

SECTION REPORTS 2020

Presented at the Annual General Meeting, March 2021

Pastor's Report.

This is an annual report I would never have dreamed of writing nor is it one that I would want to write again. However, in a year of global crisis and uncertainty, God has remained faithful and we have much to be thankful for as a church. The building in which we meet may have needed to close, but the church certainly hasn't! This has been a year of progress and foundation building, the fruits of which I am convinced will be seen in the months and years ahead.

This time last year, the thought of doing church on-line would have been enough to send me running for cover but I have been amazed at how resourceful and determined people have been to make it happen. Our Worship Group and Technical team have served us in the most amazing way. I cannot begin to thank them enough for all the hours they have given to put our services together. The blessing received has been immeasurable and one of the unexpected outcomes of going on-line is to have a congregation that is probably now twice the size! Although I still believe an on-line service is no match for meeting and worshipping together.

Although lockdown has brought huge challenges, and I never want a repeat of it, it has presented us with amazing opportunities. People have responded magnificently to a multitude of pastoral situations. I trust we have become a brighter light in the community through the way people have served. It has also been so encouraging seeing Messy Church grow in a way we probably couldn't have imagined, with more families being reached and supported through the delivery of craft bags and the on-line service.

Far from shutting up shop, 2020 has certainly been a year of progress and development. After returning from Albania, we were delighted that Chris and Debbie Carter accepted the call to join Harri, increasing our YMCA Community Outreach team from one to three! I know lockdown has presented its challenges to them, but contacts have still been made, relationships developed, and support offered in a variety of ways. I've made the point before and I want to make it again. We haven't employed Harri, Chris and Debbie to do the work on our behalf. We have employed them to open up and facilitate opportunities that will draw others of us into the vital work of Community Outreach.

An ambitious vision brings with it an increasing amount of administration. We are so thankful to those who have given much of their free time to carry out this vital work over the years, but we also recognised in 2020 that we now have a workload that requires a level of time and professional ability that is difficult to sustain on a voluntary basis. And so, it was agreed by the church to create the new post of Church Operations Manager. We hope to be able to fill this position by Easter 2021.

I know Marie will mention this in her report, but it has also been exciting to see God's provision through continued faithful giving on the part of the congregation. At a time when so many charities and churches have suffered financially, the congregation has never wavered in its giving.

As we look back on 2020 it is important we acknowledge that this has been a year of pain and loss for many in our congregation. We especially remember the Home calling of John Geelan and Hilary Webber. We thank God for two faithful examples of servanthood who are now greatly missed.

Finally, we enter 2021 with incredible opportunities but also big challenges before us. I don't think God would want it any other way. I am excited, as I trust you are, to be a part of what He has in store for us in the coming year.

God bless, Peter.

Secretary's Report

Who'd have thought this time last year, eh? Our 2020 AGM also coincided with our final Sunday Worship service together without restrictions, but we didn't realise it at the time. A year on, and it has been amazing the way God has led us through, kept us, strengthened our faith, challenged us, and built us up. We acknowledge that His capacities are not limited by the pandemic.

It is truly amazing how God has enabled us to continue serving, often in new and unusual ways. Friday Friendship moved online, and has allowed relationships to grow; the new online Sunday Chat has provided a measure of fellowship that we used to enjoy over a coffee in the Hall. Bible study, Lifegroups, prayer meetings, Leadership Team meetings, Church Members meetings and various spontaneous catch-ups have been able to take place on Zoom. It's not the same as meeting face-to-face, but what a tool it has been for the Kingdom!

I have been impressed with the creativity of members in finding ways to meet with others: garden lunches, walks, cycle-rides, door-stop drop-bys, shopping for each other, running errands for each other, and telephoning those who are isolated. Thank you to everyone who has stepped up in various ways "to equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ." Ephesians 4:12,13

A highlight for me has been putting together the ECC Newsletter, weekly for the first part of 2020 and now monthly. My thanks to all contributors, and especially to John Sumner, whose daily devotions on Facebook have been such an important ministry and reached so many.

Less thrilling has been having to oversee Covid restrictions on those Sundays we were able to meet. It is frustrating to require people to book, and to limit numbers. An unexpected benefit has been that many more people can view the live-streamed service, even if they are ill or have transportation difficulties. Many thanks to John Watts and Trevor Sharp for their technical expertise. This is a ministry we want to continue even after restrictions lift. Thanks, too, to Chela Fowler and the Stewarding Team for their diligence in helping to keep us safe in the Hall.

We have just signed up to Exeter Foodbank's referral service. This means that we can issue someone in crisis with a Foodbank voucher. This is just one of the many rays of hope I see for the coming year. God has blessed us as a fellowship, and I am confident He will continue to do so as we seek His way forward for our church.

Sandy Salisbury

Treasurer's Annual Report 2019

The accounts for 2020 have been prepared and have now been checked by our independent examiner, who has confirmed that they are an accurate reflection of our financial position. The full accounts for 2020 are available on request.

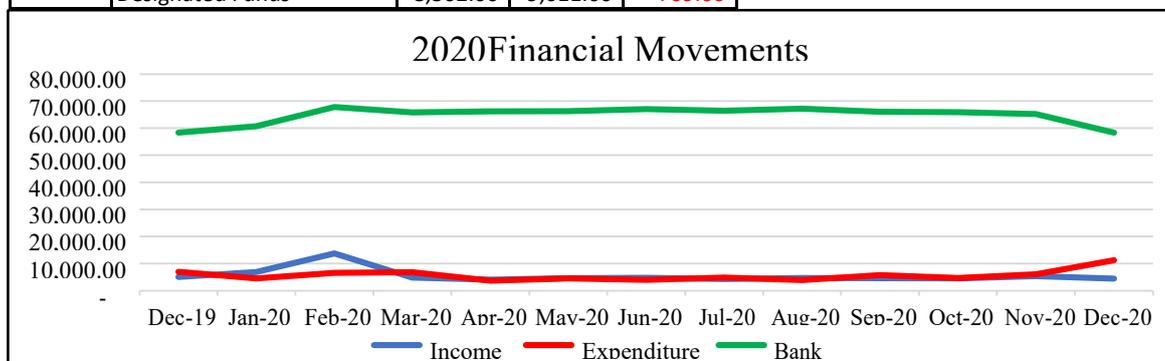
I think we can safely say that 2020 has been a year like no other. In a time of lockdown we have had to pause many of our activities. We have moved online for our Sunday Worship and employed 2 additional community workers. Additionally during 2020 we have been able to donate £10,185 to Christian charities, and a further £1,380 to individuals in need.

Thanks to the generosity of all of our members, we have ended a truly exceptional year with a bank balance of £58,353.07 and a total deficit of only £27.19.

Key Figures to note are:

		2020	2019	Difference
Income		66,479.76	68,326.95	-1,847.19
of which:	Gift Aided Donations	35,838.23	37,048.17	-1,209.94
	Non Gift Aided Donations	9,477.45	8,578.07	899.38
	Gift Aid	9,379.96	6,580.00	2,799.96
	Rental Income	10,200.00	10,200.00	0.00
	Other Income	1,584.12	5,920.71	-4,336.59
Expenditure		66,506.95	61,400.48	5,106.47

including	Donations to other charities	10,185.00	8,143.00	2,042.00
	Fellowship Fund	1,380.75	123.29	1,257.46
	Pastor	35,996.46	35,810.49	185.97
	YMCA Community Workers	9,841.28	2,636.00	7,205.28
Bank Balance at 31 December		58,353.07	58,380.26	-27.19
of which:	General Fund	50,051.07	49,369.26	681.81
	Designated Funds	8,302.00	9,011.00	-709.00



As our accounts are prepared on an income and expenditure basis, it is important to note that there are some items that have not been included in the 2020 accounts, as they had not been received or paid as at 31/12/2020. These include:

- Gift aid relating to 2020 donations of £9,105.65 (received January 2021). As we move into 2021 we are planning on claiming this quarterly, thereby allowing the gift aid income to be shown in the same accounting year as the donations to which it relates most of the time.
- A final bill of £4,023 in relation to replacing the Manse windows (paid January 2021). This has been paid using money designated for this purpose.
- Payments for the use of the church office, as no invoices have yet been received.

Our budget for 2021:

ECC General Account Balances	BUDGET			
		For Comparison		
	2021 Budget	2020 Actual	2019 Actual	2018 Actual
Opening Balances				
General Funds	50,078.26	49,369.26	42,442.79	22,670.40
Designated Funds: Building Fund	7,552.00	8,261.00	8,261.00	8,261.00
Designated Funds: Manse Deposit	750.00	750.00	750.00	750.00
Opening Balances brought forward	58,380.26	58,380.26	51,453.79	31,681.40
Income				
General Purpose Income: Gift Aided	34,000.00	34,958.60	30,266.13	22,226.04
General Purpose Income: Non Gift Aided	10,000.00	9,378.23	8,198.07	6,549.16
General Purpose Income: Gift Aided Loose Offering	2,000.00	879.63	6,782.04	2,874.03
General Purpose Income: Non Gift Aided Loose Offering	-	80.00	380.00	1,472.50
General Purpose Income: Just Giving	-	19.22	-	-
Total General Purpose Income	46,000.00	45,315.68	45,626.24	33,121.73
Other Income: Administration	-	37.44	-	-
Other Income: Children's and Youth Work	-	28.70	-	8.06
Other Income: Church Members' Meetings	-	91.13	35.00	-
Other Income: Community Projects	-	-	15.72	-
Other Income: Conferences and Training	-	-	660.00	747.00
Other Income: Equipment	-	-	53.70	36.40
Other Income: Fellowship Fund	-	10.22	228.75	-
Other Income: Friday Friendship	140.00	60.59	335.42	285.16

Other Income: Gifts	-	120.00	3,500.00	-
Other Income: Life Groups (incl Ladies Prayer)	-	65.04	237.33	471.34
Other Income: Manse	10,200.00	10,200.00	10,200.00	9,400.00
Other Income: Messy Church	260.00	133.51	430.86	241.35
Other Income: Mission	-	948.75	393.00	326.29
Other Income: Special Events (Incl Alpha/Away Day)	100.00	88.74	-	5.00
Other Income: Tea and Coffee	-	-	30.93	-
Designated Income: Building Fund	-	-	-	-
Designated Income: Manse Deposit	-	-	-	-
HMRC Tax Refund	16,150.00	9,379.96	6,580.00	6,347.40
Total Income	72,850.00	66,479.76	68,326.95	50,989.73
Expenditure				
Administration	12,102.53	3,667.46	3,457.20	1,935.42
Alpha	500.00	499.17	-	-
Children's and Youth Work	100.00	67.93	264.74	201.82
Church Members' Meeting	250.00	240.75	214.80	96.40
Conferences and Training	500.00	210.00	644.11	907.00
Equipment Purchase	500.00	1,450.71	1,361.56	281.42
Fellowship Fund	-	1,005.90	123.29	36.00
Friday Friendship	915.00	343.00	1,308.84	824.58
Life Groups	-	149.94	189.85	378.67
Manse	4,270.00	1,029.01	2,359.90	2,843.33
Messy Church	1,199.25	372.70	870.82	1,228.59
Mission	7,000.00	10,185.00	8,143.00	5,770.29
Monthly Prayer Meeting	45.00	20.00	70.00	60.00
Pastor	37,498.30	35,996.46	35,810.49	14,676.66
Presentations and Gifts	400.00	374.85	1,000.00	-
Special Events	750.00	60.01	97.00	148.42
Sunday Worship	2,523.00	881.52	2,589.75	1,754.66
Tea and Coffee	300.00	111.26	259.13	74.08
YMCA Families Workers	18,277.00	9,841.28	2,636.00	-
Total Expenses	87,130.08	66,506.95	61,400.48	31,217.34
Movement	- 14,280.08	- 27.19	6,926.47	19,772.39
Closing Balance	44,100.18	58,353.07	58,380.26	51,453.79
Closing Balance Check	44,100.18	58,353.07	58,380.26	51,453.79

At first glance this is a daunting budget, as we are currently anticipating a shortfall of £14,280. Key aspects to note are that following the events of 2020, we have recognised that income in 2021 is unpredictable, and therefore estimates have been made based on income remaining static.

In order to meet the requirements set out in charities law we are expected to maintain reserves equivalent to 3 months' running costs. Even with this level of planned deficit, we will still be able to maintain this level of reserves.

However, as a church we have no plans to remain static and have budgeted for increases in activity and the employment of a Church Operations Manager. We know that if our plans are in line with God's plans, the money will be available to finance those plans. We have a God who provides, but we also have a God who sometimes expects us to step out in faith and act before we see that provision.

Marie Langdon

Messy Church Report

Messy Church has moved online as a YouTube video each month. The first video in July proved popular, and since then craft packs have been delivered to families that want them. Using the Exwick News and various Facebook groups to advertise the number of families receiving packs has increased from 6 in August to 22 delivered in February. Some of these families are new contacts. It seems that despite the pandemic and the restrictions we are making new friends. The families usually have their packs delivered by the same people so that relationships can be built upon.

At Christmas some of our church family helped put together Christmas ballers for some of the families Harri has been supporting. These were very gratefully received.

Harri Sharp

Community Workers Report

Debbie and Chris joined Harri in October 2020 working part-time for Exeter YMCA in partnership with ECC. Whilst Harri's focus is principally working with families in Exwick, Debbie and Chris are also involved with the 4 property housing project run by YMCA Exeter in Exwick. Each of these properties accommodates two residents. The Messy Church work is shared between Harri, Chris and Debbie. There is also a volunteer group from the ECC congregation who help with items for the Messy Church video and activity bags that are delivered to each family monthly.

Harri has continued throughout the year to forge relationships with the families she works with. She has been able to help with school issues for children as well as getting hold of furniture etc. for families in need. She has co-ordinated Messy Church.

Debbie and Chris initially spent time doing online training and have continued to make links with the YMCA Exwick residents. This includes activities such as giving out mushroom growing kits then following the progress on facebook, going for walks, delivering a hot meal called the 'food boost' on Friday nights, giving out 'prayer plants' and distributing the Christmas chocolates from ECC, which were much appreciated. Whilst there have been good opportunities for 'doorstep conversations', we look forward to meeting people more face-to-face when the lifting of restrictions allows. For example, Chris hopes to begin a ukulele group and Debbie hopes to do some gardening with them.

In addition, Chris and Debbie are training to become mentors through ICE (Initiatives in Christian Education) with the 'TLG' (Transforming Lives for Good) programme. This facilitates coaching 1:1 in local schools with disaffected students at risk of falling behind in their studies. Debbie and Chris have also regularly attended online meetings such as Exwick community hub, Friday Friendship, Linking Lives charity, Trussel Trust (foodbank) and the initial part of the Leadership team meetings. It cannot be overemphasised that the nature of the work is severely inhibited by the current restrictions that are in place. Having said that, the post of community worker does give them licence to be out and about more than as members of the public.

On a final note we have been greatly encouraged by the wisdom and inspirational ideas of staff at YMCA Exeter. Their innovative vision makes a huge impact in the lives of many young people in this city. We look forward to developing our role in the coming months ahead. Similarly, they are excited to be partnering with ECC and watching to see God working at grass roots in the community.

Chris and Debbie Carter

P.A., Videoing and Live-Streaming Report

The past 12 months have been a real challenge for the ECC because most of the time we haven't been able to meet together due to coronavirus.

At the beginning of April, the worship group decided that the only way forward was for us to have our services online and our first attempt was to use Zoom. However, although it's not always apparent when we chat online, as soon as we try to sing or play music together online, there is a problem of latency. This is a slight delay caused by broadband because we all have differing broadband speeds making it impossible for us to sing in time with each other. This discovery was made on a Wednesday evening. On the following day, Gareth Gates was on the One Show and was asked how he overcame the problem. Graeme said well that's all very good but where are we going to get the technology to do it. This is where I came in. I had only recently bought the software and computer that was capable of doing exactly what we needed. This was clearly in the providence of God. So we started simply by the worship group recording the songs individually and assembling them into a group recording. We then added the sermon from Peter and our online service was born. I've made it sound simple but we have all been challenged and have had to overcome sharp learning curves. We then progressed to videos of the individual singers and various contributions from other members,

The next challenge was even bigger when we were able to meet back at the Parish Hall but in limited numbers. We decided that we would have a go at live-streaming which means showing the service on YouTube as it happens. This involved further complications as you can imagine and I'm not sure that we ever got it right. Because audio transmits faster than video, there is a lip-sync problem which we had to overcome. Also the processing causes a 20 second delay in transmission. We made back-up recordings in case things went wrong, which they did more than once involving the replacement of the live stream with a recording. We also wanted to show the song lyrics on the screen. Again, we discovered that the software we already had was able to do this. We purchased an additional live streaming copyright licence from CCLI which had been especially introduced, and some additional hardware. I already had a suitable camera so our additional expense was minimal. We are now in a position where we can handle almost all situations. The Lord has been very good to us.

We did have some technical problems each step of the way. Just before lockdown, we invested in a new digital mixing desk and during the lockdown a new loudspeaker system was installed. We linked up a direct connection from the mixing desk to the computer. All these things have produced learning challenges, especially with the volume levels and mix of voices but they have been mainly overcome thanks to Trevor assisted by Debbie.

We have a great deal to be thankful for because we have been able to meet together virtually and because this technology is new to most of us, we have overcome many difficulties. I want to mention those members of our church who don't have access to the Internet or have been unable to hear the services properly. For them it has been a difficult year and I wish there was some way we could make it up to them. I really look forward to the day when things are back to normal.

John Watts

Men's Group Report

Like other church activities, the very well attended men's breakfasts at the Imperial along with other face to face men's meetings had to stop when we went into lockdown in the Spring of 2020.

We have continued to meet for a monthly discussion on Saturday mornings on Zoom. Numbers attending have been small but we have had a wide range of conversations and it's been good to keep in touch when we have been unable to meet physically. These meetings have now stopped.

I am very much looking forward to resuming our breakfasts at the Imperial when we are able to and it is safe to do so, along with other opportunities for the guys to meet up. This will hopefully not be too long now.

Many thanks, Dave Ovenden

Ladies Breakfast Report

This is our 7th year of Ladies Breakfast and it has been like no other with fits and starts due to the corona virus.

We met in January, February and March, and I was encouraged by a couple of new faces. We continued our theme based around Philip Yancey and Dr. Paul Brands' book "Fearfully and Wonderfully – The Marvel of Bearing God's Image" (an amazing book by two of my favourite people). We were taken on a tour of wonder through the human body where we traced the metaphor of "One body, many parts" from a medical perspective on human life as well as the mystical perspective on the unifying presence of the body of Christ. A grateful reminder of the marvels of the human body, giving astonishing insights as to how the body cells work in community, and similarly how the body of Christ (us) works best in community (so much to learn here).

Lockdown then reared its ugly head and we didn't meet again until August, and then in September and October under the rule of six (several times over), in our garden gazebos with brunch on the menu, at the later time of 10am. The weather was very good to us and all in all it was an enjoyable compromise. Looking forward to meeting up again very soon.

Lin Alford

Worship Team Report.

Like most other departments in the Church we have not had too much opportunity to meet together as a group since the beginning of lockdown almost a year ago.

John Watts set up a You Tube channel for ECC to move our weekly services online and we started with a few videos of people singing some worship songs and uploading them to the internet. With experience comes wisdom and with trial and error we embarked on a journey of discovery that has led us to being able to produce a Worship Service each week.

This involves a huge amount of work from a number of people behind the scenes. First we select items that relate to the weekly theme and then either Chris or Graeme prepares a 'reference' backing track. This track is then shared with the Team via our Whats App group. The Team then downloads the song and uses one device to play back the reference track through headphones whilst using their mobile phone to record a video or sound track of their contribution.

Once complete, those recordings are sent to Chris and John across the interwebthingy. Chris takes all the soundtracks and then mixes them into a final version. John meanwhile collates all the videos together into what you see in the finished version and adds back in the master sound track. Finally John adds onto the screen all the words to enable you to sing along to the Worship.

While all this is happening, Peter is recording his sermon, others are recording the prayers, readings and other contributions which John then uses to assemble the Service. Finally on a Saturday night while we are all asleep John is busy sorting the gremlins and other denizens of the internet to ensure that the polished video is properly uploaded to You Tube for us all to watch on a Sunday Morning. So our Thanks to everyone who has contributed in any way to this process over the last twelve months as it has been a real effort and a lot of hard work.

For the few weeks we were able to meet in person under the tight restrictions allowed, thanks have to go to Sandy for running the booking system and to those Stewarding and helping with set up and clean up both before and after the service. Mention goes too, again to John and to Trevor for working out how to simultaneously record and live stream the Service to You Tube and get the sound and vision to align.

We regularly have over 100 people viewing most of the services and we have been excited to see how God has used lockdown to reach out to people.

If you would like to contribute to the online service please let Peter know as we always need volunteers for readings and prayers and if you are feeling adventurous why not have a go at doing a welcome slot? If you would like to contribute to the musical items and are not already in the Whats App Group please contact Graeme to find out more (without any obligation of course!)

Graeme Salisbury