

1. INTRODUCTION

The past year was undoubtedly a year of many firsts for the world and the church was no exception, all due to the Covid-19 pandemic. As the stewards of the parish of St George's it was important that we, together with our Priest In-charge, Fr. Eben and the rest of the parish council, ensure that the parish is able to weather the pandemic and, at the same time, transition towards a virtual church in response to the lockdown regulations. We are grateful to the individuals who remain committed to the parish during this time and have ensured that St. George's continues to function and carry on during these very difficult times.

We are grateful to the clergy, lay preachers, staff, and parishioners who have responded positively in ensuring that the Covid-19 regulations are adhered to when services are allowed.

The parish council continued to hold monthly parish council meetings virtually and physically when lockdown regulations allowed. Unfortunately, we lost the services of Andrew Del Boccio following the hard lockdowns which saw the departure of many expatriates from our country. Andrew was a valuable member of St George's and contributed massively to his role as the Director of Dedicated Giving and an alternate Church warden. We give thanks for Andrew's service to our parish and we are grateful for the time spent with his family here at St. George's.

We are pleased to report that Colin Robinson has since taken the role of DG Director and for that we are grateful.

2. BUILDINGS

Church, Rectory, and offices

- The church offices are all broadly in a good state of repair.
- It is anticipated that in time the main circular steps to the approach to the church as well as the steps to the South door will need to be repaired or replaced.
- The following repairs were done during the past year:

- Roof repairs for the office/hall building, the church (west-roof tiles refit and repairs) and the Rectory (kitchen slate-tile roof repairs from rain damage).
- Refurbishment of the vestry interior.
- Completion of the disabled access to the church hall/office building.
- Repainting of office interiors.
- Rectory fence conversion with access gate and stone-masoned steps, gate motor and light fixtures.

3. FURNITURE & EQUIPMENT

New acquisitions

- Church – New sound system electronic equipment and installation and video camera equipment for digital online church services and communication video recordings.
- Offices – New Office furniture for Youth Pastors' office; new cups/saucers for staff and visitors, lockable black steel cabinet for office groceries, and frames of heritage pictures of church and hall buildings.
- Rectory –New ceiling fan for house.
- Other – Verger's toolbox for new electrical and hand tools for the basic maintenance of property by the Verger.

Disposals

- The Toyota Avanza was sold during the latter part of the year both for practical reasons as well as to be in line with the Diocesan rules.
- The Motor car replacement fund stands at approximately R 580 000 and is currently deemed to be adequate, however, may need to be transferred to a general reserve.
- This is because the Diocesan rules prohibits parishes from acquiring vehicles for their rectors and instead appointed clergy is expected to use their own transport and in return receive a transport allowance.

Maintenance

- We continue to be the beneficiaries of the time and expertise of Sydney Place who attend to the maintenance and tuning of the organ, and for which we are very grateful.
- However, the organ will require specific interventions by the manufacturer, Reiger, from time to time. Consequently, funds have been set aside in the organ maintenance

fund for this purpose. The Council considers the current level of this fund to be adequate.

Protection of assets

- The church and the rectory are fully alarmed and have an armed response serviced by 24/7, The rectory and garden are further protected by an electric fence connected to the armed response.
- All assets are adequately insured through the Diocesan insurance policy and values are updated annually.

4. FINANCES

Verifier

- Charmel Flemming has continued as the appointed verifier by the Diocese.

Annual Financial Statements

The verified accounts for 2020 have been posted on the church door, the salient features are: -

Income

- The total income was approximately R400,000 lower than in the prior year.
- However, Dedicated Giving ("DG") was ahead of the budget and the prior year notwithstanding the Covid-19 pandemic which nevertheless had a negative impact on other income comprising rental income, offertory, wedding fees, and donations.

Expenses

- The total expenses for the year were lower than in the prior year and marginally below budget.

Net position

- An overall deficit of R574,000 resulted for 2020 which, whilst higher than the prior year, could have been worse were it not for the continued and increased generosity of the parishioners and the careful management of expenses during the year.

Cash position

- Available cash is R1,8 million including special funds and for the future running of the parish in the short to medium term. However, the long-term sustainability of the parish is dependent on maintaining and increasing DG income in the coming years.

5. PERSONNEL

Clergy

- As mentioned in our opening comments, this has been a year of many firsts and we are grateful at the speed with which Fr. Eben led the clergy in their response to the lockdown regulations of almost seamlessly moving into virtual sermons and later services.
- St. George's was one of the few churches to embrace change and transition to virtual weekly sermons, two weekly God-Ed (Sunday school) videos and later an online full Sunday service.
- We give thanks to Eben, Gerard, Anthony, Nigel, and Yvette for everything they have done in ensuring that services at St. George's reach into our homes on a weekly basis.
- We extend our congratulations to Eben who was appointed Priest In-charge at St Georges' on 01 December 2019 and has done a superb job, Covid-19 pandemic notwithstanding, and it was prescient to have a young, energetic, and social media savvy priest as our appointed Priest In-charge in time for a post Covid-19 world. What a blessing his appointment has been.

Director of music and organist

- Marnus has once again excelled in this position providing an excellent support to the weekly virtual sermons and services when lockdown regulations allowed for services to resume.
- The standard of music at St George's remains exceptionally high and we are grateful for the many innovations Marnus has brought about even during the pandemic to ensure there is great music at St. George's.

Administrative staff

- Nomawethu, our parish secretary, has continued in this role in a capable, willing, and efficient manner and ensured that the weekly pew leaflet is dispatched regularly and timely.
- Our bookkeeper, Frederik, has continued to manage our accounting and produce monthly results for council. In addition, he has overseen the maintenance which we have noted has been extensive this year.
- Gift continues as our verger and handyman; he ensures that the church is ready for all services and led the team that painted both the Rectory and the hall.
- Kevin, under the watchful eye of Claire and John, manages the garden which is integral to the beauty and tranquillity of our property.
- Anna was the mainstay of our Bread for Life outreach which we had to close due to the pandemic, she has continued with the upkeep and cleaning of the hall, the facilities, and the offices.
- We are indeed blessed with excellent and dedicated staff that are committed to St Georges and we thank them for their invaluable contribution.

6. SUPPORT FUNCTIONS

- Many other activities take place at St Georges, which for the impact of Covid-19, would have been adequately reported on.
- In the limited times when the regulations allowed for the resumption of services, we give thanks to all who gave their time and talent in so many vital functions:- the music and the choir, supporting preachers, parish ministers, servers, sacristans, bell ringers, sides men, Sunday school and youth workers, flower arrangers, caterers and tea pourers, greeters, Mothers Union and Anglican Women's Fellowship members, who all make worshipping at St George's the joy it is.
- We also give thanks to many parishioners who are involved in a variety of outreach and social upliftment programmes helping to make a difference in the lives of those less privileged than ourselves as well as in reaching out to the lonely and isolated as a consequence of the lockdowns and the fear of contracting the virus due to age and comorbidities.

St. George's Anglican Church, Parish of Parktown
2020 Churchwardens' Report

At St George's we remain optimistic of a better tomorrow and are grateful for the vaccines and the promises they bear for a normalised church life.

Siviwe Dongwana

David Barnes

Church wardens