



February 2021

Dear Church Family,

Following a really great PCC meeting on Monday, we are excited to be able to update you on progress with the Annexe. We are really pleased to report that we are on track to commission the completion of the Annexe and surrounding landscaping, with a view to commencing all internal and external work from May onwards 2021. The Annexe comprises of 419 square metres of space which will enable us to better serve our community and share in the welcome and hospitality of Jesus. We have completed final planning permission detail and building control details are also being resolved. A full construction tender pack for all of the remaining work is being assembled for 1st March, with six contractors keen to quote for these works. We would ideally appoint a preferred contractor by mid-April.

Much is unfolding, with 25-40 actions daily relating to the Annexe and its completion! The solid commitment is that most of the work can be completed in 2021 and we can open the facilities early in 2022. At last, the hoarding can then come down and we can together better serve our community! It's starting to feel very real!

Many of you have been contributing regularly and sacrificially to the Building Fund for some years and we are so grateful for this continued support in addition to your general giving to our ongoing work and missions. **Thank you for any and all generosity in the past leading to this point. It has been truly appreciated.**

During 2020 we were pleased to see many people changing their method of general giving by setting up standing orders, where previously they would have given by cash or cheque in the offertory. We are so grateful for this and pleased to confirm that our total income in 2020, despite the lack of gathered church offerings, wedding and rental incomes were £161,931 as against £175,280 in 2019. Despite this fall in income, savings in expenditure meant we were still able to carry over a good surplus to 2021, some of which was agreed by the PCC to be directed to progress the momentum of the Annexe completion.

We recognise that time and resources are never more pressured than they are at present but would invite that each of us prayerfully review and reflect on the percentage of our giving to the work of God in the world through this local church. In the next month we will finalise the external mission giving to our five partner agencies and individuals, so your potential 10% giving, as reflected in scriptural patterns, is able to make a profound difference not only in Hextable and Swanley Village but to the ends of the earth.

In 2020 we completed work in the main church and entrance with some refurbishment to the back halls. The cost to finish the Annexe internally and externally is projected at up to £550K with further set-up £75k costs and additionally £75K monies operational costs for the first year, totalling £700k. **Our present resources are approaching £100k including forthcoming grant monies of £25k. Together we pray and are active in seeking further grant monies where possible. Our goal is to confirm the way we will resource the remaining £600K as soon as possible.**

The Annexe Development Team have given an incredible number of hours to resolve, rationalise and progress the project and, in doing so have already achieved significant cost savings. We will pursue further options on savings to bring the final total cost right down! **Inevitably we're holding value engineering as a high priority**

against the reality that we want to achieve a finish that means our community is blessed and served well, long into the future. There has been significant work going on behind the scenes and we are grateful for those who are giving sacrificially of their time and talents so that together in God we can see this done. Please continue to pray for the teams stamina and wisdom in decision making. Much is being achieved!



So how are we going to fund the outstanding sum needed to bring the vision of Next Door Hextable to completion? Whilst the PCC has agreed on a loan in the principle of up to £550K over a maximum term of 15-years if necessary, in order to complete the outstanding work, we would prefer to draw down much less, or none at all! To this end, we are making a final push with a large number of grant applications and other funding possibilities which the PCC affirmed in detail on Monday night. We would like to share this with you and invite your prayerful consideration of the part you might be able to play.

1 Annexe Gift Day – Sunday 14th March

As we are delighted to welcome new people to the church family since our last gift day and recognise there may be others who were unable to give then, but might be able to now, we will be holding a Gift day on Sunday March 14th. **Now and in the coming days, might you prayerfully consider a one-off gift or what you might be able to pledge over the next 9 months towards the completion of the Annexe by the close of Sunday 14th March?** Please communicate with Sue - office@stph.org.uk with the bank details here for your ease: Sort code 20-25-42 Account 73932516 Account name: Swanley St Paul Parochial Church Council

2 Patrons

We are committed to a wider community Patron model, where we would be seeking a one-off gift of £500 firstly from us as members of the church family and subsequently from members of the community. We believe that there are many who are not members of the Church who care about the local community and may have the capacity to help us raise a substantial amount against the remaining total needed. We would offer a *small package of incentives for a patron donation, as yet to be fully worked out. We will need to carefully assess which of our own members of the Church might already qualify as Patrons based on past giving. As members of the Church please be assured that if you have given more than £500 for this project at any point, you will qualify as a Patron. If you have not given in the past, you will not be a Patron, you have to specifically sign up to this scheme and give £500 in order to qualify as a Patron. If this is something you feel able to commit to, please register your interest with Sue by the 14th March as after that date an invitation will be given to the community to participate in this way.*

3 Loans

If you are in a position of wanting to help but cannot afford to gift the monies outright, might you consider lending some money to the Church over a set period of years, with 0%, 1% or 2% interest? If this is something that you think you might be able to help with, can you please let Sue know? All offers would be needed by the 1st May or a mutually agreeable date thereafter. Ideally, your response should include the amount you are willing to lend, the maximum term over which you would be able to lend some money (in whole years), and the interest rate (if any) that you would be prepared to lend at. If there is sufficient interest, we will then ensure that proper legal agreements are drawn up to enable us to launch this formally, to the best benefit of all. This loan model would make for a significant saving on the amount possible and offered by an external loan provider. We prayerfully want to lay it out together and seek the Lord in this together.



Other matters for prayer

More generally, we are looking forward to the time very soon when we can gather as a church again. We are planning for that time in relation to all our work but particularly amongst children, youth and families and our seniors' ministries. We have had a staff position for our work with children and youth for many years. Glenn Walsh provided wider general pastoral support and Emma Jane specialised solely in work with children and youth. The PCC has agreed that we will seek to fill this vacancy within an Associate Pastor role from September with a post which is 60% youth, children and schools' ministry and 40% working in wider ministry and mission providing

ministerial support in the Parish generally, starting to progress this recruitment around Easter.

In all things we value your love and our shared life. Scripture invites us to give back to God out of our first and best! Proverbs 3 v9-10 says: "Honour the Lord with your wealth, with the first fruits of all your crops: then your barns will be filled to overflowing, and your vats will brim over with new wine." Know that Julie and myself will be prayerfully actioning the three invitations above as will our PCC. The joy will be together seeing God do something truly marvellous in our time.

All replies on these matters are welcome as soon as possible and, if possible, by close of Sunday 14th March to Sue office@stph.org.uk and she will collate the gift, patron and loan responses anonymously and discreetly so that at our Monday 15th March PCC meeting we can take stock of church replies, report back to the church family and better plan for the months ahead. **Together this is the last big ask and push to see this completed for the honour of the Lord in this place.**

In all of this we are thankful for you all and grateful for Gods ongoing provision in people and favour. Whatever you can give in time, talents and treasure in the furtherance of our mission to love God, grow family and increase hope in this part of Gods world, we are thankful for you. The drawings are only illustrative as not all detail is finalised, Johnny is hopeful of 500 patrons, and most of all your daily prayers into this venture are welcomed, as is your generosity in together seeing this work done!

Please do book in with Johnny for a conversation if more detail or any particular point of this Annexe completion causes you concern? Let's not lose sight of what the Annexe has always been intended to provide namely a safe, welcoming and hospitable space for all in the community where they might encounter the love and welcome of God Himself.

This is a vision for all of us to play our part...

Your generosity and partnership in this means so much,

Yours sincerely,

Revd Johnny Douglas
Vicar & Project Lead

Susan Haward
Churchwarden

John Wigginton
Churchwarden