

St John
the Baptist
Burford

ANNUAL MEETING

Agenda & Papers

Monday, 13 May, 2024

Annual Meeting

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Annual Parochial Church Meeting

7.45pm, Monday 13 May 2024

Venue: New Warwick Hall, Church Green, Burford OX18 4SY

We will start at 7.30pm so that the meeting can begin promptly at 7.45pm

Meeting of Parishioners		Enclosures:
1.0	Welcome, Apologies, Opening Prayer	
2.0	Minutes of the Previous Meeting of Parishioners & APCM	
	<i>Action: Corrections, Approval</i>	
3.0	Election: Churchwarden	
3.1	Three Vacancies (Term Length: One Year)	
Annual Parochial Church Meeting		Comments
4.0	Matters Arising	
5.0	Election: Lay Members to Parochial Church Council	
5.1	At this APCM there will be three casual vacancies for elected lay members of the PCC each to serve for two years, to complete the three-year terms of office ending at the conclusion of the Annual Parochial Church Meeting in 2026.	
6.0	Prayers for the newly elected	
7.0	Appointment of Auditors	
	<i>Action: Decision</i>	
8.0	Reports	
.1	Vicar's Report	
.2	Parish Activities, Financial Report and Statement 2023	
.3	Electoral Roll Report	
.4	Fabric Report	
.5	Deanery Synod Report	
.6	Safeguarding Report	
.7	Ministry Reports	
9.0	Any Other Business	
10.0	Closing Prayer	

It would be very helpful if any questions on the enclosed or items for AOB are submitted in advance to the Chair and PCC Secretary by noon on Wednesday 8 May 2025.

pccsecretary@burfordchurch.org

Apologies: Jim Pringle
Anne Pringle
Magnus Eyles
Becky Eyles
Trevor Hames
Sally Ann Johnson
Jane Price

1.0 Welcome, Apologies and Opening Prayer: Owner: _____ By: _____

Tom PUTT welcomed everyone to the meeting and prayed for the meeting. A hymn was sung. He considered a reading from **Colossians 1: 15-18**. God is sovereign over all of our lives.
Apologies for absence ere received and noted.

2.0 Minutes of the Previous Meeting of Parishioners & APCM: Owner: _____ By: _____

The minutes of the previous meeting on Monday 23 May 2022 (pages 005-008) were agreed as a true summary of discussions and decisions.

3.0 Election//Churchwardens: Owner: _____ By: _____

Tom PUTT thanked Andrew LORD and Linda PETRA for their service as churchwardens over the last year. He reported that both have served with skill and dedication, and given much wisdom and support.
Tom PUTT advised that two nominations have been received for the three vacancies:
1. Andrew LORD (proposed by Phil ORMISTON, seconded by Jane POULSON)
2. Linda PETRA (proposed by Andrew BUTCHER, seconded by Gill HAMES)
There being no further nominations, there was no need to hold an election. Tom PUTT declared that Andrew LORD and Linda PETRA were duly elected as churchwardens for the coming year.
The Meeting of Parishioners closed at 19.55.

Agreed as a true record by the APCM at their meeting on: _____

Signed: _____ Name: _____

Annual Parochial Church Meeting

Monday 15 May 2023

4.0 Matters Arising:	Owner:	By:
None noted not covered on the agenda.		
5.0 Election// Lay Members to Parochial Church Council:	Owner:	By:
Tom PUTT thanked those stepping down from the PCC. Tom DOUGLAS had served on PCCs here and elsewhere for many decades; he remains Treasurer. Also retiring were Janey PETERSON, Paul PETERSON, Robert LIND and Judy BRANSTON.		
5.1 Nine nominations had been received for three year terms of office:		
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Philippa HUGHES, proposed by Andrew LORD, seconded by Suzanne FARR 2. Charles HUNTER SMART, proposed by Andrew SALSBURY, seconded by Geoff ENOCH 3. Katy OATRIDGE, proposed by Robert LIND, seconded by Steve PETRA 4. Kevin RILLIE, proposed by Andrew SALSBURY, seconded by Paul PETERSON 5. Michael THOMPSON, proposed by Paul WHITE, seconded by Andrew SALSBURY 6. Paul WHITE (for a second term of office), proposed by Rob EMMERSON, seconded by Robert LIND 7. Vanessa LEEDHAM, proposed by Linda PETRA, seconded by Suzanne FARR 8. Jo BARHAM, proposed by Linda PETRA, seconded by Liz MATTHEWS 9. Rob EMERSON, proposed by Robert LIND, seconded by Paul WHITE. 		
5.2 One nomination had been received for a one-year term of office:		
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Adrian JACKSON (for a second term of office), proposed by Liz JACKSON, seconded by Andrew SALSBURY. 		
There being no further nominations, there was no need to hold an election. Tom PUTT declared that the above named were duly elected as lay members of the Parochial Church Council for the terms of office set out above.		
6.0 Election // Lay Representatives to Witney Deanery Synod	Owner:	By:
6.1 Tom PUTT thanked Sue McCROSSAN who has stepped down after several years as Deanery Synod representative.		
Three nominations had been received for three year terms of office:		
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Sam BREWITT-TAYLOR, proposed by Robert LIND, seconded by Paul WHITE 2. Ruth Reavley (for a second term of office), proposed by Stephen PRICE, seconded by Gaynor TAYLOR 3. Martin GEE, proposed by Sam BREWITT-TAYLOR, seconded by Robert LIND 		
There being no further nominations, there was no need to hold an election. Tom PUTT declared the above named were duly elected as lay representatives to Witney Deanery Synod (and ex officio members of Burford PCC).		
7.0 Prayers for the Newly Elected	Owner:	By:
The meeting spent time in small groups praying for those who had been elected.		
8.0 Appointment of Auditors	Owner:	By:
<i>Tom DOUGLAS proposed, seconded by Andrew LORD, that Just Audit & Assurance Ltd be appointed as auditors for the coming year.</i>		
Motion put to a vote. Unanimous in favour. <u>Motion passed.</u>	TD/JM	Asap

9.0 Reports

Owner:

By:

9.1 Vicar's Report

The report from Tom PUTT (pages 028-030) was received and noted.

He opened with thanks to Roy TARBOX and Jenny TARBOX for a decade of deep involvement in church life. Though they have moved to Ducklington, Roy continues his ministry role as LLM in Ashtall. He noted his grateful thanks to Lynette DERRY for all she had done as Verger. The process of redundancy had been difficult. He noted that James Morrey, Operations Manager is to be married in June, and will move to Chippenham. His phased move out of the role is in progress, and Tom offered thanks for all he had done in the role.

He highlighted some of the many instances of God's great kindness through the many people serving in many ministries in the parish. He reminded us of the three main themes of this church's life:

- Growing in Christ – without that, what we do is pointless and a waste of time
- Loving his People – we should develop and grow. As a community of disparate people, we should think of ourselves as Partners (in the John Lewis model)
- Reaching Burford Benefice and beyond. Some members of the congregation come from a distance.

He emphasised the importance of spiritual growth, of being equipped and confident to live and speak for Christ in every aspect of our lives. In 2023, he planned that prayer would particularly focus on the places where many of the congregation live: Burford, the Wychwoods, and Carterton/Brize Norton, and enabling those people to nurture mutual support, and to consider what God might be up to in their places and lives.

Tom PUTT invited question and comments on his report and the presentation, with the following being noted:

- Stephen PRICE asked whether the Outreach Committee might be revived. Tom PUTT thanked him for the question. A Committee was being planned with a two-fold purpose; events, and equipping for friendship evangelism.
- Penelope LEAF asked whether that Committee would include people not on the PCC. Tom PUTT confirmed that the Committee would include PCC members and others.
- Lynette DERRY asked for an update on the appointment of a curate. Tom PUTT thanked her for the question. A Curate had withdrawn, on the basis of his understanding of Christian beliefs and the Church of England's divergence from it. Tom PUTT shared some of his views, though not all. Tom was expecting an update from another possible curate imminently.

9.2 Parish Activities, Financial Report and Statement for 2022

The financial statements (pages 009-027) were received and noted. Tom DOUGLAS directed readers to Note 18, on page 27, as a topline summary, explaining that the Unrestricted Fund covered day-to-day expenditure, with Designated funds used purely for the matters named. The Auditors required separation of the Warwick Hall finances. The Parish is co-owned of the assets of the Burford Benefice Bartholomew Trust with the other PCCs of the Benefice. The Restricted fund is money which is in the Parish's custody, but destined to other agencies, or for specific uses.

He reviewed the major features of the finances in 2022. The slight surplus on the Unrestricted Account had been achieved only by using £40,000 from the Fabric

Fund for fabric-related running costs. In the long-run this practice would be phased out. Supplementary income from Covid-related support grants had ended. Letting income had recovered almost to pre-Covid levels.

Tom DOUGLAS invited questions and comments, with the following being noted:

- Martin BAILEY asked about the running costs of the Church and Warwick Hall. Tom DOUGLAS directed attention to Note 8, where expenditure on service contracts and other regular maintenance were stated.
- Clive FIETH asked what the in-year Appeal had raised on an ongoing basis, noting that income had dropped by £10,000. Tom DOUGLAS replied that he estimated £15-£20,000, some as one-off and some as ongoing incremental giving. The 2021 income figure had been inflated by one-off £75,000 grants. Congregational giving had increased over the year by £10,000.
- Sue McCROSSAN asked what the one-off grants had been for. Tom DOUGLAS reported they were a combination of Covid-related support grants and a grant from the Greening Trust.
- Rory DARLING questioned the judgement on budgeting and expenditure on IT and visual/sound system equipment and the appointment of a PA to the Vicar, and budgeting which he believed had resulted in a Verger being made redundant. Tom PUTT responded that that was not a question on the Accounts. Further, equipment purchase had been funded from the Restricted Fabric Fund, which by definition could not be spent on salaries. He was grateful to Rory DARLING for his friendship and support of Lynette DERRY during a very difficult process, the details of which remained confidential. He noted that other staffing cost-saving had been necessary, with the Youth Worker not being replaced, and a formerly paid role of Bookings Manager now been a voluntary role. The PCC had to respond to financial realities.

Kevin RILLIE proposed that the meeting moved to the next business item. This was agreed.

9.3 Electoral Roll Report

The report on the Electoral Roll (page 030) was received and noted.

9.4 Fabric Report

The report of the work of the Buildings & Maintenance (Fabric) Team (page 031) was received and noted.

- Martin GEE, noting the drop in the value of the Fabric Fund from 2021 to 2022, asked what works are currently being budgeted for. Tom PUTT responded that budgeted expenditure of £30,000 on repairs to the church roof, which had just begun. Costs for replacing the church heating system were being worked on. Most of the repairs and maintenance work arises at short notice. The report contained a list of planned works. Tom DOUGLAS noted that repairs to the Warwick Hall roof and coping stones had been covered by a grant from the Greening Trust, with the grant not included in the Fabric Fund.

Tom PUTT thanked Andrew BUTCHER and the team for their work.

9.5 Deanery Synod Report

The report on the Witney Deanery Synod (page 031) was received and noted.

9.6 Safeguarding Report

The report on safeguarding (page 032) was received and noted.

- Phil ORMISTON asked what the plan was to achieve full compliance in the children's ministry team. Tom PUTT summarised the recruitment and safeguarding compliance process. No-one begins work with children without appropriate DBS certification. DBS certification is renewed every three years. Volunteers who do not renew are removed from the rota.

- Stephen PRICE asked about the referrals noted in the report. Tom PUTT commented that five matters had been raised with the Diocesan Safeguarding team. One had needed minor follow-up in the Parish. The PCC had received timely and appropriate reports. Safeguarding is taken seriously in the Parish, and staff are in contact with the Diocesan team regularly.

9.7 Ministry Reports

The other reports on ministry activity were received and noted.

10.0 Any Other Business

Owner:

By:

Clive FIETH asked whether a Vicar’s statement on the Anglican Communion’s situation with respect to Church of England discussions on same sex marriage, and the Bishop of Oxford’s published position, would be forthcoming. Tom PUTT referred to the series of five meetings held in early 2023 which allowed parishioners to discuss perspectives and implications, including biblical, church organisational, missional and discipleship matters. He was clear that Christians are to love those n same sex relationships. He noted that the General Synod had set aside half a day at its July 2023 meeting, and the whole of the November 2023 meeting, for debate. There was not unanimity of view across the Benefice, though a majority concurred with his teaching. The PCC had already decided to express its disagreement with the Diocesan and Area Bishops, and its solidarity with those of similar mind. Tom personally had a good working relationship with the Diocesan Bishop, who was to address the Diocesan Evangelical Fellowship in coming days. There was no doubt that there were difficult days ahead. The PCC would continue to consider the matter.

Clive FIETH asked whether there was truth in the rumour that the church would not pay its Parish Share directly to the Diocese but use a third party. Tom PUTT responded that the PCC decision had been made public knowledge through the Benefice e-news. The mechanism to show solidarity with those of similar mind was The Good Stewards Trust. The Diocese is content with this development. This was not a blackmail tool; the Parish receives many services from the Diocese and will continue to pay in full for them. Were the Parish to have a surplus and wish to support initiatives in support of its position, that could be done through the same mechanism.

Andrew LORD Thanked the clergy leadership team and staff for their hard work and contribution to the life of the Parish. The Churchwardens were very conscious of the effort put into their roles.

11.0 Closing Prayer

Owner:

By:

Following a hymn, Tom PUTT closed the meeting with prayer.

Agreed as a true record by the APCM at their meeting on:

Signed:

Name:

**PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF ST JOHN
THE BAPTIST, BURFORD**

Charity number: 1130342

Annual report and accounts – Year ended 31 December 2023

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PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF ST JOHN THE BAPTIST, BURFORD

REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES for the year ended 31 December 2023

The trustees present their annual report and financial statements of the charity for the year ended 31 December 2023. The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to Charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019) - (Charities SORP (FRS 102)), the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and the Charities Act 2011.

The charity's full name is The Parochial Church Council of the Ecclesiastical Parish of St John the Baptist, Burford, but it is generally known as the Parochial Church Council of St. John the Baptist, Burford, which is the name used in these financial statements.

Aim and purposes

The Parochial Church Council (PCC) has the responsibility of cooperating with the incumbent in promoting in the ecclesiastical parish, the whole mission of the church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical. The PCC is also specifically responsible for the maintenance of the Parish Church of St. John the Baptist, Burford and of the Warwick Hall.

Objectives and Activities

The activities undertaken by the church in the year include offering a number of church services, children's and youth group ministry, home groups, prayer partnerships, outreach ministries, courses on marriage, parenting and discipleship, together with events which have brought the local church and community together.

The church gives around 12.5% of giving to the church away, mainly through grants overseen by the Mission Committee. We seek to develop deep relationships with selected mission partners to support them with prayer, time and money. Our mission partners are engaged in a diverse range of ministries at local, national and international level.

Achievements and Performance

During 2023 numbers attending services and other church activities (including evening study courses and day-time bible study groups held in peoples' homes and in the Warwick Hall) had returned to pre-covid levels. Two study series covered Sexuality and Church History. Community activities included weekly coffee mornings, parent and baby/toddler groups, an activity club for the elderly, and an all-age Christmas Lunch. Activities for children and young people included a camping weekend, and a Barn Dance was enjoyed by people of all ages.

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF ST JOHN THE BAPTIST, BURFORD

REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES for the year ended 31 December 2023 (continued)

Investment Policy and Performance

The PCC has decided that the money making up the Fabric and Equipment Fund should be invested in long term, low risk, income-producing assets with a view to maintaining capital and using the income for the repair and maintenance of its buildings and equipment.

To this end investments have been made in:

- a residential property in Burford; and
- shares in the CBF Church of England Investment Fund

The total annual income available from these investments for the repair and maintenance of the buildings and equipment in 2023 was £23,370 (2022-£24,997).

In making these investments the charity has taken into account the ethical basis on which money is invested by the CBF Church of England Investment Fund.

Financial Review

General Fund This fund is for the day to day running and mission of the church and includes income and expenditure for the Warwick Hall. At 31 December 2023 £190k was held in the General Fund, £68k higher than at the start of the year. Turnover in the General Fund was around £433k for the year with members of the congregation and visitors giving £296k (including gift aid recovery). Of the expenditure, £28k was given for mission and charitable work.

Fabric Fund This fund, originating from various legacies, is designated for the repair and maintenance of the buildings and equipment of the church and hall. At 31 December 2023 £892k was held in the Fabric Fund, invested in various ways. This is £95k higher than at the start of the year as a result of grants received offsetting much of the repair cost to the Hall and a rise in the value of investments during the year.

Reserves Policy

It is PCC policy to try to maintain a balance in the General Fund which equates to at least three months unrestricted payments. This is equivalent to between £80k and £100k. It is held to smooth out fluctuations in cash flow and to meet emergencies. At the year end general reserves exceeded the level required by the policy as the value of the General Fund was £190k. It is planned to use these reserves for the mission of the church with particular consideration given to outreach and pastoral support within the church and wider community.

The Fabric Fund is invested to provide an income to meet regular costs of repair and maintenance. Where this income is not adequate to cover all regular repair and maintenance, or where there are one off fabric costs, this is met by disinvesting from the Fabric Fund.

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF ST JOHN THE BAPTIST, BURFORD

REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES for the year ended 31 December 2023 (continued)

Volunteers

The PCC appreciates that the work of St John's is hugely dependent upon the contribution of volunteers and wishes to record its thanks to all who offer their time and talents.

Volunteers working with children and vulnerable adults are subject to DBS (Disclosure & Barring Service) checks in line with St. John's Safeguarding Policy and approved by the PCC.

Fundraising

The PCC is committed to high standards with regard to fundraising activity and has complied with all laws relating to charities and fundraising. We are clear, honest and open about our activities and fund raising requirements. We are respectful towards all supporters, and with the work carried out to meet GDPR regulations have recognised our strong procedures with regards to fundraising information security. The PCC received no complaints about its fundraising activities during 2023.

Funds are raised primarily through donations from church members and visitors to the church. A smaller amount is raised from letting rooms in the Warwick Hall.

The PCC does not employ any professional fundraisers or use commercial participators nor do we cold call members of the public. The PCC has not signed up to any voluntary fundraising scheme or standards.

Structure, Governance and Management

The charity is governed by the PCC, which consists of around twenty members plus clergy licensed to the church, who serve on the PCC ex-officio. All members of the PCC are trustees of the charity. The PCC meets at least six times a year. In addition a Standing Committee meets to consider matters arising between PCC meetings. Other specialist subcommittees support the work of the PCC, including the Finance Committee, the Fabric Committee and the Mission Committee.

PCC members are elected by vote at the Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM) by members of the electoral roll who are present at the meeting and in accordance with Church Representation Rules. PCC members normally serve for a period of three years.

The charity is affiliated to the Church of England, and as a result has representatives sitting on the local deanery and, potentially, diocese committees.

Public benefit

The trustees confirm that they have complied with the requirements of section 4 of the Charities Act 2011 to have due regard to the public benefit guidance published by the Charity Commission for England and Wales.

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF ST JOHN THE BAPTIST, BURFORD

**REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES
for the year ended 31 December 2023 (continued)**

Reference and Administrative Information

Trustees

The following trustees have served during the year for the dates shown:

Rev T Putt	Mrs L Petra
Mr T Douglas (to 15/5/23)	Mrs R Reavley
Mr C Hunter Smart (from 15/5/23)	Mr A Butcher
Ms K Oatridge (from 15/5/23)	Mr P White
Mr A Lord	Mr R Lind (to 15/5/23)
Ms S McCrossan (to 15/5/23)	Mr K Rillie (from 15/5/23)
Mrs P Hughes	Mrs J Petterson (to 15/5/23)
Mr P Petterson (to 15/5/23)	Mr A Jackson (to 1/6/23)
Rev C Reavley	Mrs J Branston (to 15/5/23)
Mr A Salsbury	Mr M Eyles (to 15/5/23)
Mr R Tarbox (to 15/5/23)	Mr M Thompson (from 15/5/23)
Ms V Leedham (from 15/5/23 to 13/11/23)	Ms J Barham (from 15/5/23)
Mr R Emerson (from 15/5/23)	Mr S Brewitt-Taylor (from 15/5/23)
Mr M Gee (from 15/5/23)	

Trustees are either ex-officio, co-opted or elected by the Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM) in accordance with the Church Representation Rules.

Charity Registration Number: 1130342

Principal Office: St John the Baptist Church, Church Green, Burford, OX18 4RY

Auditors: Just Audit & Assurance Ltd, 37 Market Square, Witney, Oxon, OX28 6RE

Bankers: CAF Bank Ltd, 25 Kings Hill Avenue, West Malling, Kent. An additional account is held with TSB.

Investment Managers: CCLA Investment Management Limited, Senator House, 85 Queen Victoria Street, London, EC4V 4ET. CCLA Investment Management Limited is authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority.

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF ST JOHN THE BAPTIST, BURFORD

**REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES
for the year ended 31 December 2023 (continued)**

Responsibilities of the Trustees

The trustees are responsible for preparing the Annual Report and the financial statements in accordance with general applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

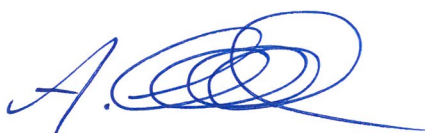
The law applicable to charities in England and Wales requires the trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity and of the incoming resources and application of resources of the charity for that period. In preparing these financial statements the trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable UK accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed in the financial statements; and
- prepare the financial statements on a going-concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the church will continue to operate.

The trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Charities Act 2011 and the applicable Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

The trustees are responsible for the maintenance and integrity of the charity and financial information included on the charity's website. Legislation in the United Kingdom governing the preparation and dissemination of financial statements may differ from legislation in other jurisdictions.

Approved by the trustees on 18 March 2024 and signed on their behalf by:



Andrew Lord

.....
(Chair of meeting)

**PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF
ST JOHN THE BAPTIST, BURFORD**

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of The Parochial Church Council of St John the Baptist, Burford (the 'charity') for the year ended 31st December 2023, which comprise the Statement of Financial Activities, Balance Sheet, and Notes to the Financial Statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is United Kingdom Accounting Standards, comprising Charities SORP - FRS 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland' and applicable law (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the charity's affairs as at 31st December 2023 and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure, for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011.

Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the auditor responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the charity in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the trustees use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the charity's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the original financial statements were authorised for issue.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the trustees with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

**PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF
ST JOHN THE BAPTIST, BURFORD**

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES

Other information

The trustees are responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the information included in the annual report, other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with our audit of the financial statements, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether there is a material misstatement in the financial statements or a material misstatement of the other information. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In the light of our knowledge and understanding of the charity and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the Trustees' Report.

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters where the Charities Act 2011 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- adequate accounting records have not been kept, or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- certain disclosures of trustees remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit.

Responsibilities of trustees

As explained more fully in the Statement of Trustees' Responsibilities (set out on page 5), the trustees are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the trustees are responsible for assessing the charity's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the trustees either intend to liquidate the charity or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

**PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF
ST JOHN THE BAPTIST, BURFORD**

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES

Auditor Responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud is detailed below:

Our assessment focused on key laws and regulations the charity has to comply with and areas of the financial statements we assessed as being more susceptible to misstatement. These key laws and regulations included but were not limited to compliance with the Charities Act 2011, United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice and relevant tax legislation.

We are not responsible for preventing irregularities. Our approach to detect irregularities included, but was not limited to, the following:

- obtaining an understanding of the charity's policies and procedures and how the charity has complied with these, through discussions and sample testing of controls;
- obtaining an understanding of the legal and regulatory framework applicable to the charity and how the charity is complying with that framework;
- an understanding of the charity's risk assessment process, including the risk of fraud;
- designing our audit procedures to respond to our risk assessment; and
- performing audit work over the risk of management override of controls including testing of journal entries and other adjustments for appropriateness, evaluating the business rationale of significant transactions outside the normal course of business and reviewing estimates for bias.

Whilst considering how our audit work addressed the detection of irregularities, we also consider the likelihood of detection based on our approach. Irregularities arising from fraud are inherently more difficult to detect than those arising from error.

Because of the inherent limitations of an audit, there is a risk that we will not detect all irregularities, including those leading to a material misstatement in the financial statements or non-compliance with regulation. This risk increases the more that compliance with a law or regulation is removed from the events and transactions reflected in the financial statements, as we will be less likely to become aware of instances of non-compliance. The risk is also greater regarding irregularities occurring due to fraud rather than error, as fraud involves intentional concealment, forgery, collusion, omission, or misrepresentation.

A further description of our responsibilities is available on the Financial Reporting Council's website at: www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities. This description forms part of our auditor's report.

**PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF
ST JOHN THE BAPTIST, BURFORD**

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the charity trustees, as a body, in accordance with section 144 of the Charities Act 2011 and regulations made under section 154 of that Act. Our work has been undertaken so that we might state to the trustees those matters we are required to state to trustees in an auditors' report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charity and its trustees as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

.....
J M Russell FCA (Senior Statutory Auditor)
For and on behalf of Just Audit & Assurance Ltd, Statutory Auditor

37 Market Square
Witney
Oxfordshire
OX28 6RE

Date

Just Audit & Assurance Ltd is eligible for appointment as auditor of the charity by virtue of its eligibility for appointment as auditor of a company under section 1212 of the Companies Act 2006.

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF ST JOHN THE BAPTIST, BURFORD

Statement of Financial Activities
for the year ended 31 December 2023

	Note	Unrestricted Funds	Designated Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds 2023	Total Funds 2022
		£	£		£	£
Income from:						
Donations and legacies	2	338,834	92,000	3,425	434,259	283,050
Charitable activities	3	25,630	-	16,487	42,117	50,087
Other trading activities	4	67,680	-	-	67,680	50,774
Investments	5	1,146	23,370	-	24,516	25,131
Total incoming resources		433,289	115,370	19,912	568,571	409,042
Expenditure on:						
Raising funds	6	-	1,660	-	1,660	10,098
Charitable activities	7	340,027	102,303	22,150	464,480	559,938
Total expenditure		340,027	103,963	22,150	466,139	570,036
Net income before gains on investment assets		93,262	11,408	(2,238)	102,432	(160,994)
Net gains on investment assets	14	-	58,804	-	58,804	(41,375)
Net movement in funds		93,262	70,212	(2,238)	161,236	(202,369)
Transfer between funds		(25,000)	25,000	-	-	-
Reconciliation of funds						
Total Funds brought forward		122,016	4,942,830	7,678	5,072,523	5,274,892
Total funds carried forward		190,278	5,038,042	5,440	5,233,760	5,072,523

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year.

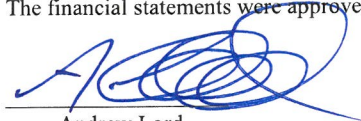
All income and expenditure derives from continuing activities.


PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF ST JOHN THE BAPTIST, BURFORD

Balance Sheet
as at 31 December 2023

	Note	Unrestricted Funds	Designated Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds 2023	Total Funds 2022
		£	£	£	£	£
Fixed assets						
Tangible assets	13		4,119,603	-	4,119,603	4,119,603
Investments	14	44,580	918,439	-	963,019	904,214
		44,580	5,038,042	-	5,082,622	5,023,817
Current assets						
Debtors	15	3,942	-	-	3,942	3,297
Cash at bank and in hand	16	145,477		5,440	150,916	48,949
Total Current Assets		149,419	-	5,440	154,858	52,246
Liabilities						
Creditors falling due within one year	17	3,720	-	-	3,720	3,540
Net Current Assets		145,699	-	5,440	151,138	48,706
Net Assets		190,278	5,038,042	5,440	5,233,760	5,072,523
The funds of the Charity:						
Restricted income funds	18	0	0	5,440	5,440	7,678
Designated income funds	18	0	5,038,042	0	5,038,042	4,942,830
Unrestricted income funds	18	190,278	0	0	190,278	122,016
Total charity funds		190,278	5,038,042	5,440	5,233,760	5,072,523

The financial statements were approved by the Parochial Church Council on 18 March 2024 and signed on its behalf by:


Andrew Lord
(Chair of meeting)


Philippa Hughes
(Treasurer)

The notes on pages 12 to 18 form part of these financial statements.

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF ST JOHN THE BAPTIST, BURFORD

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

for the year ended 31 December 2023

1. Accounting Policies

Statement of compliance

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to Charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019) - (Charities SORP (FRS 102)), the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and the Charities Act 2011.

Basis of preparation

The PCC meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS102. The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention with items recognised at cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant note(s) to these financial statements.

Going concern

The trustees consider that there are no material uncertainties about the charity's ability to continue as a going concern.

Income Recognition

All income is recognised once the charity has entitlement to the income, there is sufficient certainty or receipt and so it is probable that the income will be received, and the amount of income receivable can be measured reliably.

Legacy gifts are recognised on a case by case basis following the granting of probate when the administrator/executor for the estate has communicated in writing both the amount and settlement date. In the event that a gift is in the form of an asset other than cash or a financial asset traded on a recognised stock exchange, recognition is subject to the value of the gift being measurable with a degree of reasonable accuracy and the title to the asset has been transferred to the charity.

Grants and donations are only included when the general income recognition criteria are met.

Gift Aid receivable is included in income when there is a valid declaration from the donor. Any Gift Aid amount recovered on a donation is considered to be part of that gift and is treated as an addition to the same fund as the initial donation unless the donor or the terms of the appeal have specified otherwise.

Donated services or facilities are recognised as income when the charity has control over the item, any conditions associated with a donated item have been met, the receipt of economic benefit from the use by the charity of the item is probable and that economic benefit can be measured reliably. On receipt, donated services and facilities are recognised on the basis of the value of the gift to the charity which is the amount the charity would have been willing to pay to obtain services or facilities of equivalent economic benefit on the open market; a corresponding amount is then recognised in expenditure in the period of receipt.

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF ST JOHN THE BAPTIST, BURFORD**NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS****for the year ended 31 December 2022 (Continued)****Expenditure**

All expenditure is recognised once there is a legal or constructive obligation to that expenditure, it is probable settlement is required and the amount can be measured reliably.

All costs are allocated to the applicable expenditure heading that aggregate similar costs to that category. Where costs cannot be directly attributed to particular headings they have been allocated on a basis consistent with the use of resources. All expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis.

All resources expended are inclusive of irrecoverable VAT.

Fund accounting

Unrestricted funds are available to spend on activities that further any of the purposes of the Charity. Designated funds are unrestricted funds of the Charity which the trustees have decided at their discretion to set aside to use for a specific purpose. Restricted funds are donations which the donor has specified are to be solely used for particular areas of the Charity's work or for specific projects being undertaken by the Charity.

Further details of each fund are disclosed in Note 18.

Governance and Support Costs

Support costs have been allocated between governance costs and other support. Governance costs comprise the cost of audit. Support costs are those functions that assist the work of the charity but do not directly undertake charitable activities such as salaries of support staff and office costs. These costs, set out in note 7, have been allocated as expenditure on charitable activities.

Volunteers

The value of any voluntary help received is not included in the accounts but is described in the trustees' annual report.

Termination benefits

Termination payments are payable when employment is terminated by the charity before the normal retirement date or end of employment contract.

Termination costs are recognised at the earlier of when the charity can no longer withdraw the offer of the benefits or when the charity recognises any related restructuring costs.

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF ST JOHN THE BAPTIST, BURFORD**NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS****for the year ended 31 December 2023 (Continued)****Investments**

Investments quoted on a recognised stock exchange or whose value derives from them are valued at market value at the year end. Other investment assets are included at PCC's best estimate of market value

Fixed Assets

Consecrated and benefice property. In so far as consecrated and benefice property of any kind is excluded from the statutory definition of 'charity' by Section 10(2)(a) and (c) of the Charities Act 2011 such assets are not capitalised in the financial statements.

Moveable church furnishings. These are not capitalised as no single item is considered material enough to do so.

Tangible fixed assets for use by charity. These are capitalised if they can be used for more than one year, and cost at least £10,000. They are valued at cost and depreciated over a period of 4 years. No depreciation is provided on buildings as the currently estimated residual value of the properties is not less than their carrying value and the remaining useful life of these assets currently exceeds 50 years, so that any depreciation charges would be immaterial.

Debtors and Creditors

Trade and other debtors are recognised at the settlement amounts due after any trade discount offered. Prepayments are valued at the amount prepaid after taking account of any trade discounts due.

Creditors and provisions are recognised where the charity has a present obligation resulting from a past event that will probably result in the transfer of funds to a third party and the amount due to settle the obligation can be measured or estimated reliably. Creditors and provisions are normally recognised at their settlement amount after allowing for any trade discounts due.

Short term deposits

This is cash held in bank deposit accounts.

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF ST JOHN THE BAPTIST, BURFORD

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

for the year ended 31 December 2023 (Continued)

2. Income from donations and legacies	Unrestricted Funds	Designated Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds 2023	Total Funds 2022
	£	£	£	£	£
Tax efficient planned giving	181,755	-	-	181,755	166,295
Other planned giving	37,855	-	-	37,855	35,354
Collections at services	291	-	-	291	865
Special collections	-	-	3,425	3,425	7,188
Other donations, including wall safe	27,511	-	-	27,511	21,417
Gift aid recovered	48,422	-	-	48,422	44,181
Legacies received	-	-	-	-	3,000
Grants	43,000	92,000	-	135,000	4,750
	<u>£338,834</u>	<u>£92,000</u>	<u>£3,425</u>	<u>£434,259</u>	<u>£283,050</u>
3. Income from charitable activities	Unrestricted Funds	Designated Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds 2023	Total Funds 2022
	£	£	£	£	£
Fees (weddings, funerals and baptisms)	7,571	-	16,487	24,058	18,427
Church and outreach events	6,082	-	-	6,082	19,800
Church bookstall and leaflets	577	-	-	577	459
Benefice contributions	11,400	-	-	11,400	11,401
Total income from charitable activities	<u>£25,630</u>	<u>£-</u>	<u>£16,487</u>	<u>£42,117</u>	<u>£50,087</u>
4. Income earned from other trading activities	Unrestricted Funds	Designated Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds 2023	Total Funds 2022
	£	£	£	£	£
Church hire and tours	188	-	-	188	60
Hire of Warwick Hall	67,492	-	-	67,492	50,714
Total income from other trading activities	<u>£67,680</u>	<u>£-</u>	<u>£-</u>	<u>£67,680</u>	<u>£50,774</u>
5. Investment income	Unrestricted Funds	Designated Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds 2023	Total Funds 2022
	£	£	£	£	£
Dividends and rent	-	23,370	-	23,370	24,997
Interest on cash deposits	1,146	-	-	1,146	135
	<u>£1,146</u>	<u>£23,370</u>	<u>£-</u>	<u>£24,516</u>	<u>£25,131</u>
6. Costs of Raising Funds	Unrestricted Funds	Designated Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds 2023	Total Funds 2022
	£	£	£	£	£
Costs of managing investment property	£-	£1,660	£-	£1,660	£10,098

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF ST JOHN THE BAPTIST, BURFORD

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

for the year ended 31 December 2023 (Continued)

7. Analysis of expenditure on charitable activities	Unrestricted Funds	Designated Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds 2023	Total Funds 2022
	£	£	£	£	£
Mission giving and donations	27,590	-	5,406	32,996	35,147
Diocesan parish share contribution	66,044	-	-	66,044	66,592
Youth & children's work - payroll costs	26,438	-	-	26,438	41,025
Youth & children's work - other costs	1,745	-	-	1,745	5,254
Clergy and visiting clergy expenses	3,063	-	-	3,063	4,714
Training	1,850	-	-	1,850	1,403
Baptism, wedding and funeral costs	-	-	16,744	16,744	10,757
Church and outreach events	6,198	-	-	6,198	26,684
Upkeep of services	7,430	-	-	7,430	4,448
Church bookstall and leaflets	424	-	-	424	699
Repairs and maintenance (see note 8)	48,778	102,303	-	151,081	188,985
Staff insurance	715	-	-	715	802
Utilities	3,401	-	-	3,401	17,898
Warwick Hall running costs (see note 8)	51,942	-	-	51,942	57,782
Cost of audit	3,720	-	-	3,720	3,540
Support costs (see note 8)	90,688	-	-	90,688	94,207
Total	£340,027	£102,303	£22,150	£464,480	£559,938

8. Further breakdown

	2023		2022
	£		£
Warwick Hall Costs			
Support Staff - payroll costs	32,336		32,152
Utilities and council tax	19,606		25,630
Total		£51,942	£57,782
Support Costs			
Support Staff - payroll costs	73,268		79,754
Office costs	10,409		4,851
Photocopy costs	1,264		3,695
Computer costs	4,317		4,329
Telephone and internet	1,097		1,092
Bank charges	333		486
Total		£90,688	£94,207
Repairs and maintenance			
Church - service contracts and other regular maintenance	17,790		13,230
Warwick Hall - service contracts and other regular maintenance	30,989	48,778	25,723
Church - other costs	56,764		74,260
Warwick Hall - other costs	45,539	102,303	75,773
Total		£151,081	£188,985

In 2023 included in "other costs" is a further £25,600 expended on historic glass conservation and cleaning in the Church, £32,590 Church roof repairs and a further £20,244 expended on replacing the heat pumps in the Hall (The heat pump cost was met by a grant from the Olive Greening Trust)

9. Analysis of staff costs

	2023	2022
	£	£
Salaries and wages	136,401	155,798
Social security costs	4,917	6,671
Pension costs	3,553	5,470
	£144,872	£167,939

No employees had emoluments in excess of £60,000 (2022: Nil).

Following a restructuring of employed posts, one post was made redundant during 2023 and a statutory redundancy payment of £2,586 was made (included in the staff costs above)

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF ST JOHN THE BAPTIST, BURFORD

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

for the year ended 31 December 2023 (Continued)

10. Staff numbers

	2023	2022
The average number of employees during the year was as follows:	<u>8</u>	<u>9</u>

The number of full time contracted staff was 2 (2022:2) . The remaining staff are employed on a part time basis.

11. Related party transactions and trustees' expenses and remuneration

The trustees all give freely of their time and expertise without any form of remuneration or other benefit in cash or kind. No expenses were incurred by any trustees when carrying out their duties as trustees.

Trustees made unconditional donations totalling £44,470 during the year (2022: £38,405)

12. Pensions

Employees of the charity are entitled to join a defined contribution "money purchase" scheme. The charity's contribution is restricted to the contributions disclosed in note 9. There were no outstanding employer's or employee's contributions at the year end. The money purchase plan is managed by NEST and the plan invests the contributions made in an investment fund to build up over the term of the plan a pension fund which can be accessed by the employee from the age of 55. The total expense ratio of the plan is 0.3% and this is deducted from the investment fund annually. The charity has no liability beyond making its contributions and paying across the deductions for the employees' contributions.

13. Tangible fixed assets

	£
Warwick Hall	<u>4,119,603</u>

The value reported is historic cost. No market valuation has been sought and, the purpose of the funding behind the build satisfied, the asset is reflected within designated funds.

14. Fixed asset investments

	At 1.1.23 £	Additions £	Disposals £	Change in Market Value £	At 31.12.23 £
Investment property (5 Sylvester Close)	444,000	-	-	18,000	462,000
Share of property (20 Oxford Road)	26,510	-	-	-	26,510
CBF Church of England Investment Fund	433,704	-	-	40,804	474,509
	<u>£904,214</u>	<u>£-</u>	<u>£-</u>	<u>£58,804</u>	<u>£963,019</u>

Sylvester Close

£462,000 is an approximate market value of 5 Sylvester Close at the start of 2024.

Oxford Road

The share of property asset represents the PCC's loan to the Burford Benefice Bartholomew Trust ("BBBT") to enable the purchase of 20 Oxford Road, Burford in October 2010; the property originally cost £245,000.

If the property were sold the PCC would receive a share of 27/245 of the net proceeds. The net proceeds being calculated as the sales price less refurbishment and other costs incurred by BBBT. This asset is included at cost within designated as the PCC has no direct control over the property or its sale.

CBF Church of England Investment Fund

Included in the unit price of the CBF Church of England Investment Fund is an annual management fee of 0.55%. This is reflected as part of the change in annual market value

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF ST JOHN THE BAPTIST, BURFORD

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

for the year ended 31 December 2023 (Continued)

15. Debtors

	2023	2022
	£	£
Gift aid reclaims	3,942	3,297
	-	-
	<u>£3,942</u>	<u>£3,297</u>

16. Current Asset Investments

	2023	2022
	£	£
Cash at bank and in hand (unrestricted)	145,477	41,271
Cash at bank and in hand (restricted)	5,440	7,678
	<u>£150,916</u>	<u>£48,949</u>

17. Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2023	2022
	£	£
Audit	3,720	3,540
Other creditors	-	-
	<u>£3,720</u>	<u>£3,540</u>

18. Analysis of charitable funds

	Balance 1.1.23	Income	Expenditure	Gains / (Losses)	Transfer	Balance 31.12.23
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Unrestricted fund	122,016	433,289	(340,027)	-	(25,000)	190,278
Designated funds						
- Fabric fund	796,717	115,370	(103,963)	58,804	25,000	891,929
- Warwick Hall	4,119,603	-	-	-	-	4,119,603
- BBBT	26,510	-	-	-	-	26,510
Designated funds, total	<u>4,942,830</u>	<u>115,370</u>	<u>(103,963)</u>	<u>58,804</u>	<u>25,000</u>	<u>5,038,042</u>
Restricted fund	7,678	19,912	(22,150)	-	-	5,440
Total	<u>5,072,523</u>	<u>568,571</u>	<u>(466,139)</u>	<u>58,804</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>5,233,760</u>

Name of fund

Description, nature and purposes of the fund

Unrestricted fund

The "general fund", the 'free reserves' after allowing for all designated funds. The general fund is available to be spent for any of the charity's purposes.

Designated fund

The "Fabric fund". Funds set aside by the PCC to enable it to meet its maintenance responsibilities for the Parish Church of St John the Baptist, Burford and other church buildings.

The "Warwick Hall" fund reflects the investment made in the construction of Warwick Hall. Whilst the building is central to the operations, there is no intention for sale.

The 'BBBT' fund recognises the interest that the PCC has in the purchase of 20 Oxford Road, Burford, over which it has no control as regards sale.

Restricted fund

Collections and other income given for specific purposes and which are required to be paid over to external beneficiaries.

Vicar's Report

Paul writes to the Corinthian Church:

"I always thank my God for you because of his grace given you in Christ Jesus. For in him, you have been enriched in every way - with all kinds of speech and with all knowledge - God thus confirming our testimony about Christ among you. Therefore, you do not lack any spiritual gift as you eagerly wait for our Lord Jesus Christ to be revealed. He will also keep you firm to the end so that you will be blameless on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. God is faithful, who was called you into fellowship with his son, Jesus Christ our Lord."

It always thrills me to think that a church like Corinth could be spoken of so highly. From the letters to the church in Corinth, it's clear that it's a mixed bag at best – and yet it knows the grace of God, is enriched in every way so they lack nothing, and will be kept by God to the end. It's a staggering view of the church.

And that is true of every church – including our own. There will be some areas in our collective church life which we are growing and we can thank God for his grace shown to us, but plenty of others need highlighting for change. We must respond rightly to that need to change, so we might be more Christlike in our beliefs and how we live. I'm grateful that work to review parts of our church life begins in earnest at the start of 2024. But in it all, we must remember that God, who is faithful, will keep his people to the end. May that cause us to trust in him and rely on him more.

As I reflect on all God has done for us as a Church Family, I am reminded of his ever-present help. The Lord has graciously added to our number, grown our love for one another and supremely, grown us in our knowledge of God and his Love for us and his world.

Ministry

Growing in Christ

'I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing. John 15v5

Sermon Series covered what following Jesus looks like from Matthew, how the death of Jesus was promised in Isaiah and how the gift of a King in 1 Samuel would help us see our need for Jesus' kingship.

1 John showed us the importance of what we believe as it impacts our living, and 1 Corinthians challenged and encouraged us to be distinctive in our world.

We started the evening meetings in 2023 too, essentially a series of topics and themes to help us as we seek to Grow in Christ. We looked at our core values in January to see how they shape the current debates around marriage in the Church of England. We let Luke guide us through Lent as we looked at Jesus' last earthly days. We considered how we might grow in our prayer lives and looked at the big sweep of the Bible story. These evenings have had a mix of teaching, discussion, prayer and music, attracting anywhere between 20 and 80 people. In 2023 the average number of people attending services in Burford continued to show an upward trajectory. The figures counted are for adults only; if under 18s were included, overall growth would be even more significant.

In November, we paused the 8am as consistently, the service had no more than a handful coming. We will review that during the year.

I continue to be very grateful to the leaders of our small groups. Home groups, women's groups and men's groups have been a vital way for the church family to keep meeting, praying, and supporting one another. These groups help keep our larger church feel small, strengthen relationships with each other and grow in our relationship with Christ.

Loving his people

³⁴ 'A new command I give you: love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. ³⁵ By this everyone will know that you

are my disciples, if you love one another.' John 13:34-35

We enjoyed several social events, as well as lots of occasions to meet together. From a Hospitality Sunday, to a great Harvest weekend with a barn dance at the Emmerson's farm and a Harvest bring and share meal on the Sunday. Men's Breakfasts and the resumption of Women's Events have helped grow relationships and encourage our faith.

With small groups taking a pause over the Summer, we ran Church History Thursdays as an opportunity for those around to meet and discuss the first 500 years of Church History. It was great to learn together and get to know people from across our various congregations.

There are also regular meetings with Signpost, Coffee and Company and midweek communion, in which we seek to develop relationships.

Reaching Burford and Beyond

The Lord added to their number daily Acts 2v47

We are aware that Evangelism (sharing our faith) is not just about centralised events – helpful though they may be. We will continue to focus on how we are each equipped to live and speak for Christ wherever we are. I'm delighted that the outreach team is now working to put together a programme that helps us be trained to be Christ's ambassadors wherever we find ourselves and also gives us opportunities to invite friends to meet our church family and hear something about Jesus. The apologetics training day was a great success, and partnering with OCCA for that event was good.

We have sought to develop the relationship with the Burford Community. We've had individuals running events in their gardens and we joined together to share coronation celebrations in the Warwick Hall. We shared publicity over Christmas and have developed and strengthened the relationship with the Primary School. It has been great to see how various people in the church family have been acting as salt and light in our community and across the multiple communities of which we are part.

We have had visitors from all over the world visit our Grade 1 listed building and the Warwick Hall throughout the week, and I continue to be thankful for all those who welcome them and gently witness to their faith in Jesus.

Another critical aspect of seeking to reach Burford and Beyond is the work of our World Mission Committee, and the continued support of local, national and international mission agencies and partners. We have enjoyed hearing news of how God has been at work in the lives of so many. Hilton McCann has taken on the chairmanship of that group and I am delighted to see how this might go forward.

With Thanks

As always, it is good to remind ourselves that as a Church, we are *all* called to ministry and minister wherever we find God taking us. It, therefore, is an absolute joy that we serve alongside one another using the gifts God has given for his greater glory – so thank you to all of you!

I want to particularly thank the Staff & Clergy Team, who help behind the scenes and lead and preach across the Benefice, and I am particularly grateful for their willingness to step in during my forthcoming Sabbatical.

James Morrey was a great asset to the Operations team, and it was a delight to preach at his wedding in the Summer. Following his marriage to Becky he moved to Chippenham and began a handover of the Operations Manager Role to Adrian Jackson. My huge thanks to Adrian, who has quickly developed the role and made a significant contribution to the wider ministry. His ability to go from the big picture to detail and interchange between policies and people with a great sense of humour is a real asset to the church.

Jo Vickers continues to serve our families with genuine care and enthusiasm and has also taken on the role of Parish Safeguarding Officer. Safeguarding is a most vital role as we continue to seek to care for everyone – and particularly the vulnerable. Do pray that her labours for Christ's sake continue to bear fruit in our children's lives.

Tarnia continues to serve as our Church Administrator and has added the administration of the Safeguarding work. Cecile has taken on all the administrative burden of Funerals, Baptisms and Weddings, but also sorting and arranging my communications and diary.

At the start of 2023 we unfortunately had to make the paid Church Verger Role redundant. I'm grateful to Lynette Derry for all she did over 5 years from keeping the building open and welcoming to visitors, preparing it for services and leading the team of Volunteer Vergers.

My thanks also go to the Wardens, Linda Petra and Andrew Lord. They encouraged me to apply for a Sabbatical, and I'm grateful for the opportunity to step back and recommit myself as a disciple of Jesus Christ. They share their wisdom and listen with patience in the staff meetings, as well as in the PCC and when meeting with me. I am delighted they are willing to stand again.

Philippa Hughes has led our Finance Team with diligence, care and wisdom. She presents the accounts and finances clearly to the PCC, but also with a personal faith and trust in our ever generous and providing God. The PCC always has the information they need so they may respond with due diligence and wise stewardship in challenging financial circumstances.

Looking ahead

As I write this in January, it's hard to know what the year ahead will bring although various things are planned. In March we have a training morning with Andy Robinson to help us read the Bible for ourselves and to help us teach it to others. We have a Church Day of teaching and fun planned for May and hope to welcome our Curate and his family in June.

As I begin my 3 month of Sabbatical, Psalm 25 has been on my mind. It's one of David's acrostic Psalms, with each line starting with the next letter of the Hebrew alphabet. David uses that structure to voice his concerns to God about his enemies, his need for guidance and the burden of guilt. The tone is rather subdued, and the trust is shown in a patient waiting rather than in exuberant joy at some immediate relief. It seems that the usual way of the Christian life is that the variety of challenges we face last a long time and as God's people we are called to wait, and to trust. In you O Lord – I put my trust.

You can imagine the vast array of events in David's life that could have led him to write this Psalm – from being chased by Saul, through to seeking God's wisdom and leadership as he set out as King, to seeking to rule after his son's rebellion and his sin becoming known. It's a Psalm we can also pray. Whether we face some form of marginalisation because of our Christian faith or facing the consequences of our sin and failures, we all need God's guidance and help and to trust and know he is good. In you O Lord – WE put our trust.

With these things in mind, we look forward to 2024 with a reminder of where our trust is to be put. Whatever we face, whatever lies ahead, we have a good God in whom we can put our trust.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Tom Putt." The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Rev Tom Putt, Vicar

Electoral Roll Report

The electoral roll was revised in April 2023 in preparation for the APCM. I can report the following:

Total number of individuals on the Roll	154
Members removed since the last APCM	14
Members added since the last APCM	15

The Roll will open for applications for enrolment on Tuesday 14 May 2024.

Ruth Reavley

Electoral Roll Officer

Buildings & Maintenance (Fabric) Team Report

The Lord has given us a group of people with a wide range of considerable skills and experience to undertake the maintenance and restoration of the church building and churchyard, the Warwick Hall and 5 Sylvester Close. Our thanks are due to Adrian Jackson, David Barham, Geoff Enoch, David Hunt, Robert Lind, Andrew Lord, James Morrey, and Geoff Taylor, who collectively have ensured the buildings are suitable for regular worship, Christian outreach, community use and support to church staff. Other people have assisted the team from time to time including Kevin Bishop, who has brought his skills in heating to bear in respect of the church building, and Nigel Street, who has continued to advise on contractual matters relating to the Warwick Hall.

Particular thanks go to Geoff Taylor, who has now stood down from the Fabric Committee having served for ten years and undertaken many practical tasks, and to James Morrey who organised the group's work so thoroughly whilst he was Operations Manager.

During 2023, we have seen the following major projects progressed and completed:

- Church building and churchyard
 - Cleaning and restoration of the church's west window
 - Replacement of the roof above the south aisle
 - Quinquennial Inspection of the fabric by the church architect
 - Inspection and maintenance of gravestones
- Warwick Hall
 - Installation of smart thermostats throughout
 - Further improvements to fire precautions

We are planning major improvements to the heating in the church during 2024. This is subject to obtaining approval from the diocese, but if approved will mean installing radiant heaters above head in the Lady Chapel and improved flow to the radiators in the rest of the church building.

In the Warwick Hall we are grappling to find a satisfactory and long term solution to the failed rooflights in the New Hall. This is being pursued through the architects. We are also planning to commence the gradual redecoration of the Warwick Hall.

We are grateful for the generous provision of the Lord as we address the many challenges and opportunities of our buildings. To God be the glory.

Andrew Butcher

Chairman, Buildings & Maintenance (Fabric)

Witney Deanery Synod Report

Deanery Synod is a cog in the mechanism of church government and leadership. It connects directly to the parishes and benefices in Witney Deanery (in our case), and to Oxford Diocesan Synod (in our case). Through the Diocesan Synod it connects to General Synod. Its membership is all clergy licensed to the Deanery, and elected representatives of parishes. We have 3 elected lay representatives: Martin Gee,

Sam Brewitt-Taylor and Ruth Reavley. Deanery Synod meetings are a way for members to discuss, encourage, consider and celebrate together how God is working in our communities and churches. The Deanery Synod can raise a formal motion to be debated at Diocesan Synod, which can then send it on to Diocesan Synod. Parish Share allocation is also determined at Deanery level.

The Deanery Synod met in April, July and November 2023. Agendas across the year included reports on General Synod meetings and on Deanery finances and the parish share allocation formula. Creating a Deanery Mission Action Plan has been discussed; in November 2023, priorities (Schools work, poverty relief and environment) were teased out. Writing the Plan is work for 2024.

The Synod also welcomed the Diocesan Social Justice Adviser in November, who spoke about addressing poverty and inequality, challenging parishes and congregations on Christian responses.

The Parish was represented at each meeting by one or more of the three lay Deanery Synod representatives.

Ruth Reavley, Sam Brewitt-Taylor, Martin Gee
Deanery Synod Representatives

Safeguarding Report

At the end of last year, I took up the position at Parish Safeguarding Officer for St John the Baptist, Burford and completed my induction training in early December. Tarnia Usher has now completed all her training as is also a Safeguarding Officer and she will be helping me with the administration.

Safeguarding is very much a whole church commitment and ensures that we demonstrably care and value everyone, in a proactive and responsible way. We have a commitment to look after our amazing volunteers-making sure they have the latest information and training for their role, and we follow the correct Safer Recruitment and People Management 2022 guidelines. We have the responsibility to make sure all due diligence and care is taken for the more vulnerable, for example, children, youth, those with additional needs, and the elderly.

The PCC and the incumbent have the overall duty of care to ensure the protection of the vulnerable in their church community and have appointed me to carry out the Church of England's Safeguarding policy and operating procedures. Safeguarding reporting is always on the PCC agenda, where they are updated with not only feedback with the percentage that have completed the Safer Recruitment required for posts with vulnerable groups, but also all other matters that come under the Safeguarding brief, include Risk Assessment, Safeguarding procedures for all ministry areas, and responding to reported safeguarding concerns. I am very grateful to Michael Thompson from the PCC who meets with me regularly to offer support and advice and to Tania Usher who is now working weekly on Safeguarding administration as part of her job.

In the last couple of months, having digested the extensive guidelines from the Oxford Dioceses policies, Tarnia and I have identified fourteen areas that we need to work on and hope to have these areas completed over the next 6 months. We have recently received training to use the Parish Dashboard and Hub and we will be using this going forward to monitor all aspects of Safeguarding.

Finally, I would like to thank the whole church family for their support, since taking up the role I have only experienced wholehearted co-operation. I recently received the completed DBS checks and online safeguarding training certificates from a dynamic volunteer in her late 80's, her willingness to get everything in order and to be up-to-date with the training was admirable. When I mentioned that she wouldn't have to complete the process again for another three years, she sweetly said, "I think we know that won't be needed!"

If anyone has a question or a concern, please do contact me on safeguarding@burfordchurch.org or talk to me or Tarnia on a Sunday after church.

The PCC holds files on 275 individuals, of whom:

105 are actively serving.

These 105 individuals are serving in 204 roles.

Disclosures

We have made a total of nine referrals to the Diocesan Safeguarding Team since July 2021.

Jo Vickers

Parish Safeguarding Officer

Prayer Life Report

Our monthly Central prayer meeting on the 1st Wed of each month continues to be the key corporate prayer meeting. It is a great time of worship, the word and prayer with good numbers of 30-40 people attending and a wide range of prayer topics. Our primary focus is on the life and function at St John's but also supporting the different ministries, individuals, mission partners across the Benefice and at times a more global focus.

We continue to join 3 times a year with the North Cotswold Gospel Partnership group of churches, praying for each other's needs.

With James Morrey, who ran the monthly prayer news and web link, having left there were a few months of no diary going out. With the need to fill that gap and bring fresh input and younger blood into heart of our prayer life, Rob Lind has joined me in focusing on keeping prayer at the centre of our church life.

We met to see how best to link our Central Prayer meeting in with the monthly diary in order to keep the CPM prayer points at the front of our minds for the month following. To start in January 2024 a prayer sheet will go out to all Home Group, Bible study and other group leaders to pass onto their members. Paper hand outs are also available to anyone who asks.

The regular 40 minute Wednesday morning prayer meeting at 7.30am continues with 4 -6 regulars most weeks. We meet on zoom for the winter months reverting to in church when the clocks change. All are welcome.

Prayer ministry after the 11 o'clock service continues to be offered and serviced by two people on hand to pray each Sunday in the Chapel of the Holy Spirit. The numbers who come asking for prayer are small but they are always important times when they happen.

We continue to believe that prayer is the engine room of the church's ministry.

Charles Hunter Smart

Children's Ministry Report



Tuesday at 9:15& 10:15am
(: Rock-a-Tots :)



In JAM we have a mix of seasonal highlights of the year which are repeated annually (monthly BREAD social events, Remembrance Sunday with guest speaker, Nativity Service, and summer camping night), and we also have the ongoing weekly Sunday morning JAM time-where we gather in small groups for age-appropriate Bible studies, prayer, and activities. All these events are only possible due to the amazing team of volunteers, and I am so grateful and thankful for the incredible team we have. Growing and sustaining the Children's Ministry at Burford Church requires faith, effort, and hard work from everyone involved-but it is a joy and a privilege to be involved in this ministry. And what a blessing it is to see the Lord working in the lives of the younger generation, as we teach the children the wonderful truths of the Bible and to help

the youngsters to know and love Jesus as their Lord and Saviour. Please do pray for this ministry and for the Holy Spirit to equip us as we plan and teach and for the children to have faith and follow Jesus all their lives.

The Children's Ministry never stands still, and this year we ran Children's Activities across August for the first time in nearly a decade. We had fantastic teams taking the lead each Sunday and this is something we hope to provide again next summer. Over the last years we have continued to run Families Together café style time once a term, this model was such a gift for us all at the end of lock down and has been a good addition to the termly Sunday morning time for our families, but more recently numbers have reached slightly over full capacity, and we are currently re-thinking this format.

Rock A Tots has continued to be popular and the two sessions we run every Tuesday morning are always full. This has proved a great way to serve our local community, and many come regularly. We currently have parents from the church family attending and this has really helped, and we have seen more coming along to church events and to Sunday services. Kath and Sue help to run this group and they are a stellar team! And the baking team does a wonderful job, supplying us with delicious cakes and cookies.

If you have any questions or would like to get involved, please to contact jovickers@burfordchurch.org.



Jo Vickers
Parish Children's Worker

Youth Ministry Report

Younger Youth (11-14)

Rock Solid meets on Sunday mornings and tends to have a regular attendance of between 12-15 children from Yrs7-9. They are a delightful and enthusiastic group and we are very fortunate to have a dedicated team of adult helpers too.

We generally follow the sermon series but this year we have done a bible overview using a mix of materials based on Vaughan Roberts' "God's Big Picture" and The King, the snake and the promise. This was well-received and was creatively taught. We have also done a number of specials including Building healthy friendships, Science and Religion, and our Idols today.

They have also had a couple of great Q and A sessions led by Charlie Styles.

The children have enjoyed serving at various church events including hosting our first ever youth service in November. They did a great job, using their many gifts in a variety of ways including being on the tech desk, welcoming and setting up, baking, being in the worship band and leading from the front.

We have also enjoyed various social events including a Christmas party, and St David's day celebration. In the Autumn term many members of the group joined with young people from other churches in the N Cotswolds for a weekend away at Adventure+ in nearby Clanfield. Many also enjoyed camping at Gigley farm and many attended various Christian summer camps during the holidays.

Liz Jackson
Rock Solid Group Leader

Older Youth (15-18)

Rooted meets in The Vicarage on Sunday evenings from 7-8.30, having been in the main service on a Sunday morning. We are a small but welcoming bunch of about 5 or 6 young people and a couple of leaders each week. We play some games, eat pizza and study the Bible together.

In the Autumn we did a Bible Overview series using God's Big Picture video's and discussion questions. This term we have done some 'How and Why' sessions about fundamentals of Christian living such as going to church, reading the Bible and Praying and we are currently following the morning sermon series in the run up to Easter. Then of course there are always socials, from decorating a gingerbread house to Easter egg hunts!

There are regular youth services for young people from local churches to gather together and worship God with one another and it was a privilege to host one in November. One of the great joys of doing this work is seeing and encouraging the youth to take part in and serve the wider church and it was great to have this opportunity to do so.

Anna Putt

Rooted Group Leader

Small Group Report

God has blessed us with another year with plenty of our congregation belonging to a Small Group. We have 16 groups with 157 members. Quite amazing. We have evening groups, a day group, a couple of Men's groups and Revive 18-30s.

We studied 1 Samuel and then the life of David from 2 Samuel as well as groups choosing what to study during the summer months.

The Small Groups are a wonderful space for people of all ages and stages to enjoy studying God's Word, to pray and support each other.

A really big thank you to all the Leaders who work so hard in preparing studies and hosting week by week.

Trevor Hames

Small Groups convenor

Women's Small Group Report

Women's Bible study groups have continued to meet over the past year and we give great thanks for all God has been doing through these groups. We have known Him encouraging and challenging us as we study His word together and experienced the blessing of fellowship together. Small groups are a vital way that we can love and support each other as a church family.

We have 6 women's groups meeting on a weekly basis, Tuesday to Fridays, one of which is especially designed for mums with young children. Do give thanks for all the dedicated leaders of these groups and their hard work in leading studies and caring for the women in the groups. Please pray that God would continue to strengthen them and help them in this vital role.

Over 2023 we have looked at 2 Timothy, a mix of 1 Samuel / Psalms and Evangelism for the summer term and then 'Women of the Old Testament' over the Autumn term.

Please pray that we would continue in what we have learned, rejoicing in our salvation and be thoroughly equipped for every good work as we come together around God's word, hearing Him speak over the next year. If you would like to be part of a group do please get in touch!

Women's events - we aim to have an evening for women of the church each term. These are to gather together to get to know each other better and enjoy spending time together and also to spur each other on in our love for God and our walk with Him. Over 2023 we have had a Testimony evening where we heard from a number of women of the Burford Benefice, a 'Puddings, Pimms and Praise' evening enjoying wonderful singing together and an evening encouraging each other from the book of Ruth.

Becky Eyles

Women's Ministry Leader

Men's Ministry Report

We have had another 4 Men's breakfast over the last year and they have been great opportunities for men of different ages to come together, to have breakfast, get to know each other better and be encouraged in their faith. We have varied in number between 24-38 mainly from St Johns, but with some from the benefice. They have usually been in the Warwick Hall making great use of the kitchen and facilities, but we also had one on the Emmerson's farm last summer. This also provided an opportunity to have a Friday night event of cheese, wine and time to hang out which was really enjoyed by all. Sadly this had meant to be a camp out ahead of the breakfast but with some horrendous weather the decision was made not to camp.

We've heard from a variety of folk (several Phillip's) - Tim Vickers (Apr 2023), Phillip Baxter (July 2023), Phillip Van der Els (Oct 2023), Phil Keen (Feb 2024), with Steve Petra speaking at the next event in April 2024. These have been varied but have often looked at how God has been at work in people's lives. We are aware that the mornings are not possible for all, and so we would like to run a few evening events over the coming year. This also would allow more time, as we have to be out of the Hall in time for the Cafe to open. One of these events is a curry night in July with a guest speaker called Alazo Julian which we hope will be the first of its kind.

There is a small team of Tom Putt, Steve Petra, Rob Lind, Rob Emmerson and Paul Oatridge who have been planning and leading the Men's breakfast and seeking to think more broadly about how we might encourage men within the church in their friendship and also in their faith.

Paul Oatridge

Men's Ministry Leader

Time Out Report

We had a very good year at Time Out with our regular Monday meetings in the Warwick Hall. Our members thoroughly enjoy the selection of activities we have - from the art table, readings, flower arranging, musical bingo, singalongs, dominoes, armchair keep fit, scrabble, quizzes, crafts from card making to Christmas pudding making and outside speakers talking on subjects relevant to older people. Members enjoy the relaxed, convivial atmosphere created and love our visiting dog Rosie as she brings back so many happy memories of pets our members have had in the past. Sadly Rosie's owner, Ann Large, died recently and she is greatly missed by all as she was a wonderful person. We all miss her as a volunteer but thankfully her husband John has continued his connection with Time Out as a volunteer driver and he brings Rosie to visit.

Many thanks go to our fantastic group of volunteers who ensure the continued success of Time Out.

During the year we had 5 trips out to the Chip Shed in Bourton on the Water, lunch at the Fox at Great Barrington, lunch in Penny Barraclough's lovely garden, the Fosseyway Garden Centre and lunch at the Carpenters Arms in Fulbrook. These trips were all greatly enjoyed by our members as they again brought back many happy memories from years ago when they made similar visits with their families and loved seeing the beautiful countryside in which we are all so lucky to live.

Our Christmas programme went very well as we all made Christmas puddings, a Christmas cake, crackers and table decorations which all contributed to our Christmas lunch party on 18th December. The 40 people present, including Tom Putt, enjoyed a joyous lunch and we were pleased to have representatives from the town present.

Very many thanks go to the Burford Charity Trustees who fund Time Out and to the Benefice for the continued support of this important community activity which in turn is a very important part of its outreach programme.

All in all a very good 2023.

John Harrington
Time Out Leader

Pastoral Car Team Report

Signpost

Signpost was launched nearly three years ago by the Church's Pastoral Team in order to expand its outreach within St John's, Burford and the wider benefice. This was to help those struggling with a variety of issues in their lives. It operates during term-time on Wednesdays from 10am – 12pm.

The criteria were:

- to provide a safe space where the team would provide a confidential listening ear for people to share their concerns;
- to offer information, where possible, to address whatever those concerns might be – eg. loneliness, bereavement, money worries, need for practical help, employment, marriage, parenting, legal;
- to provide suitable links for individuals to get further help;
- to share Jesus' love, bring comfort and renewed purpose into broken lives and by so doing the evangelism of the church.

The Signpost Team

The existing Pastoral Care Team is co-led by Sue Hunter-Smart and Sally Denyer with Ruth McCalman and Jenny Cridge-Raven.

How well is Signpost working?

There continue to be positive outcomes, several of significance, where the team were able to help those who felt lost and alone, were bereaved, had unresolved consumer issues and employment matters to address. In each case they were provided with advice and/or pointers as how to solve their problems, as well as encouragement and support. Those with mental ill health were supported. Importantly, there have been some wonderful answers to prayer.

It has made gentle, positive progress including providing a stopping-off point for church family members to explore issues in their own lives or even just to chat and enjoy coffee and cake. There have been referrals both from and to church members and from other support agencies. An example of this An example of other support agencies using us could be WODC asking us to help with a request to them from Age Concern. The Lord has blessed and encouraged along the way.

Prayer needs to underpin the work overall and the commitment of the church is greatly valued because the team know that they would be much less effective without the Holy Spirit to empower and guide the team. The hope is that Signpost will continue to consolidate and expand its outreach,

The Signpost team would like to thank the Staff team and members of the church family for their support practically and in prayer.

Raising Awareness

There is always the need to remind people that Signpost exists for everyone and generate continuing awareness. This year a monthly entry has been made in 'The Bridge ' [Burford town's publication] and it has also been featured on Facebook.

We try to maintain the awareness with repeat posters around the benefice but would like to remind everyone that this work is for the whole church family to advertise as well as use. We welcome individuals from anywhere, with any issues.

Sally Denyer
Signpost

Individual Pastoral Care

An appropriate level of pastoral care was provided on an individual basis during 2023 to those suffering bereavement and to people with other needs.

Revd Cedric Reavley

Coffee & Company Report

Coffee & Company is so worth while. It seems on the surface such a small activity but we regularly now have up to 15/20 people each week. We serve a group of regulars, both church members and folk from the community and provide coffee and chat for those attending the mid-week Wednesday Communion Service.

Sadly we have had to meet in the Warwick Hall throughout the Autumn and Winter. We long to get back into the church where we can also serve visitors but it is just too cold!

Being in the church is the ideal for us where we have the opportunity not only to provide a much needed meeting hub for those free during the day, but the chance to demonstrate the gospel to the visitors through hospitality.

Coffee & Company is run by a dedicated group of 8 ladies who not only serve and greet with a welcoming smile but provide delicious homemade cakes.

Jane Poulson

Coffee & Company Co-ordinator

Missionary Committee Report

The function of the Missionary Committee (formerly known as the World Missionary Committee), is to assist the Church in coordinating its Missionary outreach.

The work of the Committee was sorely affected during and after the pandemic – since when some former members relocated and sadly one of whom has died. We acknowledge former members' commitment and sheer energy and input to the Church's Missionary strategy - in years gone by. In order to continue their good work - and to bring matters up to date - a deep Review of the Church's Missionary strategy, objectives, procedures and manpower resources was undertaken. The purpose was to understand what steps were considered necessary to reinvigorate the work of the Committee. The Review began in July 2023 and concluded - after many iterations and fine-tuning exercises - with the PCC's endorsement (January 2024) of a Procedural Document. This document contains a condensed version of all the outcomes of the Review and represents the platform from which the Committee will pursue its remit. The Committee now comprises 4 members (Chair; Secretary; Partner Liaison and Funding). Many of the initiatives currently under way were described in a recent power-point presentation at the Monthly Prayer Meeting. We hope that the Prayer Meeting will be the forum that we will be able to use to (re)introduce those whom we support when they can visit us in person.

In 2023, we supported 9 Missionary Partners, Partner Organisations and Partner Mission Agencies - and 1 "One-Off" Applicant for support. Currently, we are in the process of updating all our records - and once this has been completed, we plan to update that part of the Church's web-site allocated to Missionary activity with current bios on those whom we support. A process to enhance our rapport with all those whom we support has begun - as has discussion about how we might encourage and further strengthen relationships with the people we support.

Hilton McCann

Missionary Committee Chair

Choir & 9.30 Service Music Report

“Sing unto the Lord a new song; let the congregation of saints praise him” (Psalm 149).

A traditional service was held at 9.30 on 38 Sundays in 2023. We are particularly blessed with the loyal service of our organists. Edwin Wilson plays the majority of service, with Phil Ormiston, Geoff Taylor, James Grainger and Cedric Reavley also having supported the services this year.

The choice of hymns for the congregation to sing is very carefully matched to the readings, to the position of a hymn in the service, and to the liturgical year. The sermon series in 2023 took us to 16 new hymns, drawing on poets from many centuries; when new words are introduced, they are usually sung to a familiar hymn tune. In total, we sang 119 different hymns (slightly fewer than last year). 88 were sung once, 20 twice, 6 three times, and one four times (Tell out my soul).

The choir sang for choral matins on 11 occasions, and also supported special services including both the Civic and Parish Carols. It numbered 19 singers at the end of 2023. In addition to singers from Taynton Parish, where the frequency of services allows them also to sing in Burford for Matins once a month, the Parish Carol Service this year has brought new singers into the monthly choir. The choir prepares an Introit for each monthly choral matins and supports the congregation in the singing of psalms and canticles to Anglican chant. In addition, they prepare Anthems for special services.

Ruth Reavley

Choir Director and 9.30 service music lead

Music Group Report

Music ministry at the 11am service is thriving. Several new musicians have joined the band, we have a new keyboard which sounds much better (and is more portable) than the old one, and we have introduced around a dozen new songs to keep our repertoire fresh and serve the preaching effectively. We're making a particular effort to plan services so that the music fits the overall shape and theme of the service well. It's a delight to hear the congregation singing with such joy.

Christmas services were a real highlight. At our carol service, the combined forces of 9.30 and 11am musicians, an enlarged choir, orchestral ensemble, soloists, thundering organ and full congregation raised the roof in praise. And, for something completely different, a week earlier the band and most of the church sound system were transported to a barn at the Emerson's farm where we sang Away in a manger in the actual presence of cattle lowing and doing other, less attractive things that cows do. This Barn Service proved popular and we hope it will become a fixture!

Ollie Nicholson

Music Group Director

Volunteer Vergers

With the church no longer having a verger we are dependent on volunteers to keep the building open to visitors. We offer a friendly welcome, information about the building and its history, and a Christian witness. Our aim is to have the church open between 10.00am – 4.00pm each day and our current team of 16 welcomers manages to do that the vast majority of the time. However, there have been occasions when the church has had to be closed for the lack of a volunteer. The recent Partnership campaign resulted in seven new volunteers coming forward and it is hoped that they will enable us to fill the gaps.

Stephen Price

Volunteer Verger Team Lead

Flower Arranging Report



Once again this past year has been such a pleasure to make our Church looked cared for and loved, it's always a delight to walk into church and "see" or "even smell" the scent from the flowers....a charming welcome.

We are now a small team of Ladies meaning the rota comes around more frequently which is not ideal as we each do 2 consecutive weeks meaning we are able to use flowers and greenery from the previous week.....this can save on cost of buying more flowers....however, having said that, we do have a fund that can be use if needed.

On a positive side, we are so fortunate to have a flower room, albeit small, but it does mean we can keep all our equipment out of sight! There were a number of weddings during last summer 2023 and for which we were asked to be the "florist" for the occasion, this is always a joy to work with the brides as the excitement mounts up as their day approaches, of course most have their own florists, but we are happy to accommodate them.

Plans are underway to hold an event where we will welcome a top florist from London, who lives locally to demonstrate the ease in which flowers can be arranged and how to go about it.....more soon once we have set a date!

Tricia Hales
Team co-ordinator

Bellringing Report

1. Service ringing

We have generally been able to ring before the 11am Services at Burford, often ringing all eight bells. The length of the 9.30 Service has sometimes been problematical; most of our bell ringers do not live in Burford, and if the 9.30 Service overruns, they may be reluctant to come to help the ringing on Sundays.

2. Special occasions

We continue to ring the bells for weddings and other special occasions, such as the Coronation.

3. Practice night

Our weekly practices continue to be on Tuesday nights from 7.30 – 9.00pm

4. Recruitment of bell ringers

We have recently resumed teaching beginners, and hope to increase the numbers of ringers at Burford.

Nigel Harrison
Tower Captain

Café Fifteen Report

The last year has proved challenging for the Hospitality industry in Burford as demonstrated by the recent failure of the Pheasant and the Mermaid (and temporarily the Burford House). The town relies heavily on the footfall of local and non-visitors and Café Fifteen is no exception and with the combined effects of petrol prices, food costs and domestic price of living increases, the early part of the year required careful manoeuvring.

However, with a restructuring of shift patterns and menu changes the Café team is finally seeing an upturn in business as we enter the crucial Spring period when the Hall's general activity increases and we are able to re-open the garden with the huge benefits that brings. With familiar faces returning, a new summer menu and fresh ideas about to be launched, I am confident the summer will be a good one, and we will continue to contribute healthily to the maintenance of the Warwick Hall.

Allan Reed

Café Fifteen Proprietor

The Friends of Burford Church Report

Charity Registration Number: 280233

The committee of the Friends of Burford Church held three meetings in 2023. In addition, members of the committee marked Shrove Tuesday on February 21st with a well-supported and much appreciated supply of pancakes in the Lady Chapel. The names of the five most recent churchwardens have been added to the list at the back of the church, and a cream tea was held for Friends on August 30th as an opportunity to publicise them, and to welcome new members of the Friends.

A history of the church was last published 20 years ago, but there has not been a guide-book for much longer, until Stephen Price undertook the considerable task of writing and illustrating one, and arranging for it to be printed. This has been paid for by the Friends, and over 350 have already been sold since it was put on display on August 23rd. Stephen has also written the script for an audio guide, and it is hoped to have this available for passers-by and pilgrims during the course of 2024.

Considerable time has been given by the committee to the proposal to instal a touch-screen in the South Transept giving detailed information about the larger of the 2 windows there, designed and made by Christoher Whall. Dr Louise Hampson of York University has provided expert help and advice, and the project is progressing well. The centenary of Whall's death will be at the end of 2024, and it is hoped that the work will be completed by then. Dr Hampson visited us in May to see the window in its position, and to meet the committee. She gave a most interesting talk at the Friends' AGM about stained glass windows entitled "The Bible for the illiterate? The real role and uses of stained glass in the Middle Ages."

A handsome new Lectern Bible, costing nearly £500, has been given to the Church by the Friends, in order that the text and page numbers exactly match those in the congregation copies.

Revd Cedric Reavley,

Chair, Friends of Burford Church

The Burford Benefice Bartholomew Trust Report

Charity Registration Number: 1079450

Objectives

The objectives of the Trust are the advancement of the Christian religion and of education, and such other charitable purposes that are beneficial to the community in the Burford Benefice with Fulbrook, Taynton, Asthall, Swinbrook and Widford.

Trustees & Responsibilities

The Trustees during the year were The Reverend Tom Putt (Ex-officio) (Chairman), Ivan Hall (Treasurer), Ruth McCalman, Simon Polito and Lynn Bibbings Burns.

The Trust's responsibilities include the provision of assistance to the clergy within the Benefice by various charitable means. In this respect, the Trust holds a part share (with the 4 PCCs in the Benefice) in 20 Oxford Road, Burford.

The property is normally used as accommodation for the Curate of the Benefice but, in absence of an incumbent in 2023, it was let to private tenants. It is expected that the private tenancy will terminate in March 2024. A schedule of repairs and maintenance will be actioned in the period following termination of the tenancy so that the property will be fit for purpose for the new Curate and his family when they arrive in June.

Financial Statement

The main payments during the year related to repairs and maintenance of 20 Oxford Road. These costs were more than offset by rent receipts and this resulted in a net surplus of £10,855. Detailed accounts are available on request.

At 31st December 2023, the available funds of the Trust were £39,948. Whilst this is a healthy balance, the Trustees are mindful of the need to maintain sufficient reserves to cover potential future spending. Such spending could include any structural work at 20 Oxford Road and the support of future ministry needs.

Ivan Hall

Treasurer, BBBT