

CHRIST CHURCH & ST. JOHN'S RADLETT
IN THE
ALDENHAM, RADLETT & SHENLEY
TEAM MINISTRY

BOOK OF THE YEAR
2022-2023



**PARISH OF RADLETT
ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING**

Sunday 21 May 2023 at 12 noon

at

Christ Church, Watling Street, Radlett

Meeting of Parishioners: Election of Churchwardens

1. Prayer
2. Minutes of 2022 meeting
3. Election of Churchwardens
4. Proposed date of 2024 Meeting of Parishioners & APCM

Annual Parochial Church Meeting

1. Safeguarding Statement & Report from Safeguarding Officer
2. Minutes of 2022 meeting
3. Electoral Roll report
4. Presentation and adoption of 2022 accounts followed by questions to the Treasurer
5. Appointment of Independent Examiners
6. Book of the Year – includes
 - a. Deanery Synod report
 - b. Churchwarden's report
7. Election of Deanery Synod representatives
8. Election of PCC members
9. Vicar's Report
10. Questions and comments from the floor, followed by refreshments

Vicar's Report for Radlett APCM 2023

2022/3 has been a transformative year of re-engaging with the wider community, sowing new seeds, and deepening our roots in Christ.

Worship

Our Sunday 8.00 am service from the Book of Common Prayer has continued with a faithful regular congregation of around 12 people. We have retained a 'main' service at 10.30 am to promote unity as one worshipping community together. This is either Holy Communion from Common Worship or our (often lay-led) All Together contemporary service of (non-Eucharistic) worship. Attendance at these services has continued to increase. In combination the two services attract usually between 50 – 70 people each Sunday. The All Together monthly service usually has an attendance of between 45 – 70 people, with a higher number of children and families. I am very grateful to Helen Street for bringing young choir members and their families to sing at this service. Our Wednesday midweek service is usually attended by 18 – 30 people, and the monthly Communion at St. John's Church on average 11 people.

In February we had a 'pulpit swap' of the ministers to help promote further integration across the Aldenham, Radlett, and Shenley Team Ministry. In September we held a Team service of Confirmation at Aldenham church at which Bishop Alan presided. In October we celebrated Harvest with a special service and a parish lunch. We also celebrated Black History Month and I was delighted at that John Palmer came to share his experiences and indeed his excellent musical talents with us. In November we held our annual All Souls service to commemorate the departed, attended by 35 people. Throughout Advent and Christmas we worked as a ministry team to offer Christingle, Nine Lessons and Carols, a Crib service, the Churches Together Carol service (with 71 attendees), Midnight Mass, and Carols by Candlelight on Christmas Eve. I was particularly delighted after (I thought ambitiously) printing 70 orders of service for the latter, to see 220 people arrive, including 45 children.

As the new St. John's building is commissioned later in 2023 we expect a healthy number of attendees given our ministry alongside St. John's school and the United Free Church, and a developing ministry amongst children and young people.

During Lent and Easter we again worked as a Team Ministry to offer a variety of services: the Ash Wednesday Eucharist with imposition of ashes, weekly soup lunches, Taizé, Compline on three evenings in Holy Week, the Maundy Thursday Footwashing and Communion service, the Good Friday ecumenical Walk of Witness with Stations of the Cross, the Seven Last Words of Jesus service, a Sepulchre service, and Easter morning Communion with the blessing of light and a baptism. These services were reasonably well attended and around 100 people celebrated the Resurrection on Easter morning at the 10.30 am service, plus an additional 30 at the 8.00 am service.

This year I have prepared and preached just over 100 sermons. I also officiate and preach at Choral Evensong at Aldenham once each month. This year I have revised the Ordinary Time liturgy with the support and assistance of Eileen Bigg, and introduced the *Mass of St. Thomas* musical setting for Communion services by David Thorne with significant help from our organist Petra Danis and the great support of the volunteer singers.

Ministry Amongst Children and Young People

This year I have attended the *Launchpad* course delivered by Youthscape, a six-week programme of training in resourcing and supporting children and youth ministry in the local parish context. Following this we have begun to make plans for youth ministry and a youth club at the new St. John's Church.

Also, with the support of the PCC I have drafted a proposal for a Holiday Club in the summer of 2023 to re-engage with children and families in the local area.

I have continued to regularly visit the surrounding schools. I lead Collective Worship worship at St. John's Infants and I particularly enjoyed a whole day there in January devoted to teaching the children to pray. I am working closely with the staff as the link governor responsible for the worship and the Christian values of the school. I also have a ministry of care to the staff in a chaplaincy-type role, bringing cake and a listening ear to the staff room regularly. This year I have been invited to deliver assemblies and talks at Fair Field Juniors, Newberries, and for the first time Radlett Prep also. Following these assemblies I work to develop greater links between the church and the schools, and this has resulted in a number of visits by the schools to the church (and much joy ringing the tower bells and the hand bells! – our thanks to Adrian and Julian Beardmore especially). St. John's Infants held their regular services in church at the end of the school year, in Advent, and in Lent. Our 'Easter bonnet' service was attended by 250 children and their families.

Through the ministry of baptism I have found fruitful connections with families locally, and I am particularly grateful for the continued outreach and Christian witness of Joy Duthie and others via the Tuesday Toddlers group, which I have also enjoyed attending, catching up with parents in-between play, crafts, and snack time.

Discipleship

The Tuesday afternoon prayer group has continued and provides strength and support to those who attend. We pray each week for the life of the church community amongst other intercessions, and we feel God is answering those prayers. Two additional Bible study groups meet regularly from the church community, plus our *ReConnection* Bible study group meeting on Zoom on Saturday mornings, with 16 regular members plus 3 occasional attendees.

I regularly meet one-to-one with members of the community who are studying the Bible and/or theology. This is a very enjoyable part of ministry and is leading to some great questions about life and faith.

I was delighted to receive the Bishop's letter informing me that Dr. Robert Attuh has completed a year's training and his studies to become a Discipleship Enabler in the parish. Robert was commissioned into this role in February during a special liturgy prepared for the occasion. Robert's first act was to design and prepare with me a new discipleship course based on the Apostle's Creed, titled *Belief and Trust* which ran throughout Lent and was very well received, with a regular weekly attendance of 25 (33 people in total). Robert and I will continue to work together to develop discipleship initiatives with the church community.

On Easter Monday a faithful group of four made our pilgrimage from St. John's Church to St. Albans Abbey, carrying the church banner in representation of the community. We enjoyed a lively and powerful service on arrival, with a very good sermon by Bishop Jane.

Community Outreach

Through the ministry of 'Life Events' (known formerly as the 'Pastoral Offices') we have continued to baptise children and teach the faith to their families and Godparents. Recent baptism families were invited back to church for our All Together Candlemas celebration in February at which we reaffirmed our baptismal vows. We have celebrated weddings and blessings of marriages in church, with families rediscovering historical links to the church through their parents and grandparents married here in years past. It is a privilege to be alongside the bereaved as we minister to them as a parish.

This year we have had 7 funerals / memorials in church plus I have officiated at a number of other funerals at local crematoria, and at burial of ashes services in the churchyard.

We partnered with Aldenham Parish Council, various local churches and synagogues, and were supported by Hertsmere Borough Council, to deliver a 'Warm Spaces' project in the Vision Hall during the colder months of the year. In October Christ Church hosted the Mayor's Civic Service and as Mayor's Chaplain I was honoured to preside and preach to the gathered councillors of the Borough and their guests on the theme of unity, and service to one another, from Psalm 133.1. I have become an active member of the Hertsmere Forum of Faiths and we meet regularly to further promote unity and goodwill amongst the various faith groups across the Borough.

On the death of Her Late Majesty The Queen in September we offered a book of condolences for public use which forms part of the national historical record of this time, and we held a special service of Evening Prayer in her honour on the first Sunday during the period of national mourning.

I am delighted that we were able to host two organ recitals by Jo Singleton which drew good crowds of people, for Remembrance and Advent. We once again hosted the annual performances of the Radlett Choral Society and the Phoenix Orchestra in Christ Church. I was very thankful to the Strictly a Cappella choir for their support and performances at the Churches Together Carol Service in Advent.

We have developed our interfaith links, once again sharing the liturgy of Remembrance with the Jewish community in Radlett and we enjoyed refreshments and time together at the Reform synagogue after the act of commemoration at the war memorial. In November I delivered the Churches Together Advent talk, titled 'Watch for the Light: A Journey Through Advent' which was well received.

Jeremy Newton and Gillian Foroughi have continued to faithfully participate in Deanery Synod alongside myself, a connection not only to the wider diocesan level of Church but also receiving updates and having discussions on the work of the national Church at General Synod level, plus hearing from a variety of speakers on themes such as eco-church, ministry to the elderly, and work amongst children and families as the diocese commits to growing younger and more diverse.

I have very much enjoyed welcoming uniform and youth groups into church, including a group of beaver scouts to whom I gave a tour and talk on the church furnishings and what we do in church, how the music makes us feel, why Christians pray and celebrate Communion, etc. I also go out and visit local groups and when I spoke to the cub scouts about the Christian faith I brought numerous 'props' which they seemed to enjoy!

Pastoral Care

I have continued with a regular circuit of home Communion visits to individuals who are unable to get to church, the number increasing as parishioners have fallen into long-term ill health. In December Petra Danis very kindly brought a keyboard to Houndswood House care home on Harper Lane and accompanied the carol singing by volunteers from church. Following this experience I have been invited to bring Communion to the care home on a fortnightly basis. Around 15 people usually join in our

worship there including some staff. I have visited other care homes and the Peace Hospice in Watford to minister to the sick and to those approaching the end of their lives, a great privilege and an opportunity to minister to their families as well.

Ministry and Supervision

As Vicar of the parish I am responsible for the supervision of our Reader, Eileen Bigg, who continues to be a great support in ministry both at Christ Church and St. John's. Eileen has frequently preached the sermon and has led All Together worship with grace and a generosity of spirit. Eileen's ministry has developed further in that she has also had opportunity to officiate at funerals this year.

Ritah Namakula is in her final year of training for ordained ministry and I am her training supervisor. This has been a real privilege and like everyone else I will be very sad to have to let her go on to her ordination this Pentecost, but such is God's call. I have no doubt she has a great ministry ahead of her as a priest of God's Church. As a preacher and leader of worship here, as well as supervising Confirmation preparation with children and preparing a session for the Lent course, alongside her training assignments and full time work, Ritah has been an inspiring colleague to work alongside and a privilege to supervise.

In November, 40 church volunteers and employees were thanked with a buffet lunch and social gathering at the vicarage for their vital contribution to the life and ministry of the church. My sincere thanks are due to Mariama for her hard work in preparing for this.

In January Christ Church hosted all the local vicars of the St. Albans area (the 'clergy Chapter') for a service of Holy Communion before our regular meeting. This year I was elected to Diocesan Synod as a representative in the House of Clergy.

As part of my continuing professional development I began teaching at diocesan level, and enjoyed leading an evening for the Readers of the diocese on theologies of the Eucharist as part of their training in Communion by Extension. I wrote up my Master's Degree thesis into a journal article which was published in the Autumn edition of the *Theology and Ministry* journal at the University of Durham.

I have begun to standardise the role descriptions for our employees in a consultative process and am thankful to Anna Bicknell and Simon Ashley for their support in this with their expertise in Human Resources.

I conducted the annual appraisal for our Parish Administrator and all appraisals, supervision meetings, and appropriate training has been carried out for all employees and licensed lay members of the ministry team, including our Ordinand, Reader, and Discipleship Enabler.

Giving

As Chair of the Home and Overseas Committee I have met with the group twice as usual and we have made recommendations to the PCC which were accepted and payments made to support various charities and causes, this year to the value of £7,800. As a Trustee of the Platt Foundation Trust I have attended regular meetings and contributed to discussions on grants made by the Trust to the education and formation of young people locally. I have used funds from the Vicar's Discretionary Fund to assist various members of the community, particularly around Christmastime.

Developing the Parish Mission

In August and October we held two Vision planning days to prepare for renewing the Mission Action Plan (MAP) for the parish. These sessions, facilitated by Kate Lomax the diocesan Church Growth Officer, were well attended by the congregation with approximately 30 people joining each session. We worshipped together, assessed 'where we are', assessed our gifts and values, and formed a cohesive set of priorities for the coming years.

Following these meetings of the congregation, I formed a small group of 'lesser-heard voices', those of various minority groups, to distil the conversations and data which arose from the Vision Days into a coherent and realistic MAP. Using all the various sources, including the focused small group discussion, I then wrote up a draft MAP for review by the Management Committee in February 2023. This was adopted by the PCC at the meeting in March. We have identified long-term priorities and also short-term goals to build initial momentum, with a review scheduled for 2024.

The three priority areas identified by church members during this process were:

1. Ministry amongst children and families
2. Deepening discipleship
3. Ministry amongst the elderly

A number of initiatives are already underway as we begin to address these priorities. These include the plans for a youth club at St. John's and summer Holiday Club. The Belief and Trust course in Lent was well received and plans are underway to develop this further. In addition, I now bring Communion to a growing congregation at Houndswood House.

The new, full Mission Action Plan can be accessed on the diocesan website here:

<https://www.stalbans.anglican.org/maps/?id=34172>

As a new 'tagline' for the church it was agreed by the PCC that we would adopt the following:

"Christ at the heart of community"

Governance

Since my arrival I have prioritised safeguarding and this year we have progressed well through the Safeguarding Action Plan, making further improvements and increasing compliance within the regulatory framework. Additional safeguarding training was received by members of the PCC and other volunteers, and all necessary DBS certificates were obtained. A risk assessment was completed for all regulated activities and the PCC was kept up to date on all safeguarding matters, this now being a standing item on the PCC agenda. In April the diocese released a new online Safeguarding Hub for the storage of data relating to DBS checks and safeguarding training for members of the parish and I have made sure we are amongst the first of the parishes to adopt this in the diocese.

In November we conducted our Annual Stewardship campaign and I preached at each of our regular services on the subject of regular giving of time and talents, with Jeremy Newton kindly providing the statistical and other data to support the campaign, and also speaking in our services of worship.

I chaired the bellringers AGM in September which was well attended and a good opportunity to thank them for their commitment and hard work on behalf of the church.

In January 2022 we commissioned Church Consultant and Trainer John Truscott to review our policies and processes and to make recommendations for improvements based on best practice. This year we have made considerable progress in following these recommendations.

For example, we implemented the church management software 'ChurchSuite' for safer and more efficient management of personal data, bookings, and church rotas. I provided training to our employed administrators and this implementation has been successful.

Continuing through the recommendations of the Truscott report, we have also:

- in our PCC meetings moved from mere 'maintenance mode' to a more creative and open discussion, with a significant part of each meeting given over to discussing mission and evangelism and 'big picture' thinking;
- re-established a Vision Hall Management Group to manage much of the day-to-day maintenance and bookings for the church hall;
- redeveloped the role of the PCC Secretary to distribute much of the accumulated bulk of the role amongst other members of the PCC and administrative staff;
- made efforts to include younger people in the management of the church, reducing the average age of PCC members at the APCM and including a teenage member of the church community in our Mission Action Planning small advisory group;
- developed the roles of Wardens and Assistant Wardens, giving more oversight to the elected Wardens and distributing roles such as locking and unlocking the church, setting up for services, etc, amongst a broader range of volunteers.

I have been very pleased with the work of the PCC this year. I have been particularly well supported by our Wardens, George Verghese and Jeremy Newton, to whom I owe a significant debt of thanks for their encouragement, guidance, skills, and sheer hard work over the past year.

As Chair of the PCC I have overseen continued review of our policies and introduced new ones where required, for example a *Preventing Bullying and Harassment* policy, based on that adopted by the diocese, was approved by the PCC in September.

The PCC has faced significant challenges over the past two years and has approached these with dignity and professionalism which is to be commended. From August 2021 I received a number of letters and emails making allegations of various forms of discrimination from an individual within the church community. These culminated in a formal complaint made to the Bishop of St. Albans under an act of parliament titled the Clergy Discipline Measure 2003. This experience was deeply distressing to myself and to my family, and led my GP to sign me off work on sick leave for two months, citing work-related stress and depression. I denied the allegations in full and with the aid of a solicitor was able to defend myself. The claims were eventually dismissed by the Bishop.

The Claimant then appealed this outcome, and added further allegations of bias against the Bishop. This appeal was investigated and in May 2022 was ultimately dismissed by Court of Appeal Judge Dame Sarah Asplin DBE, sitting in her capacity as President of Tribunals.

The Claimant then made a new complaint about myself and other members of the church to the diocese which was referred to the diocesan Racial Justice Action Group. In their report, the Chair and another member of the group concluded that: "we have not found evidence of racial bias or unfairness." Further, that:

"All the information we have received shows us that Christ Church is a church that has worked hard and imaginatively to become a genuinely diverse church. It has responded with vision to the challenge of 'Black Lives Matter', is promoting and supporting UK minorities into ministry and leadership and providing inclusive worship to appeal to diverse tastes."

Following that report, the Claimant then launched a court action in the Watford Employment Tribunal, since transferred to London, against myself, the PCC, various members of the church, and the St. Albans Diocesan Board of Finance. As co-respondents we are legally represented by a firm of solicitors appointed by our insurer. The claims are substantially the same as those previously made against myself, church members, and the bishop, in the previous cases. All of the claims are denied in full. A preliminary hearing scheduled for 24 March 2023 was postponed at the request of the Claimant and a new date has been set for 19 June.

In light of this action the PCC made the decision to self-refer to the Charity Commission to make them aware of the circumstances, given that any such action could potentially harm the reputation of the charity or lead to a loss of finances. The Charity Commission responded to the effect that they were satisfied that the PCC and Management Committee were dealing appropriately and diligently with the complaint and the PCC has kept the Charity Commission updated as required.

In Conclusion

As a community of faith we have faced significant challenges including Coronavirus, bereavement, lack of engagement with younger people, and division. However I feel very strongly that by faith we are rising to those challenges, and putting not only truth and justice but also grace and hospitality at the heart of this Church. It has been my prayer since before I arrived here that Christ would sit on the throne of the church, as sovereign in our hearts. I truly feel that by prayer and Godly discernment we are moving in the right direction together. In all our endeavours I am reminded of Psalm 127.1:

*Unless the Lord builds the house,
those who build it labour in vain.*

I pray that we commend ourselves and all we do to God's loving care, and ask that God build us up in number, in richness of devotion, in love, unity, and in the bonds of peace as we seek to follow Jesus Christ together. Thank you for being on this great adventure!

Rev'd. Oliver Blease
May 2023

Notes from the Churchwardens

The year started with Caroline Newman and Fiona Turner as Churchwardens, and in May, Jeremy Newton and George Verghese were elected. Both have had a steep learning curve and are grateful for the support they have received from many parishioners.

The year also started with Covid restrictions in place, but these have been relaxed during the year, and it has been good to see more people return to weekly worship at both the Wednesday and Sunday services. Unfortunately, it has not yet been possible to resume weekly children's work or Sunday school.

Traditionally, Churchwardens have spent most of their time concerned about the fabric of the church(es). There is a separate report about the development of the St John's site, so this section focuses on Christ Church, Vision Hall and the churchyard.

All parish churches and churchyards are required to be inspected every five years and our "quinquennial" inspection was carried out in June, with the full report available in October. The surveyor found the church to have been well looked after and, whilst there are a few areas we need to keep an eye on, the remedial work needed over the next five years was assessed at ca £5,000. Some of the suggested work has already been carried out, including painting the external doors both to the belfry and to the porch with the Angel doors, for which our thanks go to Barry Hogg.

We have continued work begun last year in replacing light-bulbs with more energy-efficient ones in both the church and Vision Hall, and given the soaring price of energy, we have invested in blankets and hand-warmers for people at church and are in the process of gaining the necessary permissions to install solar panels on a roof of Vision Hall.

There have been a few emergencies, involving burst pipes – in the churchyard, outside the vestry and at the back of the church where a radiator leaked. All of these were fixed, but we are still exploring where water gains ingress around the Rotunda roof.

The courtyard behind the Rotunda has been cleaned and looks pristine, and the doors from the courtyard into Vision Hall have been revarnished. Thanks to a donation, two all-weather teak benches have been provided in the courtyard, replacing the old church pew which was in very poor condition.

Fiona Turner has organised work-parties to tidy the churchyard, and this continues throughout 2023. We are very grateful to Fiona in leading this and we encourage more people to join in, and give a couple of hours or so in a month. We are similarly very grateful to those in our congregations who look after a particular bed or area, keeping it clean, tidy and looking cared-for.

On the grounds more generally, the major change has been the moving of a fence in the carpark, which has enabled the closing of the gate and the ending of a "rat-run" for cars which was becoming increasingly dangerous to people walking on Church Field. New signage makes it clear that it is not a thoroughfare.

Several trees suffered badly in the hot, dry summer of 2022 and work to remove or prune these is scheduled for 2023.

A major success has been the sale (completed in 2023) of a complete set of handbells which had been bequeathed to the PCC for use or disposal as considered most appropriate.

Other smaller items have included repair of an altar frontal and a chasuble, and new signage welcoming people to church. We also took part in the Government's "Warm Spaces" initiative, albeit there was little demand in Radlett. The scheme is being re-thought for winter 2023.

Jeremy Newton & George Verghese

St Albans Deanery Synod report for 2022

A Deanery is a neighbourhood of churches, in Radlett's case, 16 parishes within and to the South and East of St Albans. Our Deanery is one of 20 in the Diocese of St Albans. Deaneries meet to consider issues common to our parishes and provide a channel of communication between parishes and Diocese.

Radlett is eligible to elect three Deanery Synod representatives, but at present has just two. Clergy are also members of the Deanery Synod "ex officio". There is a small amount of "synod business" at the end of each meeting, such as approving a budget, or suggesting improvements.

In June at St Peter's Church, London Colney we heard from two guest speakers, the new Diocesan Secretary – David White, who discussed his approach to the role in leading a team of experts in the strategic and operational running of the Diocese. The job is an interesting balance between business and ministry. His talk inspired a lively debate about many subjects including parish share, finances, buildings and declining congregations.

We also heard from Maggie Dodd – Anna Chaplain for St Albans. Anna Chaplaincy is named after the prophetess, Anna, who recognised Jesus as the Messiah upon his presentation at the Temple. It is run by the Bible Reading Fellowship (the team behind Messy Church) and is an ecumenical, community based project of 230 chaplains, with ambitious plans for one in every town. As people get older, they are not always able to attend church. Anna Chaplains visit people of any faith or no faith, and their families, at home, in retirement flats and in care homes.

People with Dementia may find it hard to come to church; it may become overwhelming. Offering "Memory Worship" at church allows them to remain in a familiar environment. We discussed and saw examples of how a service can be geared to support their needs including signposting, flexibility, simplicity, familiarity and making the service more interactive and engaging by using a Memory Worship Box with Prayer Bear, Bible and electric candles.

In October, a meeting was held at St Luke's church St Albans on Clergy Welfare. Problems such as the cost of living crisis led to 2022 being a record breaking year with 2,500 grants made in 6 months. The speaker Richard Farmbrough from the Clergy Support Trust discussed the support available for Clergy and their families to ensure their health and wellbeing. Support is often financial but other resources are available too, including for example a listening service, insomnia and debt advice.

These Synod meetings (normally, just three a year) are open to all and it was good to see people from our congregations at the meetings described above. If anyone would like to know more about Deanery Synod, please come and talk to us.

Gillian Foroughi and Jeremy Newton

Radlett Representatives on St Albans Deanery



**ST ALBANS
DEANERY**
Serving & supporting our churches

St John's Family

Development of St John's Church site

2022 was a year of stop – go – stop!

There was no activity on site until May, when all the groundworks started and seemed to take a long time. And then, the building outline started to emerge, with its skeleton metal frame, and for the first time, we could envisage what the new church would look like. Have a thought for the people putting up the metal frame, working in the hottest part of last year's summer – so much so that, on some days, they had to stop working as the metal became too hot to handle.

Then the metal frame started to be filled in with bricks, and neighbours and passers-by could see the church and hall take bodily shape. Several comments were passed on to me that the bricklayers were doing a great job.

But then, the year ended frustratingly with many days lost in December and again in January, due to both the cold and the wet weather.

However, as I write just after Easter 2023, the roof is on, the windows are in and the cross is up (albeit needing its final cladding). By the time you read this, you should be able to see the church, hall and flats without the scaffolding.

Now the building is watertight, work can continue apace, and all the finishes – for flooring, walls, kitchen, toilets etc – have been chosen.

The current programme is for Christchurch Nursery and other hirers to be able to use the new building from the start of September, and Bishop Alan will formally commission St John's church at 3pm on 15 October 2023.

It has been a long time since the idea was first mooted in 2016 of re-developing the site and enabling six units of affordable housing to be available. But the vision has remained the same throughout – to serve God in the community.



Jeremy Newton (on behalf of PCC)

Vision Church Hall

The Church hall was named “Vision” with the clear intention of reaching out to the Radlett community at large yet still keeping our own Church at the centre of our activities, and it is still fulfilling this intention. Please do consider the Vision Hall for any events you may be planning.

Vision Hall bookings have increased with more regular weekly hirers as well as one-off children’s party bookings at weekends. Various local organisations use the Vision Hall for events and meetings, and the Radlett Museum quiz night in March was a great success. Hirers express appreciation for the warm welcome and attractive space.

Ceiling lights in the Rotunda and Hall have been replaced with LED panels and the usual maintenance and regular servicing continues. The kitchen shutter and appliances - water boiler and dishwasher - have recently been serviced, and the carpets throughout have been professionally cleaned. The furniture is showing its age and some of the chairs will need replacing before long. When halls and church are busy carparking space is at a premium and needs careful management.

We have re-formed the Vision Hall Management Group to deal with matters as they arise, consider best practice and ensure that Vision Hall continues with the “intention of reaching out to the Radlett community at large yet still keeping our own Church at the centre of our activities”. We will transition to become the Halls Management Group in Autumn 2023, to include the newly opened St John’s Church and Hall. We would welcome new volunteers – please speak to Ollie, the Wardens or any of us.

Helen Warne, Jenny Bailey, Fiona Turner



Churches Together in Radlett and Aldenham (CTRA)

Christ Church, St John's, United Free Church, St Anthony's and St John the Baptist, Aldenham

Throughout 2022 the Churches of Radlett and Aldenham have come together to celebrate Christian festivals and to serve the local communities.

The International World Day of Prayer was held at Christ Church. In Lent we held a series of talks based on 'Sharing the Easter Story' by Sally Welch at St Anthony's. The churches also joined together for Compline during Holy Week and the Walk of Witness on Good Friday.

The Churches marked the Platinum Jubilee with a Service of Thanksgiving in June and supported many local events.

The Summer Hamper scheme which delivers food parcels to families during the school holidays continued to run throughout the year. We also delivered a Christmas Hamper and an Easter Hamper to each family filled with goodies and treats kindly donated by our parishioners and members of the community.

The Catch-up Club continued to run throughout the year at St Anthony's. Lead by a team of volunteers, it is aimed at helping children in our community who benefit from extra help following Covid.

The churches also supported the community scheme 'Warm Places'. Christ Church and St Anthony's were open to the public throughout the winter months.

The Remembrance Day service was held in Radlett at the War Memorial and was very well attended. The sound system was much improved this year. A wreath was laid on behalf of our four churches.

The Ecumenical Carol Service took place at Christ Church. It was well attended this year, as were many of the services over the Christmas period.

Our Clergy meet together from time to time. The Steering Committee met in January 2022, held the AGM in May 2022 and met again in September 2022.

Cath Parkinson

Secretary Churches Together Aldenham and Radlett



Safeguarding Report - May 2023

The Parish is committed to the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults and to supporting those who have been victims of abuse, as well as those who may present a risk to others. The PCC has complied with the duty under Section 5 of the Safeguarding and Clergy Discipline Measure 2016 (duty to have due regard to the House of Bishop's guidance on safeguarding children and vulnerable adults). The PCC have adopted all the House of Bishops' Safeguarding Policies and Practice Guidance, as well as *Promoting a Safer Church* (child protection and vulnerable adults policy) at their meeting on 7 September 2021. This document is displayed in the narthex (under the balcony) in church.

We have a Parish Safeguarding Officer (Deborah Adeoti) and a Lead Recruiter (Greta Flynn). Those who work with vulnerable groups in the Parish are recruited in accordance with *Safer Recruitment and People Management Guidance*, published in June 2021. DBS checks are renewed every three years and all those who have been safely recruited, plus members of the PCC, have undertaken safeguarding training within the last 3 years. Where there are still requirements for training to be completed and policies to be implemented or reviewed, these will be addressed as a priority within the Safeguarding Action Plan, to be presented at the first PCC meeting, later this month.

Contact details for those wishing to obtain advice, raise any concerns or make referrals to the statutory authorities are posted around the church property on noticeboards. Safeguarding information is also displayed on the church website.

There is adequate insurance cover for all activities involving children or adults undertaken in the name of the Parish. There have been no issues of safeguarding concern reported during 2022/3.

Rev'd. Oliver Blease

May 2023



Summary Financial Review of the Year, including Stewardship

Please refer to the full Accounts. This brief report highlights key points of the PCC's finances of 2022.

Overall

The accounts show a loss of £125k in 2022

- The church's income was £246k, but expenditure was £287k, giving a net loss of £40k
- There was a further £85k loss on investments (reversing most of the gains made in 2021)

Income

Of the £246k income

- 59% came from voluntary giving from parishioners, mostly through the Parish Giving Scheme
- 18% came from hiring out our halls, and fees, mainly from funerals
- 23% came from renting the curate's house, from grants and investments

We are grateful to all those who commit to give regularly and proportionately to their income, reviewing their giving each year. However, it appears that only two-thirds of households on our electoral roll do so. Of course, we welcome people who give by cash or machine each week they come to church, but this is no substitute for (though it can be additional to!) pledged giving of a proportion of household income.

More worryingly, the table below shows how much of our voluntary giving comes from a handful of parishioners. Our church depends on people giving; it does not receive money from the state, and currently the top five donors (or households) give over 40% of our regular income.

The table below shows giving from regular donors through the Parish Giving Scheme (over 85% through this method), bank transfers, cheques or monthly envelopes, before reclaiming tax under Gift Aid. The table does not include any who give regularly through SumUp, but unless a person was giving at least £50/week, it would not materially affect the table.

Band	Number of Donors	Amount
Up to £100	11	£300.00
£101 to £300	11	£2,524.72
£301 to £500	9	£3,870.00
£501 to £1,000	21	£16,245.08
£1,001 to £2,000	11	£16,090.51
£2,001 to £3,000	6	£14,450.53
£3,001 to £5,000	3	£14,970.00
£5,001 to £10,000	4	£25,260.00
£10,001 and up	1	£17,400.00
Total	77	£111,110.84

Expenditure

Of the £287k expenditure

- 42% (£120k) was the “parish share” which pays for the vicar, a proportion of the time of the other team ministers, for the vicarage and for Diocesan expenditure
- 25% was spent on staff costs and Vision Hall (as much was spent on the halls as was received in income)
- Energy costs rose by £14k, and accounted for 7% with depreciation a further 8%
- 10% was spent on upkeep of buildings and grounds, and the remainder on a wide range of expenses and fees (including fees related to the development of St John’s site)

Looking forward, we are seeking to grow income further from Vision Hall, and the new St John’s church and hall, and we are continuing to examine where costs might be saved (e.g. through solar panels). However, we need more regular giving from all in order to pay for our hopes and plans to re-start children and youth work.

Finance Advisory Group



Home and Overseas Committee (H&O's) 2022

The H&O's committee has responsibility for recommending to the Parochial Church Council how to distribute funds to charities and individuals at home (i.e. within the United Kingdom) and overseas on behalf of the parish. As with all charities those we have previously supported both in prayer and financially are still recovering from the past difficult years and are struggling to continue their work. Despite the financial difficulties felt by all, our generous church family have enabled us once again to support charities at home and abroad so that the valuable work of spreading the Good News of the Gospel and in the giving of practical help to those in great need can go on.



The Committee aims to meet 2 to 3 times a year and at the September 2022 meeting we discussed the distribution of funds to the various charities. We recommended to the PCC that we continue supporting the same charities as in the previous year. The amount of funds allocated for distribution to the charities for 2022 was £7,800, a smaller amount than the previous year, none-the-less a very substantial amount, thanks to our generous church family. The funds were allocated as is the practice of 2/3 to overseas and 1/3 to home charities. The committee also recommended the distribution of the Christmas 2022 and Easter 2023 cash collections. The PCC agreed the recommendations (see next page).

Representatives from our supported charities have once again been invited to come to meet us and to talk about their work. A good proportion of those invited have responded positively including Christian Aid, Interserve, CMS, Open Door (St Albans), and Javed Kamarrudin.

All the Charities we support express their grateful thanks for our generosity and keep us in their prayers as we do them. Thank you to all who give to our church funds especially this last year which has been difficult for everyone and for all the extra support given in so many ways to help those in great need which includes the Churches Together Hamper scheme and Toys at Christmas - Thank you everyone.

Last year the committee began exploring ways of going forward, how to assess who we support; should the length of time of support be limited; can we support other worthy causes and also how many charities to support. In the coming year the committee will continue, on behalf of the church family, to explore how and who we support at home and abroad.

We will look at possibly supporting new charities that have been put forward for consideration; however, to do so may require 'dropping' some charities that we have supported for many years.

Thanks once again to our church family for very graciously and generously continuing to support the church, with time, talent and money.

Thank you to Kamran Foroughi who has stepped down from the committee, we are very grateful for his insight and contributions.

The Home & Overseas Committee have a request - Please prayerfully consider if you would like to join the committee, fresh minds with new ideas are always welcome, there is no entrance exam, the salary is non-existent but the rewards are priceless!

Please pray for God's guidance for those on the committee and for those whom God will call to serve in this important work.

Oliver Blease, Alan Taylor, Rosemari Whiteman & Susan Brown.

Home and Overseas Committee recommended donations 2022

Approved at the November 2022 PCC meeting

2022 donation total amount £7,800

a) Overseas

1) Christian Aid	£885
2) Interserve (for Rev'd Dr G Aylett)	£715
3) The Bible Society	£715
4) CMS (for John Waters)	£465
5) Practical Action	£615
6) Toybox	£615
7) Nepali Church (Mr Milan Adhikari)	£715
8) Tear Fund	£475
Total	£5200

b) Home

1) The Scripture Union	£438
2) New Hope Trust	£833
3) Open Door (St Albans)	£443
4) Herts Young Homeless	£443
5) Javed Kamarrudin	£443
Total	£2600

In addition, the committee recommend:

The Christmas 2022 cash collection be distributed equally to:

1. The Children's Society,
2. CRISIS
3. The Vicar of Radlett Discretionary Fund**

The Easter 2023 cash collection be distributed equally to:

1. Radlett Hamper Fund
2. The Vicar of Radlett Discretionary Fund**

**** Note:** The Vicar of Radlett Discretionary Fund cannot exceed £750 in the account therefore if not needed, all collections to be distributed equally to the other charities at Easter and Christmas.

Prayer Group 2022

The Tuesday Prayer Group continues to meet each week at 2.00pm. We have recently moved from the 'upper room' of M4 in the Vision Hall to the more comfortable surrounds of Joy and John Duthie's home. Their kind hospitality and the convenience of the house makes for a very enjoyable setting.

We meet for one hour, beginning each session with a time of reading scripture aloud. We reflect on this briefly with a silent pause and then pray freely and openly.

The topics of prayer are wide-ranging and the group dynamic is very informal. This means there is no preparation required, we just 'turn up and pray', which is part of the attraction of the group.

Each week around 5 members usually gather together. We pray for the life of this church community and for the flourishing of the Holy Spirit amongst us. We ask for growth, in number and in depth. And we offer to God all the circumstances that are on our hearts at that time, such as world events, community matters, and other issues.

It is a delightful and joyous gathering which brings comfort and real healing to both the *prayers* and the *prayees*. Everyone is welcome.

Thursday Lunch Club

Thursday Lunch Club meets every week, except over Christmas, at Woodland Lodge (the Guide Hut) in Scrubbits Park Road. We currently have over twenty members.

For a modest charge, the club provides a two-course, cooked lunch for elderly residents who (mostly) live on their own. Not only does it offer them an enjoyable meal (some say the best one of the week) but also the companionship they lack at home.

Shortly before Christmas we have a full Christmas dinner, which this year, was funded by Radlett Men's Club. Helen Street brought her singing group from Fairfield School, who entertained us with Christmas songs.

The members value this club greatly, but it could not function without the volunteers who cook or wash up (you get to eat, too) or transport 2 or 3 people between their home and the Guide hut. The volunteers all find it very worthwhile and we are always looking for new people to join our happy team. If you (or someone you know) could spare some time on a Thursday to fulfil one of these roles, about every 4 weeks, please contact me. Thank you.

Anne Newton

Tel 857230

Email – apnewton60@gmail.com



Bell-ringers



During 2022, the bells were rung for most services thanks to this extraordinary group who every Sunday ring the bells for Sunday services. At Ridge or South Mimms before dispersing to Aldenham and Radlett to ring for those services. I must add a thank you to Wenzel's who are open and willing to sell to us our coffees and breakfasts as we move from tower to tower. There was the Jubilee where the bells were rung in celebration, as we visited multiple churches on the Jubilee weekend. Where possible the bells were tied to events being held in the villages that we rang the bells at.

Then on the 25 June John Beardwell died who had been instrumental in getting ringing established in Radlett and served as the Ringing Master for over 30 Years. His funeral was on the hottest day of the year. Ringers from all over the county along with the occasional ringer coming from further afield some as far as Yorkshire. They attended the funeral and joined in the open ringing before and after the funeral. On behalf of my brothers' and my Family I want to say thank you for ringing for his funeral.

On the 8th of September 2022 Queen Elizabeth II died. There was a call for ringers to muffle toll bells as part of Operation London Bridge. I must say that muffling bells does require some dexterity as it is like clambering over an adult sized climbing frame. Bell ringers answered the call to ring for their Queen and the new King. I can tell you that the tolling of the bell is not easy, and we tolled in pairs as it lasted an hour. Trying to achieve a 7 second gap between each sound of the bell. This is quite technical and holding the bell on the balance does strain the arms. This is a special type of ringing which is not practiced or performed very often. Normal ringing of the bells allows the bell to do 90% of the work so an hours ringing is not at all strenuous. For all the help and support the ringers gave me I thank them.

2023 is looking to be a time for National Celebration and I have been asked to ring Church Bells and would love it if you wanted to join me. So please call me on 07980934835 or come to a ringing Practice at Christ Church on a Wednesday at 8pm.

Adrian Beardwell (Ringing Master Christ Church Radlett)

Tuesday Toddlers

Age 0-3 | Tuesdays in term-time | 9-11am



This lovely group was set up almost 20 years ago, by Joy Duthie and others.

Now it is run by two enthusiastic and very capable young Mums, Emma Salomon and Helen Jones, but Joy still comes almost every week and chats to the Mums (and Dads, Grandparents and Childminders) and shares the love of God.

Whilst the numbers vary greatly week by week (as you would expect with children of this age), there can be up to 25 children and babies, with a great mix of parents/carers from different nationalities and backgrounds. It makes for interesting conversations.

As you can see from the pictures above, there are loads of toys (many more not in the picture!) as well as mats and suitable toys for babies. It is quite a challenge getting everything back into the cupboard!

It is an opportunity for Mums and others to talk to each other in a relaxed environment (with coffee or tea provided by Chrise and Marion), and for their children to play and interact with each other. There is always some craft on offer, and then there's time for children's snacks, and finally a time of singing, ably led by Anna.

At present, the group meets in the Scout Hut, but everyone is looking forward to moving into the new St John's church

Joy Duthie and (occasionally) Jeremy Newton



St John's School Report



“Start children off on the way they should go and even when they are old, they will not turn from it” Proverbs 22:6

This has been a wonderfully refreshing year for St John's school after all the restrictions of Covid. Finally, the school has been able to blossom and return to a home of togetherness, warmth and vitality. Transformation has taken time and patience, as we see children whose development has slowed and for whom anxiety still features. Special steps are taken to ensure well being for all is at the fore and progress in learning is returning.

In the summer, we held a street party and joyfully celebrated Queen Elizabeth's Platinum Jubilee and then, together, mourned her passing later in the year.

Our community has been enriched by the welcome we have been able to offer Afghani children, for whom spaces could be found until permanent homes were offered. As the tragedy of the war in Ukraine unfolded, our children were helped to understand what was happening. They played an active part in gathering supplies together to send to Ukraine and eventually to welcome some Ukrainian children into our school. These experiences of diverse cultures are of immense benefit to the children and the school as a whole.

After a 2 day Ofsted inspection in May 2022, we were delighted to receive a judgment of “Good”. The inspectors gave a judgment of Outstanding for both “Behaviour and Attitudes” and “Personal Development”. This showed a recognition of the exceptional practice in our school to develop independent learners with high aspirations and to provide support and adaptations in the curriculum to enable all to make the best progress possible. This was a great vote of confidence in our leadership team.

Secure in the strength of the team at Radlett St John's, the Poppy Trust were content for Mrs Aharon the Executive Head Teacher to take on a consultancy role in another church school, Watford St John's, while that school seeks to recruit a new Head Teacher.



Meanwhile, back at Radlett St John's, Mrs Leggett (Acting Head Teacher) has been pleased to lead the spiritual development of the school. One unmistakable symbol of that is the newly created Woodland Walk mural installation linking the dining room and the playground. Characters representing our school values all appear in the woodland setting. Incidentally, the installation was devised by a former pupil of the school!

Rev'd Ollie, continues to play an active role in school life and is always greeted with enthusiasm by the children.

The Christmas Christingle Service at Christchurch was very well supported by parents and families who will not forget Olly's dramatic depiction of John the Baptist preparing the way for the Lord!



Olly also opened the school Prayer morning encouraging the children to think deeply about the meaning and purpose of prayer and how we pray, both in the Christian faith and in other religions. Bubble prayers turned out to be a favourite and unsurprisingly, provided an opportunity for some excellent art work.

There has been an emphasis this year on ecology and the need to look after our planet.

We have a team of eco warriors who promote recycling and reuse. There was one project involving the conversion of crisp packets into blankets!



A clothes swap shop took the stigma out of second hand clothing for hard up families as the cost of living crisis bit. Everyone could see the merit in a bargain!



We encourage the children to think about our school Values and put them into practice.

This year we are seeing children and their families bringing their own ideas forward to raise awareness of the needs of others. Two of our children have requested to run fundraisers, one to raise money for the homeless at Christmas and one for a charity that is very important to her.

The school is full and, happily, continues to thrive and provide the best possible nurturing environment for children at the beginning of their school careers.

We look forward to a colourful and imaginative Easter Bonnet parade along Radlett High Street.

Jane Williams

**Minutes of the Annual Parishioners Meeting (APM) &
Minutes of the Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM)
held on Sunday 8th May 2022, 12 noon
at Christ Church Radlett**

Meeting of Parishioners: Election of Churchwardens

In the absence of the Reverend Oliver Blease, Jeremy Newton proposed that Archdeacon Jane Mainwaring chair the Annual Parishioners Meeting. This was agreed by the raising of hands.

There were 46 people present (33 in 2020) and 5 (five) apologies had been received.

- 1 Prayers** - Archdeacon Jane Mainwaring opened the meeting in prayer.
- 2 Minutes of 2021 Annual Parishioners Meeting:** There were no corrections or amendments and the minutes were unanimously approved as a true record.
- 3 Bishop's Letter (for noting):** Archdeacon Jane Mainwaring stated that this is an item for noting and not for discussion. She stated that the Bishop's letter informed the PCC of an ongoing investigation into claims of racial discrimination within the parish. As a diocese, these claims are taken very seriously and there is an ongoing investigation. At the conclusion of the investigation, the PCC will receive a report and will take any action deemed necessary by that report.

Before moving to item 4 (the election of Churchwardens) there was a pause in the meeting following which the Archdeacon moved to adjourn the APM and to move on to the APCM. A question was raised from the floor as to the reason for the adjournment. Archdeacon Jane replied that there was a question over whether one of the nominees for churchwarden had been seconded; all nominations are required to be proposed and seconded. Whilst this question was being resolved, Archdeacon Jane proposed moving onto the Annual Parochial Church Meeting and to return to the Annual Parishioners Meeting in due course.

The meeting adjourned at 12.08pm, to be continued after the Annual Parochial Church Meeting.

At 12 50pm Archdeacon Jane thanked everyone for their patience and reopened the Annual Parishioners Meeting and moved to the election of Churchwardens.

- 4 Election of Churchwardens:** Archdeacon Jane announced that she had received two nominations for Churchwarden; the nominees were Jeremy Newton and George Verghese; both having been proposed and seconded.
On the basis that there are only two nominations and the parish needed to elect two Churchwardens, Archdeacon Jane stated that both Jeremy Newton and George Verghese were duly elected to serve as Churchwardens for the next year. She said she was grateful to them for their willingness to serve in that role.
- 5 Proposed date of 2023 APM & APCM:** Sunday 14th May 2023
This date is a week later than the previously proposed date so it would not clash with the 2023 Team retreat. The date of Sunday 14th May, 2023 was accepted.

The Reverend Robert Fletcher, Acting Team Rector, closed the Annual Parishioners Meeting and Annual Parochial Church Meeting in prayer at 12.58 pm.

Annual Parochial Church Meeting

Jeremy Newton proposed that Archdeacon Jane Mainwaring chair the Annual Parochial Church Meeting. This was agreed by the raising of hands.

- 1. Minutes of 2021 meeting:** The minutes were present. There were no corrections or amendments and the minutes were accepted as a true record.
- 2. Electoral Roll report:** Electoral Roll Officer, Gillian Foroughi presented the revised Electoral Roll (ER). She reported that this year the ER was only required to be updated and that the next full revision will be in 2025. The number of people registered on the ER is 187; in 2021 it was 190. Since the last APCM, one person had left, five people had sadly died and three had been added to the ER. The reduction in number is about 2% which is less than in previous years which had been approximately 5% before the Covid 19 pandemic.

There were no question and the Archdeacon thanked Gillian for the report.

- 3. Election of Electoral Roll Officer:** Gillian Foroughi was nominated to continue in the roll of Electoral Roll Officer. Gillian was unanimously elected.
- 4. Safeguarding Statement & Report from Safeguarding Officer**
Deborah Adeoti, Parish Safeguarding Officer gave the report as follows:

The parish has maintained a safe and comfortable environment for all Church members and visitors to the church. We welcome and respect everyone in church without any exceptions. We listen to feedback and take necessary actions as required. We are committed to building constructive links with statutory and voluntary agencies involved in safeguarding.

This past year has been busy. In August 2021 the Revd Oliver Blease, our new Parish Vicar, made safeguarding a priority, formed a Safeguarding Team, and started to use the Diocesan Safeguarding Dashboard to track progress and generate the Safeguarding Action Plan. Much progress has since been made, particularly in producing policies, establishing safeguarding training, and ensuring that appropriate DBS checks are in place for those in key roles in the parish.

At the meeting of 8th September 2021, the PCC adopted the House of Bishops Policy *Promoting a Safer Church* as the new parish safeguarding policy, adopted the Parish Safeguarding Action Plan and agreed to adopt and use all the standard Procedures, templates, and parish resources documents from the Safeguarding section of the Diocesan website.

Since then, PCC members have been encouraged to complete all required safeguarding training. The PCC has approved policies for Responding to Safeguarding concerns or allegations; Recruitment for ex-offenders; adopted the Delegation for reporting serious incidents to the Charity Commission and approved the list of activities with children and vulnerable adults.

Before each approved activity can commence or recommence a volunteer role description is required, the leaders must have appropriate DBS clearance and complete relevant safeguarding training, and a risk assessment must be approved by the PCC.

The Bell ringing for children and Mums and Tots activities have completed all safeguarding requirements, are fully approved and the groups are meeting regularly. The Parish is now at Level 2 of the Safeguarding Dashboard - one more stage to go.

Steady progress has been made, thanks to the Safeguarding team and Oliver, and to all who have completed the necessary training - however there is still work to do.

In conclusion, Deborah confirmed that the Promoting a Safer Church Safeguarding Policy is published on the church website and that the PCC has complied with its duty under section 5 of the Safeguarding and Clergy Discipline Measure 2016, to have due care to the House of Bishops guidance on safeguarding children and vulnerable adults.

Archdeacon Jane thanked Deborah and all who are part of the safeguarding group as she was aware that much work had been undertaken in this last year to make sure the safeguarding practices for this parish are as they should be. Thanks were expressed by those present with a round of applause.

- 5. Deanery Synod Report:** Gillian Foroughi reported that the Deanery consists of a group of neighbouring churches and that Christ Church & St John's are part of the St Albans Deanery which consists of 16 parishes, extending from St John the Baptist Church in Aldenham to St Michael's Church in the north of St Albans. There are approximately 20 Deaneries within the Diocese. This parish can elect three Lay Deanery Representatives. Our current representatives are Jeremy Newton and Gillian Foroughi which means there is one vacancy. The Deanery has three meetings a year. The Rural Dean is the chair which until recently was the Reverend Kenneth Padley. The meetings are open to everyone, with the business meeting at the end of the meeting. This year there was a Zoom meeting in June and those present spoke about how they had managed through the pandemic. Generally the view was that children and youth activities had been badly affected. Churches that had good technology had fared better. In October, the meeting was at Christ Church in Radlett and the subject was Climate change and ECO church, which had been well attended. In February, the meeting was at St Saviour's Church; there were two speakers, David Barker, Managing Director of Youth Talk, a charity providing support for young people living in and around St Albans, and Christian Cole, Diocesan Youth Missioner, who spoke about parishes encouraging young people to be part of the church community. This was based on a report 'Faith in Young People' which looked at the dramatic fall in the number of children and youth attendance in the churches. One interesting statistic was that if the current rate of decline continues, then in 10 years' time there will be no children left in church. A big challenge and priority for us all.

The next Deanery Synod meeting is on 8th June at 7.30pm at St Peter's Church in London Colney and will explore how we can make our churches and services accessible and meaningful for people suffering with dementia. Gillian invited anyone who would like to be involved in the Deanery to please speak with her or Jeremy Newton.

The Archdeacon thanked Gillian for the report.

- 6. Election of Deanery Synod representatives x 1 (casual vacancy):** There are currently two lay representatives, Gillian Foroughi and Jeremy Newton and one vacancy to complete the term of office. There were no nominations. Archdeacon Jane encouraged anyone who would like to consider being a Lay Deanery Representative or would like to know more, to speak with Gillian or Jeremy.
- 7. Resolution re Term of office of PCC members:** Archdeacon Jane explained that in 2014 the rule for the term of office for PCC members changed; PCC members would be elected for a term of three years. If a parish felt they wanted to continue with yearly election this was allowed but would need to be resolved at the APCM and reviewed at least every six years.

At the APCM in 2014 Christ Church & St John's resolved to continue to elect PCC members on a yearly basis. This resolution should have been reviewed in or before 2020 but as there has been two years of disruption, it was overlooked and has therefore been brought to this APCM for review.

Archdeacon Jane Mainwaring proposed that PCC members for this parish can continue to be elected to serve a term of one year. By a show of hands all were in favour of the proposal.

8. Election of PCC members x 12: Archdeacon confirmed that there are 13 nominations:

Fola Adeoti	Abiola Ajayi-Obe	Simon Ashley
Robert Attuh	Jenny Bailey	Anna Bicknell
Remi Bola	John Graham	Barry Hogg
Caroline Newman	Fiona Turner	Sue Waller
Rosemari Whiteman		

Archdeacon Jane stated there are 13 nomination and only 12 places. However there has been a tradition in this parish in the past that, if there are more than 12 people standing for PCC, which is a positive as many churches struggle to fill PCC places, the in place of having an election, one or two people are co-opted.

Archdeacon Jane proposed from the chair that this practice continues as a tradition of this parish, and therefore all 13 of those who have been nominated will serve on the PCC. The proposal was accepted by a show of hands, with one vote against and one abstention.

Therefore, Archdeacon Jane confirmed that all 13 who have been nominated to serve on the PCC for the next year are duly elected and that the Management Committee will approach one person to be a co-opted member. She thanked everyone who had committed to serve on the PCC for the next year.

9. Election of St John's Committee members: The following have all been nominated and seconded and were duly elected:

Eileen Bigg,	Susan Brown	Jeremy Newton
Philip Reason	Fiona Turner	Helen Warne

10. Appointment of Assistant Churchwardens: Susan Brown stated that last year there were six Assistant Wardens, previously known as Deputy Wardens. Tony Caduff and Christine Kamruddin have stepped down this year and were thanked for their years of service. There were 4 nominees all have been proposed and seconded:

Barry Hogg	Kamran Foroughi	Fiona Turner	Helen Warne
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Archdeacon declared that on the basis that there is less than the usual number of Assistant Wardens, they were all duly elected as Assistant Wardens and thanked each one for the service they provide in this ministry.

11. Appointment of PCC Secretary: There were no nominations for PCC Secretary.

Archdeacon Jane proposed that the Management Committee look at the role of the PCC Secretary. She also suggested that anyone who may like to know more about the PCC secretary role or are interested to speak to Oliver or Jeremy Newton.

Archdeacon Jane thanked Susan Brown for her service in this role, followed by a round of applause.

- 12. Presentation and adoption of 2021 accounts followed by questions to the Treasurer:** John Graham presented the 2021 Accounts. He stated that these accounts had been formally approved at the 8th March 2022 PCC meeting.

He referred to the financial summary report on page 17 of the BOTY. He highlighted that the church had broken even at an operational level and because of gains on investments, the accounts showed a healthy net income. This had been an exceptional year with investment gains, and may not necessarily be repeated in the coming year. Income from voluntary giving and hall lettings were down this year and although hall lettings are picking up, it may be difficult to return to the same income as before the pandemic. Rental from the curate's house has made a significant contribution to the income. Expenditure included our payment of the "parish share" to the Diocese and the upkeep of the Vision Hall and staff costs.

There were no questions on the accounts. John Graham moved that the 2021 accounts be adopted. With a show of hands all were in favour and the accounts were adopted unanimously.

- 13. Appointment of Independent Examiners:** John Graham stated that Hillier Hopkins LLP have been the church financial examiners for approximately 14 years. A question had been raised at a PCC meeting as to whether the examiners should be changed. He reported that it is the policy of Hillier Hopkins LLP to rotate partners every 10 years in line with their code of practice. The partner on our audit was changed three years ago in line with their policy, and this year a new manager had been assigned as the church's auditor.. Therefore on the basis of Hillier Hopkins changing partners three years ago (equivalent of a new firm) and this year assigning a new managers, John Graham proposed that Hillier Hopkins be re-appointed as Independent Examiners.

All were unanimously in favour by a show of hands.

- 14. Appointment of PCC Treasurer & Assistant Treasurer;** John Graham was proposed as Treasurer and Jenny Bailey proposed as Assistant Treasurer. By a show of hands, they were both duly appointed and thanked for all their hard work of keeping the accounts in order.

- 15. Book of the Year:** Archdeacon Jane thanked everyone who had contributed to this record of the year in the life of this parish and to those who have put the book together, and presented each report in the Book of the Year for comment or questions.

Jeremy Newton added to the St John's Church report, that on 23rd May 2022 the builders will be back on site; all the agreements have been signed and there will be a new church in a years' time. Archdeacon and Fiona Turner both thanked Jeremy for all the work he has put in to this project. There was appreciation with a round of applause.

Anne Newton made a request for volunteers to help with Thursday Lunch Club.

Archdeacon Jane again thanked those who had written the reports and also thanked everyone for their ministry that is represented in the reports and their part in it as this is what makes parish life and is what church community is.

- 16. Churchwardens' Report:** All were encouraged to read the Churchwardens report on page 3 of the Book of the Year. There were no additions to the report and no questions.

- 17. Remarks from the Revd Oliver Blease** - In the absence of the Reverend Oliver Blease, the Reverend Robert Fletcher, as Acting Team Rector gave his thanks to everyone for supporting him as Acting Team Rector and for support of the whole team. Despite difficulties, the team had continued to function well. In the summer, St Martin's Church will welcome their new Vicar.

18. Questions and comments from the floor;

Fiona Turner thanked everyone for their support over the last four years. She thanked everyone for their love and support which was very much appreciated, especially during the vacancy, pandemic and difficult last year.

She presented a gift voucher to Susan Brown on behalf of the PCC in thanks for her service as PCC secretary. On behalf of the PCC, she also had a gift voucher for Philip Reason to thank him for the many years that he has taken care of the grounds around the church, the graveyard, church field and vicarage and for keeping on top of the grounds maintenance contracts; he took this on when he was churchwarden and has continued until now.

She thanked everybody who contributed to the smooth running of the church and stated 'we are a wonderful team who work well together'.

There was a round of applause.

Jeremy Newton thanked Fiona and stated that no churchwarden has said it is an easy role, the warden is constantly being surprised by the unexpected and Fiona has had it in spades. For about half her time as Churchwarden we were without a vicar; she has done all that is expected of a churchwarden and many extras including organising services and arranging for all the visiting clergy through the vacancy and pandemic. He hoped she would now be able to slow down and enjoy spending more time with her granddaughter. In thanks for all her service to the parish she had been given a Rhododendron which was presented earlier in the year and is in a planter outside her front door.

Jeremy concluded by saying that Fiona had said 'it is team work', but it is also true to say that a good leader is necessary to build a good team - so well done Fiona for building a good team. There was a round of applause.

There were no further comments or question.

Archdeacon Jane Mainwaring declared the Annual Parochial Church Meeting closed and after a few moments declared the Annual Parishioners Meeting reopened, and resumed at Item 4 of the agenda; the election of Churchwardens.

After the conclusion of the APM, Robert Fletcher closed both meetings in prayer at 12.58pm.

Archdeacon Jane Mainwaring was given grateful thanks for chairing both meetings.

**The Annual Report and Financial Statement for the
year ending 2022 and the Book of the Year
are available on Christ Church and St John's website**

**Grateful thanks to everyone who submitted reports for
the Book of the Year and to our proof readers**