

Dedham and Ardleigh Parishes – Finance Update March 2021

We would like to take this opportunity to update you on the current ministry and financial position of St Mary's, Dedham, and St. Mary the Virgin, Ardleigh

The onset of the Covid 19 pandemic a year ago meant that 2020 was a very difficult year for us all, and I do not think that anyone of us would have imagined that we would be in the same position one year later, but now we have the hope that the introduction of new vaccines will help us to return to some form of normality during the summer months.

Last year saw both churches open for a period for services with reduced church capacity, but for some time they were closed for all but private worship. However even when the church buildings were closed the Church very much stayed open. Members were very active in manning the Helpline, collecting and delivering medicines and groceries as needed ,and fully supporting the food bank and homeless charities in Colchester: this is Dedham and Ardleigh churches in action. We needed to adapt to be able to provide our ministry services, and thanks to a grant from the Dedham Ecclesiastical Lectureship Trust, we were able to install new live stream equipment in Dedham so that we were able to conduct Sunday services, and weddings and funerals on line via Youtube. Home groups, friendship groups and other activities have also continued on a regular weekly basis via zoom, and if you are not already a part of one of these groups we encourage you to join us.

The pandemic has meant that both churches lost a lot of income during the past year from weddings, visitors and fund raising events, but we strictly controlled non essential costs, and were able to continue to serve our congregation and community. We are grateful to members in both parishes who continued to offer financial support throughout the year.

We know that the economic situation remains very difficult, but we would again ask that you prayerfully review what you are able to give to support the church and its ongoing ministry, and if possible to commit to doing this using a standing order which makes the administration much easier. If you would like to set up a standing order to make regular payments to the church details are found [here](#), or please contact the parishes office.

In both churches, we are reliant on you the membership for the income to pay for the day to day ministry and mission of the churches and the parish share which pays for the ministry of the clergy.

We thank you for your past contributions and pray for your continued help and financial support.

Thank you,

The Vicar and Churchwardens