aldham Parochial Parish Council (PCC) has the responsibility of cooperating with the incumbent, the Reverend Ian Scott-Thompson, in promoting in the ecclesiastical parish, the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical. As a church community, our aim is that we should all grow into a living relationship with Jesus Christ. We aim to do this through worship for people of all ages and stages in life, and through keeping the wider world's needs in our minds and in our giving.

The PCC is also specifically responsible for the church building and grounds.

## Objectives and activities

The PCC is committed to enabling as many people as possible to worship at our church and to become part of our parish community.

Our Mission Statement reads:

“We exist to honour God and to enable people in our community discover Jesus”

The PCC maintains an overview of worship throughout the parish and makes suggestions on how our regular services and one-off special events can involve everybody within the parish. Before the Covid-19 pandemic, our regular pattern of worship contained variety: one All-Age Worship, two Communion and one or two Services of the Word. This year, the monthly pattern has been three Services of the Word and one Communion with Junior Church on one Sunday. On fifth Sundays we join with Marks Tey for a combined service. Our services and worship put faith into practice through prayer and scripture, music and sacrament.

When planning our activities for the year, we have considered the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit and, in particular, the supplementary guidance on charities for the advancement of religion. We have also been particularly mindful of the guidance and encouragement provided by the previous Bishop of Chelmsford's Transforming Presence publication. We try to enable ordinary people to live out their faith as part of our parish community through:

- Worship and prayer; learning about the Gospel, and developing their knowledge and trust in Jesus.
- Provision of pastoral care for people living in the parish.
- Missionary and outreach work.

To facilitate this we maintain the fabric of the Church. Despite it being an old and traditional building it is configured to make it as multi-use as possible with kitchen and toilet facilities. During 2015 a Friends of Aldham Church was formed to assist with fund raising for maintenance of the fabric.

costs remained at a similar level to the previous year. We are able to recover the VAT on some of the Fabric expenditure. From 2015, the Fabric Fund has been used to pay for routine fabric expenditure such as insurance, minor repairs, roof alarm maintenance and gutter maintenance. Income is principally from the Book Exchange, the FOECT Ride and Stride and a few donations.

Fabric Fund Year End Balances						
2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
£6,106	£4,563	£1,666	£678	£693	(£613)	(£880)

In June we received a legacy of £1,468 from the estate of John Crane who was Treasurer of Aldham Church from the 1980s to 1992. It was an unrestricted gift and was assigned by the PCC to the Fabric Fund for some future project. Other income was mainly: from vergering fees - £188, Friends of Aldham Church - £800, Ride and Stride - £158, Book Exchange - £39 and VAT recovery - £198 making total receipts £2,972.

Mission & Charity Giving - 2021	
CYO	701
Tearfund	220
New Life Church, Nepal	600
Essex Clergy Charity	80
Friends of Essex Churches	60
Bible Society	120
CPAS	80
Colchester CAP	225
Colchester Foodbank	225
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£ 2,311</b>

The major items of expenditure were: insurance (£1,690), roof alarm maintenance (£537) and tree maintenance (£240). Routine maintenance included organ tuning, boiler maintenance, gutter clearance, fire extinguishers, trees and minor repairs., making total payments £3,238.

church. We received one legacy this year. See section on **Fabric Fund**.

## Giving in kind

We continue to benefit from the generosity of many of our number who give their time, skills, energy and material goods in order to keep the church operating with a minimum of actual expenditure. Whether inside the church, in the churchyard or elsewhere these efforts are appreciated and we thank our organist, the musicians and all who are on church rotas and who help out on an ad-hoc basis. Similarly fees for vergering and bell ringing, at the request of those providing the service, are returned to the church.

## The Accounts for 2021

The complete accounts may be seen on the church website. Copies may be found at the back of the church or obtained from the Treasurer, Mr Richard Gough, 12 Oak Tree Cottages, Aldham, CO6 3RJ.

## General fund

The General Fund (unrestricted) ended the year with a balance of £5,427.43, over £3000 up from the end of 2020. The total receipts into the general fund were around £1500 up on 2021, mainly due to the gift aid tax relief claimed on donations from the Gift Day in 2020. Overall our expenditure from the General Fund was very similar to 2021.

The Parish Share continues to be a challenge, even though it went up since 2020 by only 0.06% to £24,471. This was due to a generous decision by Marks Tey PCC to donate about £900 to us and adjust the 60/40 split to 61.5/38.5 from 1 January 2022. Even so, we knew we would not be able to pay the share unless special steps were taken. The PCC decided on another 'Gift Day' on 21 November with a target of £4,000 which we said would be necessary to pay for our share in the cost of ministry. Gift Day was in fact more successful in that it raised £4,925, enabling the PCC in December to decide to pay the share in full, as it has always done for at least 50 years. We have avoided using the Tom Holme Legacy Fund for running expenses.

It looks as though Gift Day is becoming an annual event at Aldham.

## Fabric fund (restricted)

We have allowed the Fabric Fund to move to a negative balance over recent years. This means the Fabric Fund is effectively borrowing money from the General Fund. Income into this fund was benefited by a legacy in 2021. All the expenditure from this fund was routine in 2021. The fund carries forward a deficit balance of £880.44. Church running

## Broadband

The Covid pandemic has highlighted the value of being able to broadcast worship from the local church to the community and beyond using the internet. Advantages include being able to reach those who *cannot* get to church services; a disadvantage is that it tempts members who *could* get to church, to stay in bed, and thereby divides the church. On balance, the PCC decided to pursue a free installation offered by County Broadband.

## Achievements and performance

Aldham is a small village (approximately 490 residents 18 years+; 220 dwellings). Despite being a few miles from the ever-expanding boundaries of Colchester and close to a mainline commuter station at Marks Tey its population is relatively static. It is estimated that almost three quarters of residents have lived in the village for more than 11 years. It is also an 'ageing' village with less than 10% being children under 15 but just under 50% being 57 years or over. Almost three quarters of households are either single or two persons. It has no school, no shop, no pub and it is geographically spread out. During 2014 the Village Hall was reopened for full use after a large renovation and rebuilding project. It is well used by both village and outside groups. The village has seven Almshouse units managed by a separate charity. Renovation of the Hines Almshouses has been completed and three modernised units were ready for occupation in the Spring of 2019. New residents, all with strong village connections, have been appointed and are now living in their new homes.

This profile presents challenges to us as a church. In normal times we struggled to attract children to All Age Worship services. When we were locked out of the church, we dropped the All-Age Service, as we were down to a single child. When we got back in the Church building, she was catered for on a one-to-one basis. We are praying for more children and the resumption of All-Age worship.

We continue to rely on a very willing but ageing congregation to help maintain the building and grounds, run events and engage in our outreach activities. However, 2021 has been a difficult year. Most of these activities have had to be called off. The Carol Service has, in the past, represented the church 'at the centre' of village life. Last year we sang a few carols at the church porch, but this year we reinstated the Carol Service, by torchlight in the churchyard, accompanied by an accordion and a violin. Over 80 people turned up, more than expected! Likewise, we took the harvest thanksgiving service to the churchyard and attracted a congregation of 35.

None of this could have been achieved without the many volunteers who give of their time and resources to ensure the church is ready for worship each Sunday, that our outreach activities are maintained and that our church remains the lively and vibrant community it is. We would like to thank all of the 50-60 people who regularly assist with all these activities.

## **Covid-19**

For much of the year, Marks Tey and Aldham have been centres of high infection. Activity this year has again been dominated by the diocesan and national advice and restrictions placed on churches. We began the year excluded from the church building and worshipped on Zoom. In May we were allowed back into the building. We aimed to keep socially distanced, and all wore face masks out of respect for the high infection rate and a number of extremely vulnerable adults. At the door, names were kept, sanitiser applied and at the end of the service, the congregation was asked to leave promptly and chat outside the church in the churchyard. This was an alien concept, and there was a reluctance about leaving the church

## **Average attendances**

Given the service changes outlined in the section above, average attendances are not a true guide to performance.

The Zoom services - January to April - were reasonably well attended, but not all our regulars could or would attend. Among those who couldn't use Zoom were some with no computer or internet; those who had poor connectivity to the internet; and those who needed friendly help with the technology but were isolating. One or two, for some reason or other, felt the grid of faces was just not church, and did not join. Some of those who persevered with the joint Zooms reflected that they had got to know Marks Tey people better.

Subjectively, we feel that attendance since we got back in the building in May, is only slightly down on pre-pandemic levels. We wear masks, we sing and we sit reasonably spaced but not regimented. One disabled person could not come back soon enough! But generally people appreciated the more personal contact which they regarded as vital in worship.

We are predominantly a village congregation. Based on the 2021 Electoral Roll (52), 45 are Aldham residents, 3 were Aldham residents who now live outside the parish but return to worship in Aldham, and 4 are not Aldham residents.

## **Pastoral care**

There is no official organisation for Pastoral Care but there are about 10 members who visit those who are in hospital, are unwell or confined to their homes. During lockdown, all church members have been asked to use their phones to talk to anyone they know who may feel isolated. This has been invaluable to a number of people needing help and comfort during 2021

## **Worship and prayer**

Ideally, we would like to offer a range of services each month and over the course of a

FABRIC AND CHURCHYARD. From time to time, we invite the village as a whole to contribute towards repairs or improvements to the fabric, and to maintenance of the churchyard. We also seek grants to cover major fabric repairs. We undertake fund-raising for fabric and churchyard.

In recent years "The Friends of Aldham Church" (FOAC) has also contributed significantly to the Fabric Fund. FOAC's aims are to ensure that Aldham Church's building and churchyard shall be of increasing benefit to the wider community of Aldham and its neighbouring villages for present and future generations by aiding the PCC in improving, repairing, maintaining, renewing, restoring, preserving and developing Aldham Church, churchyard and associated buildings, and the fixtures and fittings in the Church, churchyard and associated buildings for the benefit of the public.

MISSIONS AND CHARITIES. We give 10% of the previous year's regular giving to external Christian missions and charities. In addition to this, fund-raising is undertaken by members for specific causes. The charities supported by this means are at the organisers' discretion, and the church is pleased to support such efforts for Christian organisations or organisations which have a Christian ethos. Mission and Charity giving was transferred to the General Fund at the start of 2019.

## **Accounting policy**

Since our gross income is less than £250,000 we are allowed to choose whether to prepare accounts on an accruals basis or on a receipts and payments basis. Since the beginning of 2010 we have been using the receipts and payments basis. We can also choose to have an independent examiner (rather than a registered auditor) examine the annual accounts.

As the church is a grade II\* listed building, we are able to recover the VAT on much of the fabric repair work that has to be done.

## **Reserves policy**

We try to maintain a balance on non-restricted funds which equates to at least three months' unrestricted payments. At the end of 2021 we had £15,986.78 in unrestricted and designated funds, against 12-monthly payments of £32,734. So we meet the Charity Commission requirement.

## **Legacies**

The PCC has agreed a legacy policy. It welcomes all gifts in wills, however large or small, and we undertake to use these gifts to make a difference in this parish. Since needs change over the years, the PCC encourages gifts to be left for the general purposes of the parish church. PCCs will often discuss with executors the most appropriate use of a legacy gift in the light of current projects and the testator's areas of interest in the

Check for worm at other cornice, in particular at Chancel	£--
Local timber treatment at pulpit lowest step, adjacent Choirstall end, pew ends, floor and edge at pews, as needed	£150
Repair worm damage at rear Aisle platform edge	£350
Provide brass "hospital pattern" pipe clips for rope at stair	£200
Remove ivy at boundary wall and monuments	£--
Paint gate hinges	£30

### **Work requiring attention within five years**

Derust and paint window ironwork	£900
Repaint rainwater goods, inc inside gutters & hoppers	£3,500
Complete repointing to south boundary wall.	£200
Replace 2 or 3 missing flints at Chancel gable apex	£1,200
Carry out localised areas of pointing, rebed displaced flints	£2,500
Fill badly open crevices at flintwork	£500

### **Other fabric**

Apart from the annual servicing routines there were no exceptional works done on the church during the year.

Annual servicing : Rainwater goods, Boiler, Fire Extinguishers, Pipe Organ, Lightning Protection, Roof, Intruder Alarm, Tree Surgery, minor repairs

Total Cost: £ 1,622.

Broken tiles, referred to in the 2021 report were investigated but not found.

## **Financial review**

### **Treasurer's post**

Richard Gough continued in the role of treasurer during 2021 with assistance and support from Iain MacCallum.

### **Financial policy**

GENERAL FUND. The cost of ministry and worship are generally met by the direct regular giving of the membership of the church. By church membership, we mean regular worshippers and the church Electoral Roll. We post all fees to the general fund, and we welcome donations (preferably Gift Aided) and legacies. Income arising from social events may be directed to the general fund at the organisers' discretion. We have no endowment income or any other reserves.

year. Before the pandemic, we had All-Age services on the first Sunday of the month with an enthusiastic music group and a number of leaders sharing the planning and activities. Thereafter, the regular monthly cycle had two Holy Communion services, and a Service of the Word at which five lay members assist in leading and speaking. We also have a regular core of readers and intercessors. There was a monthly communion on a Tuesday.

But 2021 started, as 2020 ended, with the church out of bounds and services held on Zoom up until 25 April. Regrettably, we had to continue not to have All-Age worship, and the pattern became three Services of the Word, and one Communion. For Communion we each provided ourselves with bread and wine or some other liquid and all consumed at the same time. The average attendance at these services on Zoom was 18.

On 2 May 2021, it was felt safe to use the church, leaving the congregation to keep distance and be masked. We sang with masks, but our little band was augmented with an unmasked soloist! For communion we again used individual glasses obtained from a Methodist supplier and we were all able to consume at the same time. Almost everyone felt comfortable taking the wine this way.

There was always the threat that the church might be closed again, so where large congregations were expected, e.g. Easter Day, Pentecost, Harvest and the Carol Service, we planned for open air services in the churchyard, focussing on the porch. The Easter Day service attracted 41, Pentecost 14, Harvest 35, Remembrance 34 and the Carol Service 78. The average attendance from 2 May to 31 December 2021 when we met either in the church or the churchyard was 23. We were sort of back to pre-pandemic levels of attendance. We had lost a few, but we gained one or two.

Harvest was celebrated in the churchyard on 10 October, with gifts of lots of non-perishables for **Open Door** that was still functioning in the forecourt of the Baptist Church in Eld Lane. The annual Shoe Box project went ahead, undeterred by the pandemic. Lindsay Gough made up or collected some 40 boxes for **Operation Christmas Child**. We supported **Beacon House** with the proceeds of the church Christmas Card (£63). The Blue Box collection for the **Children's Society** raised a little over £287.

John Pitts and Keith Rush continued training to become authorised lay preachers, and as part of their training they led many services and preached many sermons.

Throughout the restrictions, the mid-week home group has used the small screen and projector to present Bible Readings recorded on DVDs at pre-covid New Wine and Keswick Conventions. These have been well-supported and continued into 2022. The second home group is being restarted in 2022.

Only one pastoral service was held in 2021, and that was a funeral in February before restrictions were in force.

## Mission and outreach

Helping those in need and bringing others to Christ is a demonstration of our faith.

The PCC has continued its policy of supporting Christian organisations or organisations which support the Christian ethic. We do this in two ways:

- 10% of our regular giving is donated to external Christian causes. A full list is given in the financial statements but they include local, Christian Youth Outreach (CYO) in Colchester reaching out to young people in local schools and national/international work, such as the New Life Church in Kathmandu. Together with St Andrews, Marks Tey we have supported the growth of this Christian church, often in very difficult circumstances, since 2003. The New Life Church and its church plants now considerably outsize Aldham and Marks Tey!

Fund-raising is undertaken for specific causes and during 2021 these have included Open Door, Foodbank and Beacon House which specialises in assisting homeless people to get back into society. For many years we have supported the Samaritan's Purse shoebox scheme, sending gifts to deprived children at Christmas time.

Three important social initiatives have had to be suspended during the present crisis: the increasingly popular monthly Saturday morning book exchange coffee and cake; open church each Tuesday morning for coffee, a chat and a time of fellowship followed once a month by communion; the monthly sit-down Afternoon Tea. Book-exchange resumed in January 2022, and Open Church restarted monthly in 2022.

Many who come to these events are not yet regular church members, but some have gone on to make Sunday church a regular event. We think of this as low-key outreach. The footfall, over all services and events in pre-pandemic 2019 was in the region of 4,650, about 9 times the population of Aldham! It will take a few years to regain that footfall.

The church is well-represented on the Village Hall Management Committee. We are always looking for ways to co-operate with the Village Hall whether for social or fund-raising purposes.

The monthly newsletter continues to be produced. Up until March 2021, email issues were produced, as well as a copy being put on the website. The paper issue resumed in May 2021. It is delivered free of charge to every house in the parish, carrying church and village news. About 40 copies are always e-mailed to friends around the world.

Our website carries details of worship, mission, who's who and links to other sites. We continue to write a church column in Grapevine, the quarterly village magazine.

## Friends of Aldham Church

In 2015, the PCC approved the establishment of The Friends of Aldham Church (FOAC)

and this was formally launched at the Carol Service in December 2015. The Friends was established under the umbrella of the PCC, using the church charity and HMRC registrations for ease of administration, but with its own committee. Two members of the PCC, one of whom is a churchwarden, are members of the Friends committee. The incumbent is the President. The Chairman appointed at the 2018 AGM was Andy Brown. In addition to the PCC nominations, the committee is made up of eight other village residents. The Friends are now well established in their fund-raising activities for the maintenance of the fabric. In 2016 they raised £2,316 towards the repair of the south boundary wall, and in response to the quinquennial fabric repair fund appeal in 2019 they raised over £13,000, more than any other grant. The FOAC has now established itself as an extremely valuable partner for the church.

However, in 2021, most of the social gatherings that were the bread and butter of their fund-raising could not take place. But, there was a most enjoyable garden party at Tile House, thanks to Neil and Wendy Byford. We are sure FOAC have some good ideas up their sleeves for when the restrictions are lifted.

## Fabric and churchyard

### Quinquennial (2016) Repairs

All the work specified in the 2016 Quinquennial report has been completed.

### Quinquennial (2021) Repairs

**Summary of Architect's list of work to be done. None has been done so far**

The church has been well maintained and is generally in very good order but there will, of course, always be a number of day to day items of maintenance in a building of this nature.

For the assistance of the P.C.C the items requiring attention have been listed in an approximate order of priority with an indication of cost which is for guidance only and will change as time goes by.

**Urgent works requiring immediate attention or Cost £ concurrently with annual roof maintenance**

Replace broken tiles to roofs	£50
Check no water ingress at roof hatch -	£--
Check valley gutter for any further squirrel damage at drips -	£--

### **Work requiring attention within twelve months**

Local timber treatment as required at hatch enclosure	£50
Treat Nave SW cornice (check also leaking pipe adjacent)	£250