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REPORT  
BOOKLET



**St. Michael & All Angels**  
CHURCH IN THE PARK | LIVING, LOVING, SERVING

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# VICAR'S REPORT

The year of our Lord two thousand and twenty two was especially memorable for me personally, as I was finally able to take my much anticipated sabbatical. I was blessed to have three months off from parish duties, and was so grateful to all those who stepped up and shared much of my workload, including my colleagues Helen and TJ, churchwardens Julia and Frank, Arthur and Lynn especially, with thanks also to our PCC for their generous grant to help fund my break.

My sabbatical began with a wonderfully peaceful retreat at the Society of Saint Francis Monastery at Glasshampton, a favoured sanctuary for me during my curacy in Worcester diocese between 2006-2010. I watched lots of cricket, spent quality time with my close and extended family, including short breaks in Dorset and the Lake District, attended the New Wine and Greenbelts festivals in July/August, and spent a week as driver for Bishop Pushpa, from the Church of South India. She was hosted by Oxford diocese for a week prior to the Lambeth Conference, and this gave me the privilege to get to know her better, prior to my trip in September.

I serve on the Partnership in World Mission committee, which reports to Oxford Diocesan Synod. The PiWM is responsible for fostering diocesan links with three overseas dioceses, including the CSI diocese of Nandyal.

In early September, I found myself on a flight to Hyderabad, where I spent a memorable two weeks in South India, primarily hosted by Bishop Pushpa.

I was given a comprehensive tour of many of their diocesan projects, including about a dozen CSI schools, several orphanages, hospitals and projects helping young women to support their families, through skills training.

The warmth of their welcome and hospitality of my Indian hosts, will remain with me for the rest of my life, as will seeing the great social need amongst so many.

During the year, we celebrated her majesty Queen Elizabeth II's Platinum Jubilee, followed sadly by her passing in September, which took place whilst I was still in India.

Helen and TJ responded with great professionalism and sensitivity to the national outpouring of grief, as a book of condolence was opened and many came to our church to pay their respects, and for prayer contemplation.

TJ, I am told, led superbly the following Sunday, with a service that no amount of theological training could ever prepare a priest to take.

TJ made plans during the autumn to move to pastures anew, early in 2023, and we are hugely appreciative of her three and a half years serving as curate in Hughenden Parish. We will miss her services filmed on location in usual places, such as a castle and a donkey sanctuary, her significant contribution to the setting up of the 11.00 am Tuesday communion service, which has now become well established, the bi-monthly services which we are now involved in leading in Hughenden Garden Village, her creative gifts, especially when producing prayer stations and countless others contributions, great and small. We wish her God's richest blessings in her new parish in Wexham.

We were so thankful to God as the Bell Tower works were completed in the spring, and the local MP for Aylesbury, Rt Hon. Rob Butler came to inspect the work in late February. I can still remember the astonishing view from the bell tower roof, as we inspected the works and gazed across the park and into the town centre, which seemed so much closer from such a great height.

The renovations were carried out to a high standard, and access to the roof is now much safer than before. We hope these repairs will be good for at least a generation.

The Bell Tower project would never have happened without an extraordinary group of people, which include Brian Clark, Christopher Tyrer, Brian Morley, Richard Peters, Derek Brown and many others. The hard work and due diligence shown by these and those who supported them cannot be overstated, and enabled the project to come in well under original estimates. We are also thankful to all the generous charities which awarded us grants which financed the project, including English Heritage, through the National Churches Trust.

In June, prior to the start of my sabbatical, the PCC approved our new parish vision statement, after two years of consultation, prayer and discussions. As we look towards 2023, and all that God has in store for us, we hope and pray that this vision will give us fresh impetus, and act as a lens through which the Lord will guide the life and mission of our church.

Sadly, we said goodbye to several current and former members of the St Michael & All Angels church family during 2022. These included John & Gloria Holmes, Len Rickards, Ann Way, Kay Kennedy and Jean Evans. May they rest in peace and rise in glory with our Lord and Saviour. Their example and legacy act as an inspiration to us all.

## **OCCASIONAL OFFICES 2022**

- Funerals 28
- Weddings 8
- Baptisms 10
- Confirmed 4

We hosted a confirmation service in November, at which Rt Rev David Jennings presided. It was with great joy that each of the four candidates gave personal testimony of what had led each of them to take the public step that day of professing faith in Jesus Christ. The age range of those confirmed ranged from 15 to 94, the latter candidate which I baptised, immediately prior to his confirmation. It is never too late to say yes to following in our Saviour's footsteps!

Festivals were once again memorable occasions in the year, including the Easter services, a combined Love Wycombe service in Wycombe town Centre in May, and well attended Christmas services, especially on Christmas Eve.

Looking through my diary for the year, I was once again struck by how active and engaged we are as a church, and my hope and prayer is that our new vision will give us renewed love for Christ, to be salt and light in our local community and beyond.

Revd. Keith Johnson

# CHURCHWARDENS' REPORT

## **JULIA GRANT**

It is now 3 years since the start of the pandemic and it has been a particularly challenging time for our church and lifestyle. Fortunately this year we have gradually moved away from Covid restrictions and decisions have been taken as the situation evolved with the clergy, PCC and guidance from the diocese. The only decision still to make is when we start to use the shared cup for Holy Communion and this is being discussed.

During this time there were a number of people who moved out of the area or changed churches but our congregation gradually returned and we also have a large number of new people now attending services. Our church continued to provide online services, which are accessed by a number of people and are supportive of those who are too elderly, ill or unable to attend a service. I have certainly found this useful at times if I have been unwell. And at a time when many churches have struggled to survive we are indeed hugely blessed with our clergy, all of our tech team and, worship leaders and all who are so dedicated in this service.

This year Keith took a 3 month sabbatical and our thanks go to Helen and TJ for their hard work during this time to keep the services running.

Thank you to Keith and all of our clergy for their dedication and commitment during the last year. Thank you also to Lynn Brooks as our admin support for her flexibility under difficult circumstances. Thank you Frank and other PCC members who have worked so hard on various projects. It is an amazing achievement to now have all of the Bell Tower work completed.

## **Stewards and Welcomers**

We are extremely grateful to the many people who offer themselves as stewards and welcomers for all of the services, thank you Amanda for organizing the 11.00 am service.

We have a number of new volunteers, which is really good to see but here are never enough willing volunteers. We continue to seek support help and service in the church in many areas so please come and talk to us if you would be willing to help in any way. As churchwarden I would like to thank the many people in our congregation who work so hard in different roles to serve God and our church and make the CW job easier.

I have now completed 6 years as churchwarden and am humbled to be able to serve God and our church as a churchwarden. We look forward with confidence to the year ahead as we look at the vision ahead.

Julia Grant

## **FRANK HAWKINS**

Firstly I need to thank Julia for her conscientious and active time as churchwarden over the past six years. When you have churchwardens that work well as a team it does make the tasks involved so much easier.

Next, I need to praise and thank all those who have done so much to help with the Bell Tower Project. Last year we named many but in particular for finalising and finishing it in a timely and professional manner I have to thank Brian Morley, Richard Peters and Derek Brown. Unless you were actually involved you would not believe the amount of work that has gone into making this project such a physical and financial success. Thank you all very much.

The work which also goes into maintaining the church and its grounds is also substantial and our thanks must go out to all those who so consistently help here. Any additional volunteers are always welcome so do please speak to one of the churchwardens if you would like to help.

A special word of thanks to Roger Grant since clearly as Julia's husband this would be difficult for her to add but his service to the church this year has been outstanding both in his physical activities but also with his diligence to safeguarding matters. Also a thank you to TJ our curate who has now moved on to her new role and we thank her for all her support and wish her well with God's help in her new challenges.

The technology in the church has gone forward this year and we are so grateful for all those who have worked to set it up, work it during services and maintain it. It is such a credit to all of you and a huge thank you for this.

I too am delighted to see the numbers of people that are now coming along to St Michael & All Angels.

At the end of the day, we do these roles to help to encourage people to come to church and enjoy God's great love and also the fellowship of other Christians here on earth. I hope I can play my part in this and that our church will go on from strength to strength.

Frank Hawkins

# FINANCE

I am pleased to say that I am seeing some recovery from a very difficult financial year in 2021 that was caused by the Covid situation. However, our planned giving of £75,721 this year was substantially down from the 2021 level of £91,136 but fortunately this was more than made up for by the generosity of some significant generous donations.

May I thank everyone who has ongoing standing orders. They are so very important and they substantially cover our parish share of £80,444, which pays for vicars' salaries and other administrative items in the Oxford Diocese. Other income came from contactless (£3,674) (up 70% on last year), cash collections (£2,449), yellow envelopes (£4,770) and visitors donations (£1,680) also made welcome comebacks from the Covid-hit 2020 and 2021 years.

While this level of giving may all seem a little underwhelming, we had a number of really encouraging developments during the year from a financial viewpoint and certainly felt God's blessing on us. We received one-off donations totalling nearly £45,000, which will cover large items of expenditure in 2023, notably the installation of new projectors and the long-needed replacement of our internal lighting with LED, which will help with our 'green' push. We also received a legacy payment of £1,400, down from last year's £15,000, but still most generous and welcome.

Additionally, we completed the badly needed repair of the Bell Tower. Huge thanks go to Derek Brown for overseeing the works and also getting his own fair hands quite dirty at times. Thank you to Richard Peters for taking responsibility for the project, in what felt like dark days around the start of Covid. We covered nearly all the cost of the works with grants of £116,135 (£83,135 of which came in 2022) and were able to recover VAT of £16,537 in 2022, due to our 'grade 2\* listed' status. The tower roof and the new Finial look wonderful and hearing the bells again brings joy to the whole valley and has provided a fitting finale to David Cornwall's 50 years as Tower Captain. We would like to again thank Bucks Historic Churches Trust, Heritage England, National Churches Trust, The Garfield Weston Foundation & Allchurches Trust for their generosity, together with the donations from our congregation.

Inflation has been running at over 10% and some costs, such as heating and lighting, rose significantly. Our church running costs were up from £6,024 in 2021 to £15,088, with £7,340 of the increase in running costs related to oil



and electricity. While this may sound alarming, bear in mind that it was a “3 oil tank year” (as opposed to 2 in 2021) in terms of our Heating costs. Also, we received a substantial Electricity rebate in 2021. We will be looking at different ways of reducing this cost through the course of 2023. A 23% increase in Insurance costs was a factor in our increased costs but given the recent damage to the church by an Intruder and the supportive response of Ecclesiastical Insurance, we can see the importance of this £3,900 item of expenditure. Maintenance and repairs accounted for most of the rest of the increased costs.

The high inflation rate is clearly a major issue for all of our congregation, in terms of the impact on personal incomes and expenditure, but please do prayerfully consider whether you are able to increase standing orders, to help the church with its ongoing cost increases, if you are in a position to do so.

Finally, we had some encouraging fundraising events during the year, including our Gift Day (nearly £4,000) and our Christmas charities week (over £3,000), while we managed to give over £11,000 in mission-related donations as a church, well above the target of 10% of planned giving.

Brian Morley  
*Treasurer*

# **PCC** REPORT

## **From March 2022 the PCC was constituted as follows:**

Vicar:	Rev. Keith Johnson
Associate Minister:	Helen Peters
Curate:	Rev. Tracey Jones
Lay Reader:	David Tester
Churchwardens:	Julia Grant and Frank Hawkins
Treasurer:	Brian Morley
Secretary:	Susan Brice
Diocesan Synod:	Christopher Tyrer
Deanery Synod:	Mike Hill, Arthur Johnson, Christopher Tyrer
Elected Members:	Janet Booth, Clare Godfrey (Lay Chair), Antony Rippon, Ben Sharp, Mark Sherrington

The APCM was held in church on Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> March at 11.30 am.

Thereafter there was a PCC meeting on zoom at the end of March. This was followed by meetings in May, July, September, November, January and March, all held in Church House.

Two additional meetings on the subject of Vision were held in June and in March.

Several meetings were chaired by Clare Godfrey (Lay Chair) because the vicar was absent due to his sabbatical or to illness.

Rev. Tracey Jones left the PCC in January 2023 when her ministry moved to another parish.

Roger Grant visited PCC meetings on more than one occasion to inform the committee about the position of the church regarding safeguarding.

Susan Brice  
*PCC Secretary*

# ■ DIOCESAN & ■ DEANERY ■ SYNOD

## **DIOCESAN**

I have set out the basic structures of the diocese – archdeaconries, deaneries and parishes - in an article for the March 2022 parish magazine: Outlook, as well as in last year’s report booklet. That article included a rationale for the payment of Parish Share. This information is available on the parish website and has not changed since. I will not repeat it here.

Diocesan Synod meets three times a year. Our elected members are Keith, our vicar, to the House of Clergy and Christopher Tyrer to the House of Laity. Elections are due this year for the 2024 – 2027 triennium and, after three trienniums, Christopher Tyrer is standing down.

The Bishop of Oxford has a duty to consult the Diocesan Synod on matters of general importance and concern to the diocese and, in turn, Diocesan Synod provides a connection to Deanery Synods and PCCs. Of particular interest is the “Net Zero” work on the diocesan vicarages. There are 450 vicarages in our diocese and the cost of adapting them will cost £30m at today’s prices. The first phase will take us to 2028 and will cost £10m. Mike Hill is our expert on climate issues both in our parish and for Wycombe Deanery Synod.

Safeguarding continues to be a primary concern. After the mediated settlement of the dispute between the Dean of Christ Church and the College (we are unique in having our cathedral as part of Christ Church College in Oxford), safeguarding has taken a major role and a large slice of diocesan resources. Roger Grant is accredited to the diocese and his training sessions are excellent and invaluable for everyone engaged with young and vulnerable people. DBS checking and safeguarding training both remain key components at our parish level.

A Parish Share Review Group met and reported during this year. The proposals were endorsed by Diocesan Synod, subject to ongoing oversight by the Oxford Diocesan Board of Finance and took effect from the 1<sup>st</sup> January 2023. The effect upon our finances can be seen in the accounts.

## **DEANERY**

Keith, our Vicar is the Associate Area Dean with special responsibility for Rural Reform. Our Associate Minister, Helen, also attends meetings, which are held

quarterly. Other members, appointed by the PCC, are Mike Hill, who has undertaken a major environmental portfolio, which he writes about monthly in Outlook, Arthur Johnson and Christopher Tyrer. Meetings are held in churches in the Wycombe Deanery, including our own and the core aims are serving our fellowships, shaping our future, spurring on our friends and sharing the fire.

Whilst it is the forum for reflecting upon the aims and initiatives of the Diocesan Synod and, in turn feeding into them, its particular concern is with local efforts and programmes. There is a Wycombe Deanery Plan 2021-2025, in which the purpose and function of a Deanery Synod is neatly encapsulated: a Deanery is a geographical subdivision between a diocese and a parish. In a deanery, parishes are grouped together so that they can work together to see God's Kingdom come. The deanery is the servant of the parishes. Its stated aim is to be largely invisible to the public, to enable growth, to provide structures that help and to increase faith in what GOD is doing. The focus of that aim is so that our churches can be more visible in their communities, grow and flourish as God intends, be free to do the work of the Kingdom and be encouraged to play their unique part.

This Deanery Plan was the main topic for the January 2023 meeting at Christ Church, Flackwell Heath. It was decided that five elements would be targeted for the next three years: Sharing the Fire by sharing the vision of the deanery across the geographically clustered nature of our deanery; Wellbeing: clergy are well supported both by the diocese and the deanery: now this must be extended to churchwardens and lay ministers; and Rural Forum: Fellowship, Opportunities, Resources, Understanding (every parish is different) and Momentum – there is so much to build upon. The Next Generation and New Congregations conclude the list.

The practical effects of the Diocesan Parish Share Review were considered in a finance update paper for the October Synod. The detailed paper is available for those with an interest in matters financial but the practical effect for our Parish has been an increase of 0.3%, or £208. I have referred above to the detailed exegesis of the justification and necessity of a parish share.

A concluding thought from Caroline Sants: “The Deanery exists not just to be served but to serve. We are a family. By this approach we live out Jesus’ command to love one another. There are difficult and delicate decisions, but we seek out prayerfully and listening carefully in order to discern.”

It's all about people: just like our parish.

Christopher Tyrer  
*Diocesan and Deanery Synod Representative*

# SAFEGUARDING

## 1 Introduction

Safeguarding remains a standing item at PCC meetings.

Our church earnestly seeks to work in line with the Church of England Safeguarding Policy and Practice Guidance. As a matter of good practice, the Parish Safeguarding Officer holds periodic safeguarding meetings, face to face and online with our church leaders, other PSOs, and with members of the safeguarding team for the Oxford Diocese.

## 2 Formal Obligations

Under section 5 of the Safeguarding and Clergy Discipline Measure 2016 all authorised clergy, licensed readers, ministry group leaders and helpers, churchwardens and PCC members must comply with the safeguarding guidance issued by the House of Bishops (this will include both policy and practice guidance).

## 3 Safeguarding Roles

Roger Grant, 07909 960938, roger\_h\_grant@hotmail.com is the current Parish Safeguarding Officer and DBS Recruiter and Verifier. Roger, in addition to PSO Induction training, also provides face-to-face and online training for the Diocese, with regard to the Basic, Foundation and Leadership level courses.

## 4 Safeguarding Policy, Guidance and Information

The Church of England Safeguarding Policy, 'Promoting a Safer Church', was agreed at the Parochial Church Council (PCC) meeting held on 17 October 2022. It is displayed in the entrance to the church and on its website. Additionally, guidance on 'what to do if you have a safeguarding concern' is available on the church website.

## 5 Safeguarding Learning and Development

DBS compliance is reviewed on a regular basis, with a recent agreement with the Vicar that all members of a ministry group, involving working with or including children on a regular basis must undertake a DBS check.

## 6 Safer Recruitment and People Management

The PCC has approved a 'Recruitment of Ex-Offenders' policy and formally adopted the Church of England's 'Safer Recruitment and People Management' process.

## 7 Concerns Raised

Currently there are no recorded safeguarding concerns.

## NEXT STEPS

- In the coming months, the focus of PSO work, particularly in relation to 2 above, is to ensure compliance for all our ministry groups in relation to role descriptions, DBS verification, training requirements, insurance cover and risk assessments.
- Complete a safeguarding audit.
- Continue to make effective use of the electronic Safeguarding Dashboard.

Roger Grant  
*Hughenden Parish Safeguarding Officer*

## ELECTORAL ROLL

There were 169 persons on the Roll as at the close of the APCM on 13<sup>th</sup> March, 2022; and there have been no applications to date.

The Roll is currently being revised; and applications to enrol must be in by Friday, 10<sup>th</sup> March, after which the Roll is closed until the end of the APCM on 26<sup>th</sup> March.

Updates on both additions and deletions will be made at the APCM.

Arthur Johnson  
*Electoral Roll Officer*

# CHILDREN AND YOUTH

## CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE @ ST MICHAEL'S (SUNDAY)

Firstly, a huge thank you to those who give up their time and help each week with Creche, Bubbles and JC Club

My 2022 report stated: 'We are actively looking for two new volunteers to join our children's team, specifically for JC Club (school years 1-6). Please speak to me about this if you are interested.'

A couple of potential JC leaders from the congregation were followed up, however the time wasn't right for them to step up into a JC role.

My 2022 report also stated: 'As a church it is important to offer a warm welcome and appropriate provision for children and young people, every Sunday'.

Without additional JC Club leaders, we needed to rethink our resourcing. Recognising that primary-age children are less able to sit through a Sunday service than secondary-age, we took the difficult, but necessary decision to reallocate leaders:

- Bubbles:** Lucy Rippon, Ester Comunello, Vicky Eaton.  
**JC Club:** Steve and Shelagh Sheppard, Ruth Bailey, Poppy Laight, with help from Richard, Helen Peters and TJ.  
**Youth:** To be filled

From the summer of 2022 our Sunday provision (or not) has been:

<b>1<sup>st</sup> Sunday</b>	All-In worship, with participation encouraged.		
<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday</b>	Bubbles	JC Club	No provision
<b>3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday</b>	Bubbles	JC Club	'youth serve', active in all areas.
<b>4<sup>th</sup> Sunday</b>	Bubbles	JC Club	No provision
<b>(5<sup>th</sup> Sunday)</b>	Bubbles	JC Club	No provision)

As a church we have 13 committed (plus 4-8 fringe) secondary aged youth on our 'books', together with 8 JC Club age. It has been lovely to see the confidence of these children and young people grow in leading the family services: reading, drama, puppets, worship.

Thank you to the youth for leading our 2022 Christingle service, and Christmas Eve carol service. Also thank you to members of Bubbles who read at our Nativity service on Christmas Eve.

To help keep the youth engaged with the church and each other, several socials have been organised throughout the year, including food and games evenings at our home, and outings to RUSH trampoline park. These occasions are always high energy and great fun.

It is lovely to see some of the youth using their gifts on Sundays – in the Worship Band, helping with tech, assisting to prepare and lead in Bubbles and JC Club.

Sadly we are seeing our youth less regularly on a Sunday, which I believe is due to our lack of provision for them. They are more able to sit through a service than primary age children, but they are also old enough to vote with their feet.

Recognising a need, the PCC took the decision to advertise for a children & youth worker. The advert was placed in September 2022, for a part-time post of 12 hours per week, £7,680. The deadline was December 2022, with no applications received.

On a positive note, I am delighted and hugely grateful that a couple from our congregation have offered to get involved in youth provision on a volunteer basis. An initial meeting with the youth and their parents is planned for 12<sup>th</sup> March to see what this might look like.

## **SCHOOL'S WORK IN THE PARISH**

In September 2022 Keith, Helen and TJ resumed regular weekly visits to Great Kingshill School to lead Collective Worship.

A Wycombe Youth for Christ (WYFC) Christmas Unwrapped session was held at St. Michael & All Angels in December for Great Kingshill School year 6. Thank you to Erica from WYFC and to everyone who volunteered their time to facilitate this – through welcoming, refreshments, crafts and technological assistance.

St. Michael & All Angels also hosted to Pipers Corner School and parents for their Pre-Prep and Prep Christingle service and welcomed the Cubs and Scouts for their Christmas service.

We are currently planning to run 'Prayer Space' for Key Stage 1 (reception to year 2) at Great Kingshill School from 27<sup>th</sup>-30<sup>th</sup> March 2023.



## **FINAL THOUGHT**

Please do pray for our fantastic group of children and young people. We are seeking to build our team of willing and enthusiastic leaders from within our congregation. Nevertheless, the loss of a staff member dedicated to children and young people has inevitably made it more difficult to provide for and nurture this group.

Revd. Helen Peters

# **C**OMMUNICATIONS GROUP

This report officially covers the year up to December 2022, but owing to the postponement of an autumn meeting due to Covid, includes some things canvassed at our January meeting.

## **‘TECH’ AT SUNDAY SERVICES**

Although, the techy part of the church tech is beyond the remit of the Communications group, increasingly the admin (rota of operators; format and content etc) is gently supervised from within the group. As far as operators are concerned, we sadly said a partial farewell (on TJ’s transfer) – with grateful thanks – to Richard Jones, who nevertheless has promised to help if needed. We are grateful to Orlando Thompson who has joined the team of Live Streamers, and to John Brooks who has joined the Proclaimers. We still need more help in both areas.

We are glad to report that the new projector has increased the sharpness of delivery in church.

## **CARDS AT FESTIVALS**

Again Easter and Christmas cards were designed by Ben Brice, printed locally, and delivered in an amazingly short time by our congregation, for which grateful thanks. Thanks also go to those who reported a couple of errors in the ‘bundling’ and reported on the numbers required for new-builds within the parish.

Ben’s design for the Christmas card was also used to make posters and web notices for the individual services and co-ordinate with the Outlook Christmas edition.

## **ON-LINE INFORMATION**

The website (under webmaster Ben Brice) has continued to be a prime source of Church information for many, and a recent push to encourage signing up to ChurchSuite revealed that most attenders at church are signed up. This is the best way of informing congregants of changes or news in the church. We hope to reintroduce a regular news bulletin during the coming year.

The church social media channels have been curated this year by Keith with assistance from Cordelia Thompson, until she 'left' for University, and our thanks and good wishes go to her in her new adventure. The group have suggested a new way forward for the 'socials', with the hope that this can be progressed in the next few months.

## **WELCOME SCREEN**

This has long been planned, hit a number of procedural and building issues, but is now up and working and the protocols for content being developed.

## **CHURCH INFORMATION**

The Church Guide (history and building) was updated and printed in church in full colour and is already in its second version, available at the back of church for £1.

As part of TJs training, as part of a project on turning visitors into pilgrims she developed (with the help of Susan Brice) a new leaflet incorporating a prayer trail, which was designed (by Ben) and printed on her behalf.

The 'What To Look For in St Michael & All Angels' leaflet was updated and reprinted.

The group continues to regularly update local publications in Naphill and Hughenden, with News from St Michael & All Angels.

## **FUTURE MATTERS**

Plans are in hand for the revamping of the notice board at the gate (with a design made and costed), to make the information easier to update, easier to attach notices and more secure from adverse wind and weather.

## **SOCIAL EVENTS**

As we emerge into a more 'normal' life, we need to ensure that notification of events is consistently and timeously circulated (Outlook, website, AV, welcome screen, ChurchSuite, pew notice sheets, and posters). Andrew Collard has kindly undertaken to review and clarify the procedure for new users.

## **MEMBERSHIP**

Current membership of the group continues: Ben Brice, Richard Peters, Alison Stacey, Guy Mannerings, Andrew Collard. My thanks go to all for their willingness to contribute to fulfilling our terms of reference, which are set out below for information.

Especial thanks of course to Ben Brice, for his graphics and to Richard Peters for his techiness.

Continued thanks to Susan Brice, responsible for the enhancement of the notice boards, particularly over the Jubilee and Queen Elizabeth Memoriam period and then again at Christmas, featuring the Mission Charities. The amazing Platinum Queen silhouette was of course created by Ben.

## **POSTSCRIPT**

Whilst we have passed on a request for others to consider the use and layout of the back of the Church, could we ask all to remove items which are past their useful (food or leaflets) date: uncollected by their intended recipient, or just should be stored elsewhere?

## **TERMS OF REFERENCE**

The purpose of the group is to support and deliver the Church's mission by improving communications both within the Church congregation and between the Church and the local community. Its objectives are to:

- Engage with those who attend different services, those temporarily or permanently unable to attend services, differing age groups and occasional worshippers
- Engage with those who are yet to hear or respond to the good news about Jesus Christ

- Recognise different forms of communication are required to reach different audiences
- Ensure communications released by the church are professional, consistent, informative, accurate and relevant
- Recognise the group's products reflect a public face of the church and must be developed in line with the church's vision, mission and teachings

Jane Tyrer  
*Group Chair*

# ECO CHURCH

## **CARING FOR GODS CREATION**

The Church of England has recognized the climate emergency and has called all parts of the church to become net zero carbon by 2030. As you can imagine this will be a big challenge but at Hughenden Church we are very keen to move forward on this challenge. We are so fortunate to have a beautiful church in a National Trust park and have enrolled with an 'Eco Church' programme which will bring the care of God's creation to the heart of our Community. We now have an active group of people that includes some young people, we meet regularly to take forward this work.

Eco Church is an award scheme for churches in the UK organized by a charity called 'A Rocha UK'. It provides a framework and a toolkit of resources to support the Church to take practical action on caring for God's earth. It also provides an action programme to support the improvement of biodiversity, address climate change and make a real difference to nature restoration.

The three awards available are Bronze, Silver and Gold and at St Michael & All Angels we are almost at the first level of Bronze. Our church building, as a listed ancient church, provides challenges for some areas, for example double glazing would be almost impossible to be approved for our beautiful stained glass windows and heating an old building of this size presents challenges. However, the resources cover five categories: worship, teaching, buildings, land,

community and global engagement. A survey is carried out to assess what progress needs to be made.

So what progress have we made so far? We are about to have LED lights in the church replacing all the old lighting, we have stopped using disposable cups and now review every event in the light of our Eco Church goals. We also use Fairtrade products where ever possible. We installed swift boxes in the Bell Tower when the repair work took place last year.

The state of nature in the UK makes depressing reading, with the dramatic reduction of once common butterflies, birds and flora and fauna. So our next step is working on the use of our church grounds to become more active in the environmental management of this space and encourage the wildlife.

Christians have become increasingly aware of the environmental crisis and our worship and teaching at times are focused on the environment and God's creation. This is not only at times like Harvest Festival but included in other teaching at the Church.

Every day the churchyard is visited by many people, whether or not they come to church services. Since the start of the pandemic it has become extra important as a place for relaxation, contemplation, prayer or to connect with friends. This is particularly important in our churchyard, where many National Trust visitors visit the church. Last year we had a 'Nature Day' with a trail around the church yard and plan to do this again.

Our plans include creating in our churchyard a restful place for people and wildlife. 'Come with me by yourselves to a quiet place and get some rest' said Jesus in Mark: 6:31. The Quiet Garden Movement nurtures access to outdoor space for prayer and reflection and we are currently looking at which part of the churchyard would best suit this.

We plan to develop some areas where we can manage the grass to create some wild flower areas. We are also at the next meeting looking where we can put some nest boxes and build a 'bee hotel'.

Julia Grant  
*Churchwarden*

Mike Hill  
*Deanery Representative for Eco Church*

[www.ecochurch.arocha.org.uk](http://www.ecochurch.arocha.org.uk)

# MISSION SUPPORT GROUP

The MSG continues to aim to inform, inspire and encourage the St Michael & All Angels church family in the support of Christian mission, near and far. We focus on a different mission each quarter, inviting a visiting speaker to talk on the organisation's work on one Sunday in that period. The focus is introduced by articles in Outlook and on the church website, and by displays on our mission noticeboard. This last 12 months, we have focussed on: Christian Aid in April-June (combined with a Christian Aid Week collection) and Project Possible in July-September. In October-December, in a change of published plan as we were unable to feature New Leaf, we focussed on the 5 nominated charities to benefit from our Christmas collections. Then in the first quarter of 2023, our focus has been Open Doors.

## **FORTHCOMING**

We have a mission focus programme mapped out for the rest of this year. In the quarter April-June we intend to look at Ukraine2Chilterns, a local charity helping Ukrainian refugees housed in the local area. For July-September we will focus on Embrace the Middle East. Then for the last quarter, our focus will be Wycombe Refugee Partnership.

## **CHURCH FUNDING**

In addition to the above, the MSG advises the PCC how to donate the church funds it allocates to wider mission causes. Last year (2022), the £2,000 was donated as follows:

- £800 to Church Mission Society (CMS), to support the Kevin and Jen Cable directly.
- £100 to each speaker's focus charity in 2020, i.e. Growing Hope High Wycombe, Christian Aid, and Project Possible.
- £300 to each of 3 charities, which we decided would be: Ebenezer Children's Centre, HART, and One Can Trust.

## **CHRISTMAS COLLECTIONS**

The MSG also recommends the causes to be supported by our collections over the Christmas period. The total for Christmas 2022 was an amazing £3,048, a

huge bounce back after the Covid years. As a result, £609.60 was sent to each of the 5 nominated charities: Christian Aid Ukraine Appeal, Ukraine2Chilterns, Ebenezer Children's Centre, Wycombe Homeless Connection, and Wycombe Women's Aid. Grateful thanks were received from each charity.

David Tester

## SOCIAL AND OUTREACH

I'm pleased to report that the Social & Outreach Committee achieved its planned outcomes - to re-establish church relationships (following Covid) and start to build more relationships with the community - through leading and participating in a variety of events and activities. My thanks to them for all their enthusiasm.

Responding to the pent-up demand for simply being together, we started off the new annual programme with the simplicity of sharing a hot dog or two after the APCM in March.

In April, Mike Hill and Andrew Collard prepared and led the parish boundary walk. With a more challenging route for the really brave and fit, many took the gentler amble on the medium route, and we had a turnout of around 35 in all. It was lovely to see people from the community and the congregation walking parts of the parish together and this culminated in the final walk down to the church and the building of a cairn and prayers said to commemorate the moment.

In a collaboration across multiple church groups, we held a special service in June to celebrate the much loved and late Queen Elizabeth II. With bunting & bells, gorgeous flowers and the most wonderful display of dedication by Ben Brice, it really was a joyful event. Despite the weather, many people shared laughter, food & drink under the cover of gazebos erected by the team.

The summer BBQ in July brought together a 'bumper crop' with as many as 70 people descending on Walters Ash for some great food and a swim. Thanks to Anu and the team for putting on this popular recurring event.

Late September, we had the Bat Talk & Walk. 57 people came to know more about our flying mammal friends thanks to a team from North Bucks Bat Trust, supported by us. Many were mesmerised as the night was brought to life with the clicks emanating from our bat detectors. Hot dogs were enjoyed to round-off an impressive and informative evening of entertainment.

In October, 50 people joined together for the Parish Weekend organised by Frank Hawkins. The group, which included many new members of our church family, enjoyed getting to know one another better and a speaker from the Oxford Diocese gave the group some thoughtful and challenging input on social justice, which was much appreciated. The weekend was a wonderful combination of fun, socialising, worship, spiritual sustenance and rest, set in the beautiful grounds of High Leigh House near Hoddesdon.

In December, the Hughenden Singers (people from the community including many from our church, all brought together by the joy of singing) put on a “Sing-Along Concert” in the church with some pieces by themselves and the Wycombe Town Band.

2022 finished with the New Year’s Day walk followed by a ‘high tea’ affair kindly hosted by Helen and Richard Peters. The weather was kind, though the ground was somewhat wet and muddy, but a fabulous way to start the new year with fresh air and friendship.

Looking ahead to the programme for 2023, we are establishing the Social & Outreach Support team; a group of people who will support the Committee through their assistance with the activities and events we make happen throughout the year. Thanks to those who have indicated that they will be joining this group.

There is also space for 2-3 more people to join the main Committee. We would ask that those who join us contribute to driving our ‘Social & Outreach’ agenda, through the creation and planning of events, and be willing to lead the occasional event themselves or in partnership with another. If this is of interest, please contact Antony.

For 2023, we are also considering how the Committee will help to realise our Church Vision and as part of that, we are seeking to draw alongside the community in such events as the Harry Potter Quiz and the Hughenden Village Day, in addition to continuing with our own programme.

Finally, we do hope you’ll manage to join us for some, if not all, of our events and we wish to thank the volunteers, and of course our church and community participants, who make it all possible and worthwhile.

Take care and God bless,

Antony Rippon  
*on behalf of the Social & Outreach team*



# MOTHERS' UNION BAPTISM ROTA

Nicola Fairbairn has continued the managing of the Baptism Rota during 2022.

There have been seven baptisms and one Dedication at St Michael & All Angels Church, during 2022, all taking place on a Sunday. The custom of an MU member presenting a baptism cube and card to the younger candidates has continued. We have also welcomed an adult candidate who has received an appropriate adult baptismal gift.

At the service, the parents and Godparents learn of the MU support that is available should the family be in need of it. There is always a note accompanying the card and cube, introducing the church's 'Hughenden Weekly Baby & Toddlers Group' which includes the monthly Tiny Tots Service. A member of the church's Tiny Tots team attends the weekly Toddlers group in the North Room, providing coffee, tea and support of any kind: this has proved to be a very worthwhile PR exercise and undoubtedly encourages some parents to consider having their child baptised at St Michael & All Angels.

I am very grateful to MU representatives who have attended the baptism services, presenting the card and cubes. There is no doubt that this representation and support as part of our outreach programme continues to be appreciated and parents see it as a warm and welcoming gesture.

Nicola Fairbairn

# CHURCH FLOWERS

The 'flower team' has done many arrangements during the year as well as for the main festivals. Our Christmas arrangements were well received and complemented the beautiful 12ft Christmas tree which this year was placed at the left-hand side of the altar. Again, we used evergreen foliage with some flowers, Christmas baubles, cones and gold leaves. Mothering Sunday saw the traditional distribution of daffodils and thanks go to those ladies who spent a considerable time tying the flowers into small bunches.

In June we celebrated the Platinum Jubilee of our dear late Queen Elizabeth II and the church was resplendent with flowers in traditional colours of red, white and blue, as well as some silver and purple decorations which were the official Jubilee colours. A wedding also took place the same weekend and as the bride was a florist, the church was almost bursting with flowers!

We are often looking for foliage to put in the arrangements – there is only so much we can cut from our gardens without making them look denuded! If you have any spare greenery please think of church flowers. Our team is small but dedicated and we would be delighted to welcome more people to carry out this very enjoyable ministry. Please do get in touch if you can help – my telephone number is in Outlook. In the meantime, my grateful thanks to all those who through flowers, continue to make the church look beautiful.

Sylvia Clark

# FRIENDSHIP MORNING

The Friendship Group meets once a month on a Thursday morning throughout the Year.

Unfortunately, the year did not start well for the Friendship Group. The Group was not able to meet up in January 2022 because the Covid restrictions had once again become severe. In February I was advised to limit the numbers attending, to 20 people, but because they were still very anxious about meeting up in a group, only 14 members came. In March we had our first open meeting for 2 years. The numbers fluctuated for the next few months but by June members were feeling more confident about meeting up in a group and so from June to November we had 20 or more people attending. Sadly, in December we had to cancel our meeting as the weather had become too severe.

We felt that after such a long period of isolation for our members, who mostly live on their own, they would have a lot of catching up to do and sure enough there was a real buzz! In April we provided a soup lunch which always goes down well and was very much appreciated. In May and July, we were able to use the Mothers Union Garden which they always enjoy and we all appreciated the warmer weather.

In June Neil Brice, our organist gave us a wonderful recital. We are so lucky to have such a beautiful sounding organ and such an accomplished organist. It was wonderful. In August we had a bring and share lunch – We could have fed an army! It was enjoyed by all. In November the Fish and Chip Annual Lunch was held at Naphill Village Hall. I was on holiday and it was very ably run by the Team headed by Cathryn Carter. That turned out to be the last meeting of the year because of the poor weather in December.

I think the isolation created by the pandemic has possibly contributed to the number of people who have sadly passed away during the year. They are sorely missed. They were Sheila Sharps, Everard Reid, Ian Sullivan, Jean Evans and Ann Way – several of which were quite sudden deaths. They will be sorely missed. Both Janet Cook and Judy Biggs have moved into care homes as they could no longer manage at home. We have welcomed 4 new members to the Friendship Group, bringing our total back up to 28 members. The number of people requiring transport is increasing.

I wish to thank all my helpers who bake scones and cakes each month and who serve everyone at each meeting and who leave the kitchen clean and tidy at

the end of the morning. They are Cathryn, Ann, Alison, Carol and Yvonne. I wish to thank Andrew Cole for helping with the transport and I would like to thank Keith, Helen, TJ and Arthur who have offered so much support.

Penny Austin

## MOTHERS' UNION

This year we were finally able to leave major Covid problems behind us.

Our branch is still committee led, as this seems the best way to apportion the various duties. We have now split the main responsibilities into two categories, with Hughenden matters dealt with by Ann Gee and our M.U. links locally and nationally lead by Norma Clarke.

In 2022, we enjoyed 7 outside speakers who talked about a variety of topics ranging from brickwork and cooking to the work of two local charities.

Our coffee mornings and Jubilee provided opportunities to meet with old and new friends as well as raising significant amounts of money for various charities. We are greatly indebted to our catering team for their sterling efforts.

You will be hearing shortly about the other particular activities within the church organisation which are supported by the Mothers' Union.

The average age of our branch members is 78 years, so it is vital that we encourage our younger friends and acquaintances to consider joining us. Everyone is always welcome at our meetings.

It is always sad to lose old friends and this year we have said our goodbyes to Kay Kennedy, Ann Way and Len Rickards.

Our meetings this year will all be held in the afternoon as an experiment as it seemed sensible to meet and leave in the daylight.

Lastly our thanks go out to the clergy and other church organisations for their continued support throughout the year.

Ann Gee

# PARISH MAGAZINE – OUTLOOK

Our parish magazine continues with what we hope is interesting, thought-provoking, informative and sometimes amusing content, in a layout which we believe is smart and colourful. We have some regular contributors and are very grateful to them for their input which makes for an enjoyable magazine. However, we can never have too many items and would happily receive articles, anecdotes, observations, etc from anyone who would like to submit them.

Once again we entered the National Parish Magazine Awards and came 20<sup>th</sup> out of 450 entries in the A5 category, an even better result than for the previous year (21<sup>st</sup> out of 330). We were delighted and plan to enter again in 2023.

Andrew Cole and his team continue to print the magazine each month; he not only delivers packs of Outlook to distributors, but also posts copies to those who no longer live near Hughenden. Our thanks to them all but especially to Andrew himself.

As editors we get together every few months to exchange ideas and generally discuss all aspects of producing Outlook. We are always happy to receive suggestions to make our magazine as attractive as possible to readers.

Sylvia Clark, Christopher & Jane Tyrer, Susan Brice  
*Editors*

# TINY TOTS

Tiny Tots meets weekly in termtime (usually in North Room, or in the summer months in the MU garden) with a monthly service in church. The service introduces the children to Bible stories and simple songs with piano accompaniment. There is also a craft activity related to the story. On these 'service weeks' there are lavish homemade refreshments: on the other weeks tea/coffee and biscuits are provided, and the 'mums' provide a snack for the children.

Tiny Tots is very much a team affair, and whilst I write this report, I'd like to thank Charlotte Tester and Jane Tyrer for taking the administrative lead in the group and keeping us well communicated – WhatsApp is a wonderful tool to keep us all informed of what's going on!

A huge thank you at the outset too for the rest of the very committed team: Christine Powell, Nicky Fairbairn and Barbara Willson, who take turns attending weekly sessions, providing refreshments, helping set up, clearing away – and providing a listening ear and prayer when appropriate to mums who need that. As we build relationships, we gain trust, and so conversations can go deeper. The welcome and friendship aspect of the group are what makes it particularly special to those who attend.

We have a lovely regular core of families who attend on a weekly basis – and have welcomed many new babies this year, which is always a delight. It is lovely to observe that our regular core of families have grown into a strong friendship group – who meet outside of Tiny Tots for friendship and support.

The group is also welcoming of new people – with many new faces joining us at different times throughout the year.

It has been lovely to resume 'normal' activities following the lifting of meeting limitations post pandemic. Parents who had young babies/children during lockdown have really benefitted – as have their children – from being able to build relationships again. We especially enjoyed meeting in the MU garden after Easter and through the summer where we held our annual Teddy Bear's Picnic in July, with TJ bringing Honey Bear who helped her tell the story. As ever, the Mother's Union provided a lovely spread for our picnic, and the warm weather was an additional bonus.

Revd. Helen Peters



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