

# **Papers for the Annual Parochial Church Meeting**

**Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> May 2024**



**Sharing the Love of God Joyfully**

**LOVING – WELCOMING – EXPLORING – GROWING**

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## AGENDA

Annual Report and Accounts for 2023 available separately

## **Minutes of the 2023 Annual Parochial Church Meeting**

The Annual Parochial Church Meeting of the Parish of Kidlington with Hampton Poyle was held at St John's Church Kidlington on 9<sup>th</sup> May 2023 at 8.00pm.

### **Those Present**

Rev'd Felicity Scroggie (chair), Rev'd Susy Brouard, Malcolm Austen, Liz Bendor-Samuel, Liz Brandom, Liz Bruce, Rob Bruce, Jill Buckeldee, Robert Buckeldee, Philippa Burrell, Mark Christodoulou, Ann Croft, Margaret Day, Margaret Dee, Bill Evershed, Tilly Evershed, Gary Gibbs, Stephen Handsley, Stephanie Hobson, Alison Johnson, Colin Johnson, Marian Knight, Elaine Marsland, Ven. David Meara, John Morris, Joyce Morris, Sue O'Hare, Jane Roberts, Kathryn Smith, Roger Smith, Ann E Thomas, Chris Tupling, Janet Warren. There were 33 people present.

### **1. Opening Worship**

The meeting opened with prayers.

### **2. Apologies for Absence**

Yo Davies, Diana Davis, Rev'd Martin Davis, Mairi Gibbs, Anne Handsley, David Hewett, Meghann Hewett, Jan Jeffreys, Peter Jeffreys, Marion Kubat, Nick Kubat, Margaret Lang, Faith McKeever, Laura Morgan, Andy Pedley, Penny Pedley, Cherrill Seward, Malcolm Seward, Kate Seward, Lesley Smith, Emma Timms, David Townsend, Joan Townsend, Canon Rosemary Tucker.

### **3. Election of Church Wardens**

Four written nominations had been received prior to the meeting:

#### **St Mary's Kidlington:**

Tilly (Irene) Evershed: proposed Sue Sturges, seconded Margaret Day

Andy Pedley: proposed Penny Pedley, seconded Margaret Day

#### **St John's:**

Mark Christodoulou: proposed Margaret Dee, seconded Malcolm Austen

#### **St Mary's Hampton Poyle:**

Susan O'Hare: proposed Kathryn Smith, seconded Margaret Day

There being no further nominations the four proposed people were elected unopposed to serve as Churchwardens for the year 2023/2024: Mark Christodoulou (6<sup>th</sup> year), Tilly Evershed (4<sup>th</sup> year), Andy Pedley (3<sup>rd</sup> year), Sue O'Hare (2<sup>nd</sup> year).

Thanks were expressed to all the wardens for their hard work, especially to Mark for serving for a sixth year.

### **4. Confirmation of Minutes of Annual Parochial Church Meeting 2022**

It was agreed that the minutes were a true record of the meeting.

Proposed by Tilly Evershed, seconded by Robert Buckeldee, carried by the Meeting.

## **5. Election of representatives for Deanery Synod**

It was noted that we were entitled to elect five representatives for the three-year term 2023 to 2026. The retiring representatives were Philippa Burrell, Stephanie Hobson, Rosemary Tucker. Nominations had been received before the meeting:

Philippa Burrell: proposed Liz Bendor-Samuel, seconded Tilly Evershed

Scott Cheeseman: proposed Janet Warren, seconded Tilly Evershed

Stephanie Hobson: proposed Ron Cosford, seconded Margaret Day

There being no further nominations the three proposed people were elected unopposed.

## **6. Election of representatives for Parochial Church Council**

Members still in elected office:

Robert Buckeldee (elected APCM 2022, 2<sup>nd</sup> year)

Margaret Day (elected APCM 2022, 2<sup>nd</sup> year)

Bill Evershed (elected APCM 2022, 2<sup>nd</sup> year)

Clare Morgan (elected APCM 2021, 3<sup>rd</sup> year)

Kathryn Smith (elected APCM 2022, 2<sup>nd</sup> year)

Chris Tupling (elected APCM 2021, 3<sup>rd</sup> year)

Members no longer in elected office:

Scott Cheeseman, now Deanery Synod representative designate

Diana Davis having reached the end of a three year term

Catherine Male having reached the end of a three year term

Janet Warren having reached the end of a three year term

Alison Johnson having resigned during 2022/23

Denise Dempsey having resigned during 2022/23

David Hewett having resigned during 2022/23

Thanks were expressed to all those resigning or retiring members.

The following had been nominated to serve as new members of the PCC:

Margaret Dee (proposed Chris Graham, seconded Diana Davis)

Bruce Forman (proposed Chris Tupling, seconded Diana Davis)

Marian Knight (proposed Tilly Evershed, seconded Margaret Day)

Laura Morgan (proposed Chris Tupling, seconded Chris Graham)

Roger Smith (proposed Robert Buckeldee, seconded Margaret Day)

There being no nominations for the remaining vacancies, these five were duly elected by the Meeting.

## **7. To appoint an Independent Examiner for 2023**

The Treasurer proposed that Nicola Cadwallader, of David Cadwallader & Co Ltd, be appointed for 2023, having acted as Independent Examiner since 2018.

This was seconded by Robert Buckeldee and approved by the Meeting.

**8. To approve the membership for the Committee of St Mary's Kidlington**

The following had been nominated to serve as members of the Committee of St Mary's Kidlington:

Churchwardens + John Morris, Ann E Thomas, Rosemary Tucker

There being no further nominations, these were approved by the Meeting.

**9. To approve the membership for the Committee of St John's Kidlington**

The following had been nominated to serve as members of the Committee of St John's:

Churchwarden + Malcolm Austen, Margaret Day, Margaret Dee, Rachel Evans, Cherrill Seward, Malcolm Seward, Emma Timms

There being no further nominations these were approved by the Meeting.

**10. To approve the membership for the Committee of St Mary's Hampton Poyle**

The following had been nominated to serve as members of the Committee of St Mary's Hampton Poyle:

Churchwarden + Jean Bagnall, Judith Baker, Tracy Bickley, Carolyn Castle, Monica Green, Pat O'Gorman, Kathryn Smith

There being no further nominations these were approved by the Meeting.

**11. To approve the membership for the St John's Hall Management Committee**

The following had been nominated to serve as members of the St John's Hall Management Committee:

Churchwarden + Margaret Day, Chris Graham

There being no further nominations these were approved by the Meeting.

**12. To approve members for the Committee of Churches Together in Kidlington**

The following were currently serving as members on the Committee of Churches Together in Kidlington:

Pam Cooper, Margaret Day, Penny Pedley

Margaret Day expressed her wish to resign from the Committee though she would be willing to continue as "contact point" for St John's. There being no further nominations these were approved by the Meeting.

**13. To consider the 2022 Electoral Roll Report**

Joyce Morris gave the report on the Electoral Roll. At the time of the APCM last year there were 243 names on the Roll. Since then six have

died and nine have joined so the Electoral Roll is now 246. She noted that this does not include the stipendiary clergy and all the other clergy who are so active in the parish.

It was noted that people are entitled to join the Electoral Roll at any time, not just before an APCM so new arrivals should always be invited to join.

Joyce was willing to continue to act as Electoral Roll Officer, but she noted that the next full revision of the Roll would be due in 2025 and it would be good to have someone else working alongside her before then.

#### **14. To consider the Annual Report for 2022**

The Chair referred the Meeting to the formal Annual Report & Accounts circulated before the meeting and thanked the PCC Secretary and Treasurer for compiling this.

The meeting accepted the Annual Report as a good summary of the life of the parish; proposed by John Morris, seconded by Philippa Burrell.

#### **15. To consider the Financial Statements for the year ending 31<sup>st</sup> December 2022**

The Chair referred the Meeting to the Financial Statements included in the Annual Report & Accounts, which the Treasurer then summarised. He noted the Independent Examiner's Report on Page 1 confirmed that all was well with the accounts, and made the following observations.

The accounts in the booklet are set out in accordance with charity legislation, which is not the most useful for day-to-day understanding. They refer to Unrestricted and Restricted Funds: Unrestricted Funds can be spent on any permitted purpose whilst Restricted Funds have to be spent on a specified purpose – normally as specified by the PCC. There are also Endowments, which in our case were set up for the benefit of one or other churchyard.

For day-to-day purposes, we focus on the General Fund, which is just one of the Unrestricted Funds. This is where we record our income (weekly giving and donations, fundraising, fees etc) together with most of our expenditure (heating, lighting, maintaining the churches, paying the quota, which is our contribution to clergy salaries). We also pay other salaries from it. So this is probably the best measure of our financial health.

In 2021 the General Fund was in surplus by £26K, thanks largely to a legacy of nearly £33K, without which we'd have ended that year £7K in deficit. The budget for 2022 forecast a deficit of £23.5K but the actual deficit for 2022 is just over £1K. This was because our income was £15.5K higher than budget – as we started to come to life after Covid, and our expenditure was £7K under budget. The higher income was good news; the lower expenditure was partly caused by not spending as much on maintenance as we ideally should have spent to keep the buildings in good repair. This is something we have to face in 2023.

The 2023 budget was prepared before the 2022 position was clear and was, therefore, very cautious. It is based on income of £170.5K (lower than we achieved in 2022) and expenditure of £247.5K which includes £50K on repairs and maintenance which we see as essential. That would give a deficit of £77K, hitting our reserves very hard, taking them from £115k to £38k at the end of 2023. It is worth noting that we hold over £120k in a Restricted Fund called "Donations" which is money given over the years for specified works at the various churches. It is our intention to use as much of this as we reasonably and legally can to fund the maintenance and so reduce the spend on the General Fund.

The underlying point is that we are currently living beyond our means. Based on an informed estimate of numbers in our congregations our expenditure in 2021 was £29 per person per week, while our income per person was only £18.50. Looking at the first quarter of 2023, and with all due reservations for the uneven spread of both costs and income – expenditure is about £20.80 per head, but income is lower at £16.35.

But to be positive. We still have things like the Fete, which has achieved amazing results in the past. We also have seven months to make good on this. If you haven't reviewed your level of giving for a while, please do so. The current gap of £4.44 per head per week equates to £231 per person per year increase – this is very much do-able.

There were no questions and the Meeting accepted the annual accounts; proposed Mark Christodoulou, seconded Margaret Dee.

The Chair expressed thanks to both Bill and Margaret Day for all their work on the accounts.

### **16. Fabric Committee Report**

The Chair referred the Meeting to the Fabric Report included in the traditional parish "annual booklet". It was noted that works carried out had been mainly limited to those which were essential or legally required. The Meeting approved the Report; proposed John Morris, seconded Mark Christodoulou.

### **17. Deanery Synod Report**

The Chair referred the Meeting to the Deanery Synod Report included in the traditional parish "annual booklet". The Meeting approved the Report; proposed Tilly Evershed, seconded Margaret Day.

### **18. To consider any other matters of parochial or general Church interest**

The Chair referred the meeting to the other reports in the "annual booklet" which gave such a good overview of all that goes on in the parish. She thanked everyone who contributed to all this activity in any way. There were no matters raised.

## **19. To deal with any other business**

No Other Business had been requested. The Chair invited members present to comment on anything that they had learned during the course of the meeting. This included:

- Thinking of carbon footprint for all church activities – I should have tried car-sharing to this meeting
- How much the average contribution per person is needed to run the parish.
- The new congregation developing at Lincroft Meadow Care Home.

David Meara expressed appreciation for all that was done by such a team of people, with special thanks to Felicity for her leadership as we moved beyond the pandemic.

## **20. To set the date of the Annual Parochial Church Meeting for 2024**

The provisional date of the APCM for 2024 is set for Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> May.

# **Reports for 2023**

## **Rector's Report**

Any review of the year 2023 has to start with a tribute to the Rev'd Martin Davis who served faithfully in our parish as Team Vicar for eight years. Martin was a true parish priest who loved the continuity of relationships with local families who don't come to church on Sundays but who engage with us regularly through Kidlinks, community events, funerals, weddings, and baptisms. Across the years Martin made solid connections with so many local families who appreciated his ministry and loved him for his care, attention, relaxed encouraging style, and gentle humour. At the beginning of his ministry with us, Kidlington's Children's Centre was closed and Martin worked with our curate Laura (and others) to use St John's and take over many of their groups. The Hub (now 'Kidlinks') has become a valued part of so many Kidlington families' lives and remains as an ongoing tribute to Martin's dedication and care. All of us, but especially St John's congregation, have so many good memories of times with Martin: leading worship in the churches and online (with that picture always behind him), wearing the lovely rose chasuble, enjoying the choral music at St Mary's, teaching us about obscure saints, enjoying a good argument (sorry, discussion), and supporting so many people privately and practically with love and prayer. His funeral services were a chance for so many people to gather and give thanks for all that he was and always will be, and we continue to remember Martin, in the words of the Iona service which he loved "in gratitude; in deep gratitude". The monthly Sunday Prayer breakfasts at St Johns, which started in May and



still continue, have been a time just for the St John's community to pray for Martin and Diana and family in his last months, and to gather together and acknowledge where we are as a community and support each other. At Martin's funeral we entrusted him to God and we go forward in the knowledge that he is held in God's everlasting arms: "Well done thou good and faithful servant; come home to me and rest." Thank you Martin. And may God bless Diana, Paul, Adam, Joel and all the family. You will always be part of our community.

Kidlington with Hampton Poyle is a complex parish full of diversity and activity; a true parish church which engages with the local community and shares God's love in many different ways. I sometimes think of it as a large and rather beautiful elephant moving forwards (sometimes relentlessly!) through the jungle and the plain. From the perspective of the elephant's ear you can't see the supporting back legs; from under the chin you can see her front legs and chest but have no idea what is on top of her back; and from the top, the elephant rider can only imagine her facial expression and her under-belly. Yet as St Paul stresses in 1 Cor 12 every single element of the body is vital to the wellbeing of the whole. From Kidlinks to Lincroft Meadow, from Choral Evensong to 'All Together', from the Making Group to the monthly Parish Lunch and the Big Sing, from baptisms to funerals.... people encounter us as a living church and value the different parts of ministry they experience, whilst usually not being aware of the many other aspects of ministry that go on or of the vital supporting infrastructure of governance, finance, administration, maintenance, cleaning, and general help that goes on every day and is mostly provided by volunteers. Thank you to everyone who plays a part, whatever that is, in keeping us as a well-run, safe, welcoming and faithful community.

The annual report and meeting is our chance to draw together the diverse parts of 'the elephant' and to value each and every one. I thank Anne who as PCC secretary has summarised the events of the year in the formal report. I will not seek to duplicate what is in her comprehensive statement.

2023 was a year of continuing and significant outreach both through the community projects and through our continual presence and interaction in the village. 'Kidlinks', schools, Kidlington Business Community, the 'Parent Support Group', civic relationships, and general outreach occasions have all been important in strengthening our presence in the village.

Our pattern of worship across the three churches continued to offer a healthy variety of styles and it has been good to see a little more crossing of boundaries each year between the different congregations. Remember, if you have people coming to lunch you can go to the 8am; if the community feel of the Maundy Thursday agape at St Mary's is not

'your thing' there is a traditional eucharist at St John's; while a non eucharistic 'All Together' service goes on at St John's there is a communion service at St Mary's; if St Mary's is cold, Hampton Poyle and St John's are warm..... and you are welcome because all three churches are your church.

Monthly joint services which started in Covid are now established by popular demand and we have benefitted from the strengths of each church - the prayer team from St Mary's have been able to offer prayer at St John's, while St John's Junior Church leaders have offered children's provision at St Mary's. St Mary's are currently very short of altar servers but St John's teams have stepped up to help at joint services. This is great team work - thank you.

The weekly Tuesday evening Iona congregation has become a place of deep prayer and mutual support. 'All Together' at St John's' has continued to offer high quality monthly creative all age worship - thank you to Katie Tupling and the team. We have kept 'Open Space' going each month at St Mary's with wonderful support from the Music Group - thank you - but it has been a struggle to find volunteers to help plan these labour-intensive services. 'Open Space' focused on biblical characters this year with a mix of well-known and lesser known people. These services will usually present us with a new thought, a different piece of music, a fresh challenge to understanding and faith. There are some misconceptions: 1) that they are always non-eucharistic (they aren't), and 2) that congregation members will be asked to do embarrassing things like talk to their neighbour (there is always an option to remain quiet and in your seat - nothing is ever compulsory). What these services will do is help us think. I am sure that in continuing to offer 'Open Space' each month we are holding on to something important if we want to be a community whose faith grows and connects with daily life. I would encourage people who have not yet been to come along and those who have not yet volunteered to help us plan one to get involved. Thank you to the music group and all who have contributed your ideas this year.

Malc has faithfully sent out the weekly email which is now established as our main communication and Margaret has kept the web site beautifully up to date. A small team keeps the livestream and bespoke online services going which, alongside 'Pause for Prayer' three times a week, offers a significant online support for faith and growth - please don't forget that this exists even if you are now physically back in church buildings for worship. Thank you to all who valiantly make these happen.

The biggest challenge has been finding volunteers for all the different roles. At the same time the biggest blessing of the year is always the people who come together to make things happen. I would like formally to thank our very many lay teams, and our PCC and committee members

who are just phenomenal. There are obvious teams like the clergy team and the Big Team (everyone who holds a licence for ministry). There are legally constituted teams like wardens, PCC, and standing committee, and the non-legal individual church committees. There are the PCC committees (Fabric, Finance, Children and Young People, Kidlinks management group). There are teams involved with the various projects (Parent Support Group management, Martin's Garden, Pastoral Visiting, the Big Sing, Sunday Teas, Choir and Chorister support, Tea Talks catering ..) And there are teams that come together for specific occasions / Worship planning (Making Group, All Together at St John's, Open Space Planning, Lincroft Meadow services, Summer Fete, concerts, Maundy Thursday meal.... And some people work terrifically hard and generously but mostly alone. You can see how dangerous it is to start a list lest one omits someone. I apologise in advance to all those I have not mentioned. You use your skills to keep every element of the Kidlington elephant healthy and in good order. Some things are very public; some things are hidden. All are needed, and without any of them we cannot be a healthy parish.

Special thanks are due to our wardens who shoulder many tasks unseen and often 'keep the show on the road': Tilly Evershed and Andy Pedley, Mark Christodoulou and Sue O'Hare. After six years of service to St John's Mark now stands down as warden. We also thank Margaret Day who has worked tirelessly to support the running of the parish office and finances, Malc running the office, Bill as treasurer, Anne as PCC secretary, and Margaret Dee, Clare Morgan, and Chris Tupling who are retiring from the PCC after their three year period of service. You all bear with my foibles (and typing) with great good humour! A special thank you too to Yo our Safeguarding Officer and David whose work with the choir and choristers has really enhanced our worship; the standard of choral singing just gets better and better every year.

Final thanks are due to the clergy team and what we call 'Big Team' (Susy Brouard, Philippa Burrell, Paula Clifford, Jane Hemmings, Colin Johnson, David Meara, Joyce and John Morris, Marian Needham, Penny Pedley, Sarah Sewell, Katie Tupling). As colleagues and friends you are wonderfully supportive, offering your different skills and wisdom in so many ways. The times are challenging in so many ways and always we have come through the challenges by working together, praying for each other and leading positively forwards. Thank you again from the bottom of my heart.

I look forward to 2024 with great hope because of the strength and love of this community which it is my absolute privilege to be part of. Thank you for having me as your rector. May God bless us all and lead us in His ways for the years to come.

**Felicity Scroggie, Team Rector**

## **St Mary's Kidlington Report**

2023 was a good year, seeing our wonderful historic building so well used by the Congregation and the Community – it is, rightly, a centre for the area.

Sunday 10am services had an average attendance of 65, with a smaller regular congregation at 8am. Monthly Open Space services continued, thanks to a small group of lay volunteers, supported by the clergy, and we very much enjoyed hosting the joint Parish service on alternate months. Some services continued to be livestreamed. The weekly Wednesday Eucharist and monthly Choral Evensong were much appreciated.

As the year progressed, the familiar round of special services took place, from Epiphany to Candlemas, Holy Week to Easter Sunday, All Souls and Remembrance up to Advent and Christmas. We are grateful to all the clergy team for making these services special, and were delighted to welcome many visitors to these events.

We also continued to welcome many visitors to the “occasional offices” which mark milestones in life – baptisms, marriages, and funerals. On the social side, the annual Parish Fete took place in and around the church, attracting the usual large numbers, including entrants to the Dog Show, and the Sunday afternoon Summer Teas resumed with a special Coronation Tea Party in May. The year ended with a new event, the Christmas Tree Festival, which involved many local schools, organisations and businesses.

Several outside groups used the church as a venue. Art Week again used St Mary's as a base in May, and KAOS concerts were another popular event. The Church remained open, all day, every day, with a regular stream of visitors wanting a look round this historic building or just in need of time, space, and solitude – as others have, for 800 years.

**Tilly Evershed and Andy Pedley, Churchwardens**

## **St John's Kidlington Report**

### **Worship**

An easing of the economic situation in relation to heating of our churches allowed us to return to a more regular pattern of services, although joint services with St Mary's Kidlington continued throughout the year on a once a month basis. Our All Together services on the first week of the month remain lively and well attended and from May, we introduced our “breakfast and prayer” sessions starting at 9.30am ahead of the regular 10am

Eucharist on the second Sunday of the month. An Iona communion service was held every Tuesday evening in the Lady Chapel.

Holy week saw our traditional services of book of common prayer, Iona, Stations of the Cross (a slightly different style using symbols, with thanks to Penny Pedley) and on Maundy Thursday a service of washing of feet, stripping of the altar followed by the midnight vigil in the Lady Chapel. Good Friday saw a reflection at the cross and our children's service in the afternoon led by Rev'd Kt Tupling and Rev'd Susy Brouard. We celebrated Easter Sunday with a Eucharist with outdoor lighting of the Easter candle from a "carefully lit" brazier. Our patronal service was celebrated as a joint service on 25<sup>th</sup> June.

Harvest was celebrated on 1<sup>st</sup> October at our All Together service, with our service of Remembrance held on 12<sup>th</sup> November. Advent Sunday saw a Christingle All Together service at which we also decorated the Christmas tree and set up a prayer tree. The traditional travelling Posada once again took its advent journey across the whole Parish, ending at St John's on Christmas Eve.

Our Christmas services included Carols by Candlelight on 16<sup>th</sup> December and a very busy Christmas Eve, starting with a Joint Parish Eucharist, during which the one and only performance of our Nativity Play took place, performed by Junior Church with a "live" baby Jesus then in the afternoon, our well attended Crib Service, finishing the evening with Midnight Mass.

### **St John's Family**

It is with deep sadness that we note the passing of Rev. Martin Davis on 17<sup>th</sup> August 2023. Martin was Team Vicar of the Parish for 8 years. A Requiem Mass at St Mary's Kidlington on 7<sup>th</sup> September was followed by the receiving of the body to St John's, followed by a Funeral service at St Mary's and a time of food, fellowship and remembering at St John's on 8<sup>th</sup> September. Thanks to God for his life were given through prayer and fond and loving memories of Martin were expressed by family and friends through poetry, music and personal reminiscence.

We were also saddened to learn of the passing of Iris Darvill on 27<sup>th</sup> March 2023. Iris was a Benedictine Oblate who had been a faithful member of St John's for many years. Iris designed the large tapestry that sits above the organ and the frontal embroidery that is currently on display in the Hall. Several members of St John's congregation attended the funeral.

### **Junior Church**

Junior Church continued to be a regular feature in all our Sunday morning services with active contributors provided to the monthly All Together services, Mothering Sunday, and of course our Nativity play. Numbers have remained steady throughout the year.

We would like to express our thanks to all the leaders and helpers who continued to nurture the faith of children and young people in St John's Church and provide lively and engaging activities for them each and every

Sunday. We also thank them for providing Junior Church activities at St Mary's during our shared services.

### **Using St John's Hall Church**

The Hall and Meeting Room are available for parish social use or use by the local community and continued to be regularly utilised throughout the year by various groups such as Zumba, Pilates, Yoga and of course by Kidlinks, the new name for The Hub @ St John's which was officially relaunched on 15<sup>th</sup> July, continuing to offer a full programme of activities.

Care and compassion in our community continued, with food donations for the North Oxfordshire Community Foodbank and The Gatehouse; #and Christmas gifts from the Advent Sunday service for those in need locally. The monthly Traidcraft stall (usually at the parish Joint service) continued to be well supported by members of the congregation.

### **Acknowledgements**

The **St John's Committee** met four times during the year. The **St John's Management Committee** has now been incorporated into the St John's Committee rather than meeting separately. Very many thanks to Malcolm Austen for all his work looking after the building over many years, and to Chris Graham, who is taking over from him.

We give grateful thanks to all members of the Parish Clergy team including Felicity, our Team Rector, Susy, our Curate, Kt Tupling for leading the All Together planning group and our retired clergy for leading us spiritually and for their valued ministry to us all during the year. We also acknowledge our thanks and appreciation to Bruce for enhancing our worship with his music in all our services.

We would also like to express our thanks to everyone for their valued support and contribution to life of St John's. We remain extremely grateful for all that you are and all that you do, as members of St John's Hall Church in Kidlington.

**Mark Christodoulou, Churchwarden**

### **St Mary's Hampton Poyle**

Our small but active congregation ensures that St Mary's Hampton Poyle is open every day to offer a peaceful welcome to parishioners and visitors alike. Services are held regularly throughout the year and all are most welcome to attend.

The village of Hampton Poyle celebrated the coronation of King Charles III and Queen Camilla with a picnic and games at Brewer's Farm and on Coronation Sunday, 7<sup>th</sup> May, the church was decorated with marvelous floral arrangements by our wonderful and talented



flower arrangers with a red, white and blue theme. Indeed, we are very fortunate that for services and on special occasions throughout the year the church is decorated by beautiful flowers.

Highlights in the life of St Mary's Hampton Poyle included the annual Rogation perambulation through the village led by Felicity on horseback, a fine day in May accompanied by 25 humans and 5 dogs, followed by tea and cake at Church Farm. On a very warm Saturday in June a Bring & Buy and Cake sale in the churchyard raised over £275 towards church repairs. In July the church qualified for a Church Eco Award. The



annual pet blessing service was held outside in the churchyard in September. Later in September came the Harvest Festival service followed by drinks and nibbles. Remembrance and All Souls was a solemn and thoughtful evening service. Advent and Christmas activities included a small Christingle service. An evening of carol singing through the village raised over £220 for the parish's nominated charities; mulled wine and mince pies awaited the hardy carolers at the end house, generously provided by Liz and Peter. Over 100 adults and children came along to the annual Christmas Eve carols by candlelight service and on Christmas Day, Susy the curate led a small but joyful communion service.

Here at St Mary's Hampton Poyle we are grateful for the volunteers who help clean and tidy the church, make the teas, arrange the flowers, mow the grass and of course, Bob who plays the organ for us. Katy Smith continues to lead the application process for a faculty to install a servery and toilet.

**Sue O'Hare, Churchwarden**

### **Fabric Committee Report**

During 2023, the Fabric Committee has dealt with a number of matters that affect the buildings under its control.

### **The Curate's House at Andersons Close**

Minor issues with the heating system were dealt with. The house is currently let and the tenancy was renewed to end of May 2024, so there is time to refurbish as necessary and prepare for the arrival of Paul, our new Curate and his Family. Routine gas safety inspections were carried out and a new "Energy Performance Certificate" was obtained as the old one had expired.

### **St Mary's, Hampton Poyle**

Routine annual checks were undertaken: PAT testing, gas service, fire extinguisher, smoke alarm battery check, woodworm check, organ tuning. The electrician cleaned light fittings and replaced lightbulbs with energy efficient lightbulbs, and repaired the outside automatic light. Overgrown ivy was cleared from perimeter walls. Small repairs as per last quinquennial inspection were undertaken: loose tiles in chancel reaffixed, outside notice board painted, cracked windowsill repaired, gate latch repaired. Regarding the project to gain a faculty for the installation of a servery and toilet: test pits were dug for percolation testing. This project is ongoing.

### **St Mary's Kidlington**

Routine maintenance such as boiler overhaul was undertaken. A Faculty was sought to enable the replacement of the radiators in the Church itself, following advice given on most appropriate type by Manufacturers, and meetings with Contractors. Faculties were sought for the disposal of old books and the Eagle Lectern.

Fire door signage in refectory and emergency lights in the Church were improved. A project was initiated to make access to the Church step free, via the Porch and West door, for the benefit of disabled persons and also to improve fire escape access. Investigation began of the options to replace the carpet in the Chancel Sanctuary - a Dioscean Advisory Committee consultation is underway. A drone survey of the Nave roof was undertaken. The clock was stopped pending advice on safety. The organ cleaning project commenced.

### **St John's Kidlington**

Externally "solar" lights were fitted to light the route of the Fire Escape. The Church chairs were replaced. Routine maintenance including gas servicing, PAT testing, fire checks was carried out as usual.

**Tilly Evershed, Chair Fabric Committee**



## **Oxford Deanery Synod Report**

3 Synod meetings took place during the year.

**22<sup>nd</sup> March 2023** 7.30pm at St John the Evangelist Church, New Hinksey

The Deanery Standing Committee decided there was no need for a formal meeting of the Deanery Synod until after all the Annual Parish Council meetings had been held, so this meeting comprised a Deanery Stations of the Cross preceded by a short service of Holy Communion. This was arranged primarily as an act of worship for the outgoing Synod.

**12<sup>th</sup> July 2023** 7.30pm at St Mary's Church Kidlington

Rev'd Canon Felicity Scroggie, Team Rector of Kidlington with Hampton Poyle Anglican Churches, welcomed the Synod to Kidlington and opened the meeting with prayer. The Area Dean, Rev'd Anthony Buckley welcomed members to the first Deanery Synod meeting of the new Triennium. He reported that in the Triennial elections Miss Prudence Dalley had been elected as Lay Chair, Mr Christopher Fletcher - Campbell as Treasurer and Mr Mark Smith to serve on the Standing Committee.

The newly installed Dean of Christ Church, the Very Rev'd Professor Sarah Foot gave a talk drawing parallels between the focus on mission in the early Church of England with the mission of the Church today.

Prudence Dailey gave a brief report on the recent General Synod meeting which was dominated by concerns over national church safeguarding policy. There was also a report and questions session on Living in Love and Faith and a motion for a localized trial run of zero – free weddings was approved.

A request was made and noted that the Parish Share should be fully discussed at a future meeting by the whole Deanery Synod.

Following this meeting the following were elected to the Deanery Standing Committee:

Clergy - Rev'd Dr Zachary Giuliano, Rev'd Gavin Knight, Rev'd Dr Robert Wainwright

Lay members – Mr Scott Cheeseman, Mrs Catherine Hilliard

Deanery Secretary – Dr Myriam Burstow

**15<sup>th</sup> November 2023** 7.30pm at St Barnabas Church, Jericho

Opening worship was led by Rev'd Christopher Woods, Vicar of St Barnabas and St Thomas the Martyr churches.

It was agreed that a motion concerning allocation of the Parish Share between the churches in the Deanery, submitted by St Aldates and circulated earlier in the day, would be considered at a future meeting. A talk 'The Parish Share: what is it for?' was given by John Orridge, Diocesan Director of Finance. The following motion [previously circulated with draft Parish Share allocation figures] 'that the Deanery Share of £1,233,757 for the year 2024 be allocated in accordance with the listed amounts per parish' was considered. After questions and discussion the motion was passed.

There being no other business Rev'd Anthony Buckley closed the meeting with the Grace.

**Stephanie Hobson, Philippa Burrell, Scott Cheeseman  
Deanery Synod representatives**

## **Safeguarding Report**

Safeguarding continues to be a priority for the Parish.

Those involved in work with vulnerable adults or children have completed any training that is necessary or have been reminded that they need to update their training. Safeguarding reports are submitted to the PCC at least twice a year.

All new activities which involve regular contact with children or vulnerable adults are subject to safer recruitment rules and all new volunteers have been safely recruited. This means they are interviewed, DBS screened where necessary and trained in the relevant level and type of safeguarding. I have handed over the Disclosure and Barring administration to Malc Sentence, Parish Administrator and have helped him become confident in the process.

There have been some safeguarding concerns this year which have been worked through with the help of clergy and our diocesan safeguarding advisor.

I am continuing to use the dashboard system to ensure that we are up to date with diocesan safeguarding requirements. A new dashboard specifically for safeguarding has been introduced. This states the exact level of training required for all church roles and has been very helpful in ensuring that we comply with requirements. I am pleased to say that safeguarding training is being taken up well by volunteers.

**Yo Davies, Safeguarding Officer**

## **Health and Safety Report**

Not the most glamorous job, Health and Safety Officer, but a crucial role in the Church. All the routine checks were done – the Fire Extinguishers serviced, the Portable Appliances (plug in things) tested, the Ladders checked for safety.

When new activities were planned, a health and safety check was always carried out, and any concerns raised regarding any potential hazards were always investigated.

Accident Books are located in each of our church buildings, but thankfully no significant incidents were reported in 2023.

There have been a couple of precautionary actions in response to concerns at St Mary's Kidlington : a bench has been removed from the churchyard as it was very rotten, with a replacement planned; and the clock in the tower has been disabled, as the weights would cause massive damage should they fall while the clock was being wound.

**Andy Pedley, Health and Safety Officer**

## **Finance Committee Report**

The Committee had few formal in-person meetings but kept in touch by email to circulate updated information. The main work of the Committee was to produce a 2024 budget for PCC approval in November 2023. This Budget was then restated to reflect the deferral of heater repairs and organ works at St Mary's Kidlington from 2023 to 2024, to be partly funded by specified donations, and the decision to amalgamate the St John's Hall accounts into the General Fund (to better reflect the reality of several churches with one overall set of accounts). Overall these changes increased the 2024 deficit, but showed an improved position for 2023 and 2024 when taken together.

The Financial Review is included in the formal Annual Report for 2023 and the Annual Accounts are shown separately.

This year's committee were Robert Buckeldee, Katy Smith, and Margaret Day, and I am very grateful to all of them for their support and commitment during the year.

**Bill Evershed, Treasurer**

## **Children & Young People Committee Report**

Due to Martin's illness, Felicity took over as chair of the committee for a time, before handing over to Susy. There has been lots to celebrate this year – Junior Church continues with good quality feedback being given to the congregation. All Together continues with a strong organising team at the helm. There was a successful trip to Romsey Abbey where the choristers sang with the adult choir as well as singing at Merton College, Oxford.

TIG (Together in God) has grown and there are now 10-12 young people, not all from Church families. We rejoiced that Sam, Joshua and Lizzie decided to take the next step in their faith journey and were confirmed at St John's in September 2023 (alongside Peter Male), surrounded by their church family, as well as family and friends. In the summer a very enjoyable punting trip was organised and on the last day of school there was a Christmas party for our young people and their siblings which everyone seemed to enjoy. There were some bespoke services focused on children and young people (such as Christingle) and every second Sunday of the month at St Mary's is now consciously more young-people friendly.

We continue to do some school work such as Be Space in North Kidlington, hosting all four secular schools in St Mary's for their Carol services, and some school assemblies in Gosford. Remembrance Sunday brought together all the uniformed organisations, and some of the young people read from the front.

For 2024 we want to focus on formation of young people, a weekend away and a permanent and welcoming space for children inside St Mary's.

**Rev'd Susy Brouard, curate**

### **Kidlinks**

The beginning of 2023 saw the work of the Hub, ably led by Rachel Rea, continue to consolidate the return from the pandemic: Little Acorns drop-in welcoming large numbers of children and their carers, sometimes as many as 50 under 5s; Toddler Club, now running as a lunch club, attracting around eight 2-3 year-olds; the breastfeeding support group appointment book always full, and plenty of walk-ins too; Bouncing Babies welcoming new families most weeks.

To celebrate the success of the provision the Hub was relaunched as 'Kidlinks - Kidlington's Community Hub for Children & their Families' in July. The new website, [kidlinks.org.uk](http://kidlinks.org.uk), was unveiled and a team of

volunteers celebrated with families new and old at the relaunch party. There was live music, a magician, dancing by Ellagance Dance Academy, lunch by Uggy's Pizza, cakes galore (donated by the amazing families), a fire engine visit from the local station, and cutting of the ribbon to officially open the new play-garden! The event was a huge success and was attended by over 200 people.

September saw the launch of the brand-new SEN drop-in group, SEN Squirrels. This 0-5's session was created for children with additional needs and their families (with or without a diagnosis) and aims to meet a very real and ever-increasing need in providing a safe and welcoming space for play and connection. We are currently working hard at reaching those families in need and increasing attendance, but the positive response to the set-up of this group has so far been huge.

In 2022 the Hub had had the honour of hosting Santa in his grotto at the Kidlington Christmas Lights Switch-on, and in 2023 Kidlinks was asked to do it again. This was again such a magical event with a huge turn-out of families. This year there was also a Christmas raffle to raise funds for Kidlinks, and local businesses were asked to donate prizes. The raffle was drawn during the Little Acorns Christmas party on Tuesday 19th December.

The talented and hardworking leader of the Kidlinks project, Rachel Rea, continues to consider ways that Kidlinks can support the community of Kidlington and surrounding communities, and 2024 will see the introduction of parenting classes.

**Anne Bardsley, Management Committee**

### **Small Groups Report**

The Parish has a range of small groups that meet to learn, grow, study, reflect or explore together. The Meditation group continues to meet every Monday evening, braving the cold with hats and blankets in the Lady Chapel. There are 3 house groups that meet regularly for study, discussion and prayer as well as additional groups that meet during Lent, Advent or other times. During Lent 2023 two groups met to reflect, phrase by phrase, on the post-Communion prayer that begins, 'Father of all, we give you thanks and praise that when we were still far off you met us in your son' using art and music as well as words. In the autumn there were four 'Questions for God' sessions exploring difficult questions, including suffering and life after death.

The Making Group meets to share together in various creative projects. In Lent they made a number of full-size portals, based on the line in the

prayer, '[he] opened the gate of glory.' Advent saw them making a variety of different Christmas trees for the Christmas tree festival.

Small groups offer valuable opportunities for forming and strengthening relationships, while sharing our experiences of life and faith. If you are interested in becoming part of a small group, or helping to form one, do get in touch with me or Felicity.

**Penny Pedley, small groups co-ordinator**

### **Pastoral Visiting Team Report**

Our team of six, with the addition of Susy, our curate, has continued with visits and phone calls throughout the year. We kept in touch with about two dozen people, and kept a watchful eye out for other older members of the church community. Philippa took home communion to a couple who weren't able to get to church, and John Morris took it to several others on a regular basis. The Parish Lunch, which continued monthly, provided an opportunity for older people to get together socially. We continued to support the clergy with the All Souls and the Presence and Absence services, which were well attended and appreciated.

**Philippa Burrell, PVT co-ordinator**

### **Prayer Ministry Team Report**

The Team continued to offer prayer ministry after each St Mary's 10am service, thanks to the wonderful commitment of Team members (since December 2018).

Two (with name tags on blue lanyards) were available in the Lady Chapel after the service to listen to and pray simply with whoever came, as well as after Joint services in St John's Lady Chapel. People may wish to be prayed for personally or may ask for prayer for loved ones.

We prayed before the service for the service itself, and after the service for the parish and our clergy, church activities, Kidlington organisations, Council and schools, and for those who were ill or bereaved.

We also held Summer and Winter Team Teas to connect, review and pray for each other.

It is a privilege to take part in this ministry and witness God's Spirit at work in his inimitable ways to comfort, relieve and bless.

**Liz Bendor-Samuel, co-ordinator**

## **Eco Team Report**

***Aim of Eco Team: To provide leadership on achieving the carbon zero 2030 challenge and other environmental matters – in our church and in our lives. The PCC recognises that there is a Climate Emergency and will plan and implement actions towards achieving net zero by 2030.***

We have been following the A Rocha "Eco-Church" guidance in our attempts to reduce our carbon footprint and to become more environmentally aware. Following on from the success in November 2022, when St Mary's Kidlington achieved the Bronze Award, St John's and St Mary's Hampton Poyle have also achieved this landmark, so we are now actively engaged with seeing what we have to do to achieve the Silver award.

The awards have an holistic approach and encompass not only reducing the use of fossil fuels, but consider many other issues such as waste reduction, less water use, caring for the churchyard, ethical trading and investments, and the widespread communication and encouragement of everyone to do their bit.

In April there was an environmentally themed Sunday service – this included a rendition of "Three Ha'Pence A Foot" as a warning about the consequences of Climate Change, inimitably given by Janet Warren. During the year we have undertaken two bio-blitzes, getting members of the congregation interested in the natural habitat of the churchyard. The first of these on 11<sup>th</sup> June, coincided with "Love your Burial Ground" Week. On the second of these, in December, we had a specialist lichenologist to help us identify lichen on the gravestones, which was wonderful, although it was pouring with rain at the time! We have also started a systematic graveyard nature survey, attempting to list all the flora (and fauna) in the churchyard. This survey will continue on into 2024.

We plan to install nest boxes and bat boxes in the churchyard; the Church is already rich in bats (occasionally to be seen flying round inside the building when events have disturbed them!) but more boxes may well mean more bats.

As an encouragement to those who may want to cycle to church (and reduce car fuel), we have got permission to install a bike rack in the churchyard. This will be installed in 2024.

We finished the year by contributing an eco-Christmas tree to the Christmas Tree festival in St Mary's Kidlington. Made of recycled wood with natural decorations of fir cones, ivy, nuts and mosses, and the "hands" from the April service, it was placed at the entrance to the church, welcoming visitors and showing our aim of improving our stewardship of God's creation.

The Group is currently made up of Andy Pedley (chair), Liz Brandom, Joanne Hanson, John Morris, Caroline Howdill and Steve Handsley. We are always looking for new members – if you are interested please talk to one of us.

**Andy Pedley, Chair Eco Team**

### **Music in the parish**

The choir and choristers at St Mary's continue to go from strength to strength. During 2023 we welcomed a number of new members and as of December 2023 we had 16 choristers and 36 adult choir members, so over 50 singers in total. Over the course of the year the choir and choristers continued to lead the music at regular Sunday morning services at St Mary's (and occasionally at St John's), singing choral evensong on third Sundays in the month, and offering extensive programmes of music at special services including the Passion Sunday Music and Readings, the Advent Carol Service, and Nine Lessons and Carols. We were also privileged to sing evensong at Merton College Oxford, and went on tour to Romsey Abbey where we sang two services with the Abbey Choir. The choir received a generous donation from a congregation member, which has allowed us to purchase new music and other resources. It has been exciting to see two of our head choristers join the adult choir, and as of December 2023 we had four teenagers singing in the adult choir.

A number of our choristers have joined the TIG youth group that meets monthly at St John's, which is very exciting to see. Furthermore, many of our adult members have been getting involved in other aspects of parish life, including for instance the Making Group, the Big Sing and Kidlinks. These developments are all an indication of the positive role that the choir and choristers is playing in bringing new members into our congregation, supporting their development, and empowering them to become valued members of our parish.



The music group offers fresh expressions of worship as part of the monthly 'Open Space' services at St Mary's. Musicians play and sing gospel songs, spirituals, folk music and modern worship songs with their cellos, harps, violins, flutes, keyboards and voices. Members of the group sometimes write and perform their own compositions. Anyone who loves music is encouraged to offer their skills, vocal and instrumental, to enhance the worship in these innovative monthly services.

At St John's we have continued our usual provision of traditional congregational hymns and occasionally dared to learn less familiar hymns and songs, sometimes with the assistance of a small group of volunteers who agreed to learn new songs in advance. A slightly different style is in evidence at our monthly All Together services, which aim to be more inclusive and experiment with different possibilities. We have been delighted to welcome Choristers from St Mary's to make contributions to a couple of All Together Services, and especially for the Confirmation Service in September, which was a whole parish service held at St John's. We marked RSCM Music Sunday in June with a sermon focussed on the role of music in worship. Towards the end of the year it was a particular pleasure to hear some of our Junior Church members bringing their instruments to contribute to the nativity play.

Finally, outside of services, mention must be made of The Big Sing, held monthly at St John's throughout 2023 under the enthusiastic leadership of Susy our curate and attracting an ever-growing number of retired participants.

**David Hewett, Clare Morgan and Bruce Forman**

## **Churches Together in Kidlington**

### **The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity**

The Fellowship meal was shared in the Baptist Church in January and was attended by over 70 people who enjoyed a good meal and a thought-provoking and informative talk by the Rev'd KT Tupling, about ways in which our churches can be more aware of and better support and include people with different disabilities. It was helpful to be encouraged to think about the range of things that need to be considered. These issues were discussed further during the midday prayers which were again held online.

### **Good Friday and Pentecost**

There was a good turnout for the Good Friday walk, helped by good weather again.

The joint service for Pentecost was held at the Baptist Church and attended by 150 people in person and a further 65 online, particularly

encouraging numbers as it was a Bank Holiday weekend at the beginning of half term. It received many positive comments and was greatly enjoyed.

### **Holiday at Home**

The Methodist Church hosted Holiday at Home for about 35 older people sharing various activities, over four days in August, supported by people from all the churches. The event was much appreciated and enjoyed.

### **Christmas**

The switching on of the lights event in the village centre went well and CTK had its stall in a more central location. Tealights with Bible verses around them were given out, together with Christmas cards with details of church websites. These were appreciated. A prayer tree was offered but little used as people did not stop to look at the stall, because there was nothing else on it.

### **Support for other groups**

CTK has continued to support the Kidlington Eco group.

(<https://kidlingtonecogroup.co.uk/>)

CTK has also supported refugees living into Kidlington, with Tesco vouchers, and continues to hold a welfare fund available for pupils at Gosford Hill School.

Thanks to Kidlington News, CTK also supported a donation of £6000 to Martin's Garden, next to St John's Church.

This year we acknowledged with sadness the death of Martin Davies, a strong supporter of CTK in the past.

Thanks are due to Paul Carter, who was Chair of CTK for 2.5 years, but needed to stand down in September due to changes in the Methodist circuit. Scott Cheeseman has now taken on the role.

We hope that the year ahead will see new developments and initiatives for CTK. Any ideas and suggestions for these would be very welcome.

As ever, our grateful thanks go to everyone who has helped with and supported CTK events.

**Penny Pedley, CTK Secretary**

## **AGENDA**

### **FOR THE MEETING TO ELECT CHURCHWARDENS AND THE ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING**

To be held on Wednesday 8th May 2024 at 8.00pm  
in St Mary's Kidlington

1. Opening Prayers
2. Attendance and Apologies for Absence
3. Election of Churchwardens to serve for the year 2024/2025
4. To confirm the minutes of the Annual Parochial Meeting held on 9th May 2023 at St John's
5. To elect up to 8 members to serve on the Parochial Church Council
6. To appoint an Independent Examiner for the year 2024
7. To approve the membership of the Committee for St John's Kidlington
8. To approve the membership of the Committee for St Mary's Hampton Poyle
9. To elect *four* members to serve on the Council of Churches Together in Kidlington
10. To consider a Report on changes in the Electoral Roll since the last Annual Parochial Church Meeting
11. To consider an Annual Report of the proceedings of the Parochial Church Council and the activities of the Parish generally
12. To consider the Financial Statements of the Parochial Church Council for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> December 2022, independently examined
13. To consider a Report on the fabric, goods and ornaments of the churches of the Parish
14. To consider a Report on the proceedings of the Deanery Synod

15. To consider any other matters of parochial or general church interest
16. To deal with Any Other Business
17. To set the date for the Annual Parochial Church Meeting for 2025
18. Closing Prayers

*Note: In order to give satisfactory answers to questions regarding parish finances, it would be helpful to the "finance team" if these could be submitted in writing or by email to the PCC Secretary at least 24 hours before the meeting.*