



# **A Year in the Life of St Christopher's Church (2023)**

2023 Report and Accounts for the Parochial Church Council  
of St Christopher's Church, Allesley Park and Whoberley



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# Introduction from our Vicar

Welcome to our “Annual Report”, which brings together a summary of the life of St Christopher’s Church, Allesley Park and Whoberley. In these next few pages we try to summarise and celebrate the different activities that make up the life of our church community, although we are aware that we will only be scratching the surface; much of what makes us who we occurs outside of any formal activities - those conversations where we support and pray for each other, our private prayers and acts of kindness that only God knows about. I hope nevertheless that you will find it an encouraging, inspiring and potentially challenging read.

Please pray for the people and activities described, and as you do so, ask yourself, is there something God is calling you to support, join in with, or even begin - in our children’s and youth ministry, intercessions, worship band, or PCC, for example? Is there a way God is calling you to help our church experience and share the love of Jesus with our community?

On a personal note, I write just a few weeks before I embark on a three month sabbatical – a generous gift from the Diocese of Coventry, in which I hope to be renewed in body, mind and spirit, and to take the time to renew my walk with Jesus. Although I’m very excited by this opportunity, I know I will miss worshipping with you, my church family, each week. I’m profoundly grateful for all of you who work so hard to make this church community so special – for our brilliant curate, Andy, who will be leaving us soon, and our ordinand, Ann, who has been such a blessing since her arrival in September, and the host of people who are mentioned in this report. Thank you!

Thank you, above all to our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, the source of our hope, in whose hands we are eternally secure.

*Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen. (Ephesians 3:20-21)*

Yours in Christ



Rev Andy March

Vicar of St Christopher’s Church, Allesley Park and Whoberley

# Aims and Purposes

St Christopher's Parochial Church Council (PCC) has the responsibility of cooperating with the incumbent, the Reverend Andy March, 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 church building of St Christopher's, Allesley Park and Whoberley, with its integral church hall, kitchen, and meeting room complex.

## Objectives and Activities



St Christopher's Church is situated at the very heart of our community, in Allesley Park and Whoberley, next to a community school, opposite shops and businesses and we want this to be reflected in the way we are as a church; we aim to provide a warm welcome for everyone in our community, from the very oldest to the youngest, so that everyone may be able to become part of this church family.

The PCC maintains an overview of the worshipping life of our church. Our services and worship put faith into practice through prayer and scripture, music and taking communion together.

In planning and reviewing our activities we are guided by our vision statement: **"God's family; loving like Jesus."**



We are called to be a growing family that seeks to build God's kingdom in Allesley Park and Whoberley by ...

### Growing in God

- **Walking** with God together - *We are people on a journey to be more like Jesus.*
- **Worshipping** with our whole lives - *Our worship enables us to meet with God and equips us to follow Jesus every day.*

### Loving each other

- **Welcoming, accepting** and **caring** for one another - *We are a loving and caring family where everyone can belong.*

### Serving our community

- **Working** with others to build God's kingdom - *We establish partnerships with others in the community to bring God's blessing.*

### Sharing good news

- **Witnessing** in word and action - *We reach out to our community with God's love and are confident to share our faith.*

To facilitate this work, it is important that we maintain the fabric of the church building and grounds of St. Christopher's, for the sake of the church as well as the wider community, for which the building is an essential asset.

# Achievements and Performance

## Growing in God

- **Walking** with God together - *We are people on a journey to be more like Jesus.*
- **Worshipping** with our whole lives - *Our worship enables us to meet with God and equips us to follow Jesus every day.*

## Worship and Prayer

2023 was the first year that felt normal after the disruption of the COVID pandemic and we have been blessed by our worshipping life together.

The PCC is keen to offer a range of services during the week and over the course of the year that our community find both beneficial and spiritually fulfilling. Our main **Sunday morning 10am service** is informal in its style of worship, attracts a wide range of ages, with children and families being an integral part of our life together.



We have **All Age Worship** on the first Sunday of the month; the other Sundays are Morning Celebration (twice a month) and Holy Communion (once a month). We have a creche and children's groups for all services, apart from All Age Worship.



We have also enjoyed returning to our occasional **Cafe Church** services for special occasions, such as Advent Sunday and Mothering Sunday.

Some of the highlights of our year –

**April**

Packed out “Messy Easter” craft time and all age service on Good Friday



**July**

Youth Takeover for our prizegiving service



**October**

All Age service for Harvest with St John’s CofE Academy and guest speaker, John White (Global Care)





## Christmas with St Christopher's Church ...

**Christmas Concert** with **Rob Halligan** and his band, and support from **Cara Greenway**



**Carols by Candlelight** with our scratch choir, led by **Emma Beasley**



**Christmas Eve All Age Celebration** with Nativity, when Santa met Jesus!



**Carol Singing** around the Parish



We're hugely blessed by a large number of people who help sustain our Sunday morning gatherings, through being part of the sung worship team; delivering Bible readings and prayers of intercession; supporting the livestream or overseeing the sound; offering prayer ministry; leading or helping our children's and youth ministry; serving refreshments after the service; organising rotas, and lots more!



If you would like to join any of these teams, then please let us know - it's so rewarding!

Thank you to ...

- *Warden/Set-up Team* - Tom Borrás and Stuart Hart.
- *Sung Worship/Sound Team* - Emma Beasley, James Bowman-Powell, Kace Chiu,

Susan Borrás, Amey Hanesworth, Anthony Randall, Andy, Alicia, Isabelle March, David Summers, Cara and Laura Greenway, Stuart Hart, Jacky Wong and Christine Lo.

- *Preaching/Service Leading and planning team* – Andy March, Andy Clasper, Ann McCabe, Nic Thorpe
- *Readers* - Heather Beasley, Barbara Bell, Veera Bhadra, Pauline Blunt, Kace Chiu, Martin Ellis, Diane Harrison, Ginny Heath, Louise Hicks, Andy Houston, Margaret Knipe, Rosemary Lavens, David Summers, Nic Thorpe
- *Intercessors* - Pauline Blunt, Tom Borrás, Diane Harrison, Ginny Heath, Louise Hicks, Andy Houston, Rosemary Lavens, Nic Thorpe
- *The Prayer Ministry team* – Tom Borrás, Ginny Heath, Andy Houston, Marie Ellis, Barbara Bell, Sandra and Stan Aldridge
- *Coffee & Tea Team* - Tina Veasey, Dianne Harrison, Ginny Heath, Margaret Knipe, Amey Hanesworth, Daniel Coupe, Isabelle March, Ian and Rosemary Lavens, Heather Beasley.
- *Chalice* – Nic Thorpe, Stan Aldridge, Pauline Blunt, Heather Beasley, Tom Borrás, Stuart Hart, Louise Hicks



One of the features of our church are the flower arrangements that make the church look so beautiful throughout the year and particularly at Christmas and Easter time. We'd like to thank our talented team, led by Sylvia Cliff: Diane Harrison, Pauline Blunt and Kay Law. We would appreciate donations towards the cost of these arrangements.

Our weekly **Wednesday morning I am Holy Communion service** provides an important space for more traditional, reflective worship, with the formal liturgy and hymns being a vital part of this and meets the needs of the older members of our church community. We're very grateful to Tom Borrás who sets up for the

services, David Summers who plays the piano or organ for our hymns, and Sylvia Cliff and Pauline Blunt who have led non-communion services.

## **Teaching Themes**

We aim for our preaching to equip people to live out their faith in everyday life. With this in mind during 2023 our preaching covered themes such as – *The Sermon on the Mount; The Creed; Any Questions; Isaiah – Promised One*. In the autumn we our All Age Services focused on the five marks of mission. From December we began to follow the Church of England Lectionary, which we will do throughout 2024.

## **Electoral Roll and Attendance**

All are welcome to attend our regular services. At present there are 85 on the Church Electoral Roll, 28 of whom are not resident within the parish. 5 names were added during the year and 1 was removed either through death or because they moved away from the parish. The average weekly attendance, counted during October, was 65 - including 46 adults and 19 children on Sundays plus 12 at our Midweek Holy Communion service. An additional 6 people would join us online. Once again, our Christmas Eve All Age service was attended by a total of 130 people, which was one of the largest congregations of the year.

In addition to our weekly services, we hold a monthly evening service, Pursuit, which is more informal with a longer time of worship and the opportunity to pray for one another. This was attended by an average of 15 in 2023.

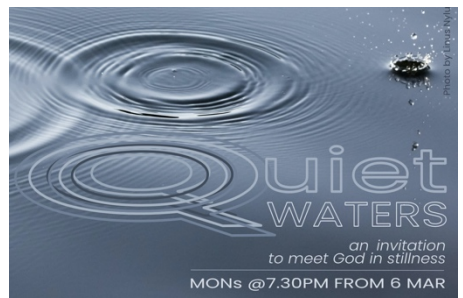
Our average weekly in person attendance for the whole of 2023 was a total of 68 (14 children and 54 adults), which compares to 64 in 2022 (12 children and 52 adults).

We also regularly joined in a monthly prayer meeting with Allesley Park Evangelical Church (APEC), which has been attended by an average of 7 from our church.

## **Quiet Waters: An Invitation to meet God in stillness**

In March 2023, we launched a new expression of worship - Quiet Waters.

*Is your peace disturbed by busyness, stress and anxiety? How can you restore peace and*



*reconnect with God's presence? We invite you to join us to explore God's presence through meditation, contemplation and mindfulness.*

We meet in church at 7.30pm on the first and third Mondays of each month. We are so grateful to Andy Houston and Stan Aldridge for developing the vision for and careful steering of this area of our worship, which is attended by around 15 people each time.

## **Life Groups**

Life Group is the name we give to those small groups that meet during the week, as a regular part of the life of St. Christopher's. We believe that **following Jesus happens best when we're in community**. And, that **community is best fostered in smaller groups**, where people of all ages, stages and walks of life can become friends, have fun and grow. So, for those who want to become more part of the family at St. Christopher's, joining a small group is a great way to do it.

We call small groups at St. Christopher's 'Life Groups' because we want them to be about:

- **sharing life** with one another;
- **finding life in its fulness** (as Jesus spoke about, see John 10.10); and
- **being 'thrust out into the life-stream of the world'** (to quote John V. Taylor), in other words to get involved, together, in the life of the communities we live our lives in.

Life Groups are, therefore, about **welcome, nurture** and **reaching out** to others. We aim to have three types: groups for those who want to follow a course of **STUDY** together, for those who want to share in an **ACTIVITY** together, and groups for those who just want to be **COMMUNITY** together.

During 2023 three life groups met regularly and they embraced the themes of Study, Activity and Community. Two groups, Puzzling Times and Together at 2 are reported in detail elsewhere in this report. The third group, the Tuesday evening life group, focused on fellowship, nurture, worship and prayer and met in person and sometimes online. Thanks to Susan and Tom Borrás and Sandra and Stan Aldridge who led this group. It's so encouraging that the three life groups involve about 40 of our church members.

If you would like to join a Life Group or have an idea for a Life Group that you would like to launch, please chat with Stan Aldridge or Andy March.

# Our work with Children & Youth



## Children & Youth on Sundays

We want our children and youth to feel a full part of our Church family and so we look to make them central to everything we do. We design our Sunday mornings around helping them to connect to God.

We run three age-specific groups: *Pathfinders*, for those in secondary school, *Explorers* for those in primary, and *Scramblers* for preschoolers. At least once a month we make our main Sunday service an All Age gathering. In *Pathfinders* a highlight has been doing Youth Alpha together, which has led to some

fantastic conversations and a wonderful time of praying for each other as part of the Youth Alpha Holy Spirit Day.

We are so grateful to the amazing team that has made this possible this year: Marie and Martin Ellis, Katy Coupe, Caroline Minett, Mary Abamwa, Andy Clasper, Andy March, Matt Wood, Liz March, Lucy Lambert, Rosemary Lavens, Laura Greenway, Ginny Heath.

## St Chris Youth / Youth Cell

St Chris Youth - for young people aged 11-18 – met every Sunday evening during term time, from 7:15-8:45 pm, in the church hall until the end of July; and due to the loss of a couple of members and changing team, started to meet as Youth Cell in the vicarage for a more in-depth time of discipleship. During the Autumn term we started watching first series of *The Chosen* together, and had great times of discussion, Bible study and prayer afterwards.

Thanks to our team - Cara Greenway, Andy March, and Ann McCabe, and Steph, who led St Chris Youth until the autumn. Would you like to join the team who can lead this fantastic group of young people?

# Loving each other

Welcoming, accepting and caring for one another - *We are a loving and caring family where everyone can belong.*



Our church family is a body made up of many parts. That's the way it's supposed to be. At St. Christopher's we are big fans of what Archbishop Rowan Williams has to say: that the church is God's pilot project for a new humanity. The way we come together, walk together, live together can show the world a redefined family, a new way of life. One part of that is that we look to welcome, accept and care for each other.

## Regular expressions of family

We know that there are people in our community who could become lonely and isolated. We want to have a constantly open invitation to them to be part of the sense of family there is at St. Christopher's; and we are delighted about the opportunity to do this through our regular groups: **Together at 2**, the **Puzzling Times** jigsaw puzzle group; and our **Church Fellowship**.

## Together at 2

"Together at 11" became "Together at 2" early in 2023, when a group of people made enquiries about using the Church Hall regularly for meetings on a Thursday morning. "Together at 11" agreed to move to 2.00 p.m. temporarily while negotiations were carried out.

When plans for the new group fell through, "Together at 2" held a ballot of all its members, when it was decided by a good majority that we would prefer to keep meeting at 2.00 p.m. This has worked out well, particularly during the Spring and Summer months, during which we have been on several outings for tea and cakes

in the afternoon. We started out by going to the Village Cafe in Berkswell, where we booked the inner room for ourselves, and had a delightful afternoon. After that we got enthusiastic and went a little further afield. Favourites were Melbicks Garden Centre, Coleshill, Oak Farm, Balsall Common, The Lavender Farm, Bubbenhall and The Charterhouse, London Road, Coventry. We hope to start our outings again as soon as the weather warms up.



When meeting in the Church Hall, we start with coffee, tea and cakes at 2.00 p.m., followed by entertainment. We have held quizzes, played Bingo and used Table Talk (where we pick a subject at random and everyone is invited to express their opinion). We have had two very much enjoyed visits from Chris Ford, who played the keyboard for us and invited us to sing-a-long.

Chris played music from the shows, and just before Christmas he entertained us with popular Christmas songs.

Our membership is still growing rather slowly (we average around 16) and we would be delighted to welcome new people, especially from the wider community. Thanks go to Sylvia Cliff and Nat Patterson, who choose the cakes and make the tea and coffee, Rosemary Lavens who keeps the Accounts, and Ian Lavens who is the best washer-upper ever.

We mustn't forget Tom Borrás, who sorts out the tables for us before and after each meeting. We couldn't manage without him.

*Report by Pauline Blunt*

## **Church Fellowship**

Another year has gone by! Members of the Church Fellowship have enjoyed eleven sociable meetings between February and December, with up to twenty members in attendance.

We were able to share food and have some friendly rivalry on quiz nights. Easter and Christmas were opportunities for us to share in Holy Communion and Carols in church, followed of course by hot cross buns and mince pies respectively. Our March get-together found us having a 'Film night' when we were educated about the life of a German missionary and evangelist, George Muller, who was responsible for setting up a number of orphanages and Christian schools in Bristol that housed and educated thousands of children.

We had visits from three guest speakers. In July, Simon from Warwickshire Wildlife Trust at Brandon Marsh came to tell us how we could make our gardens more friendly for the ever-dwindling numbers of hedgehogs.

In August we received a return visit from Barry James of the Midland Air Museum who told us about the history of the museum and their current projects, supported by many volunteers across all age ranges.

In November, Helen Barlow from the Dog's Trust told us about the Rehoming Centre at Honiley where up to 180 dogs are cared for at any one time, and the extra pressures put on their services since lockdown.

It is becoming harder to find organisations who don't charge large amounts of money to supply a speaker as we only have a small pot of money to use. This is one reason why it has been decided to increase the subscription for this year, to help cover increasing costs.

The small committee will endeavour to keep the Fellowship alive, and would welcome new members and offers of assistance.

*Report by Kay Law*

## **Puzzling Times**

Twelve people have enjoyed another year of friendship and brain-training by completing many jigsaws of various subjects from 250 to 500 pieces over about 46 weeks with a break for holidays and Christmas/New Year.



The group now has a library of about thirty large piece puzzles to help those with not-so-nimble fingers. Any donations of large piece puzzles would be gratefully received for us to ring the changes.

We also have a bit of a 'swap shop' with puzzles completed at home brought to the group and then often passed on for someone else to complete.

Members of the group have been very generous with their time by washing up and also providing delicious treats, sometimes home made, to accompany our drinks.



We have donated some funds to Church to help with heating and lighting as we are grateful to have the use of warm comfortable surroundings each week.

The time spent in other people's company has been particularly valued by those who live on their own and new friendships continue to grow.

We are looking forward to another year of Puzzling Times.

*Report by Kay Law*

We also know how isolating parenthood can be. We will say more about our **Christopher Robin** toddlers group in the next section.

## **Pastoral Care**

We aim to be a community that cares for one another. We want to be alongside one another in the tough stuff of life, because we believe our God does the same. We have various informal ways of sharing news of the concerns and needs of our little family and we look to respond as we can.

We believe in a God who is still active in the world and in our lives. And, so, one of our responses is to pray for each other. We have a **St. Christopher's Prayer Chain** group on Facebook as well as a more public prayer list.

We also offer prayer ministry, seeking God's guidance, his strengthening and his healing. Our prayer ministry team is available to pray with people every Sunday. Praying together, people find comfort, strength, encouragement, hope and God's loving, healing presence.

We have recently formed a Pastoral Care team that responds to the needs of those within our church. If you would like to join this, then please speak to Andy or Pauline Blunt.

# Serving our community

*Working with others to build God's kingdom - We establish partnerships with others in the community to bring God's blessing.*

## Christopher Robin Playgroup



- Christopher Robin is a stay and play playgroup for children 0-4 and their parents and carers running each week during term time on Tuesday afternoons.
- On average we have between 12 and 20 families attend each week.
- We aim to offer a wide variety of fun and creative play and activities, an interactive Tots Church session and refreshments. Most importantly we try to offer a really warm welcome and support for the adults who come, facilitate friendships and to share a message of truth about Jesus' love through our care and through the Tots Church session.
- A massive thank you to Caroline and the rest of the team who took on the running of the group when Liz stepped back from co-ordinating the group last year. Liz is now involved with running the group again.
- Our team of regular volunteers is currently Liz, Caroline, Mark, Cara, Diane, Tina B and Ann. Their commitment and enthusiasm is wonderful and allows us not to just do the practical jobs but spend time caring for people.



## Please Pray

- For deeper relationships with families, especially those struggling, and opportunities to support them emotionally.
- For opportunities to share the good news of Christ with families.
- For inspiration as to whether there is more we could do to build on our existing ministry and how to better support young families in the area. Ideas and thoughts are welcome.



## Christmas Fair

At the end of November 2023, we held our Christmas Fair and were delighted to welcome hundreds of people from our community. We raised over £2100. Thanks to Katy Coupe and their fantastic team who came together to make these events happen. Particular thanks are due to Mat Hicks who worked tirelessly in the kitchen.



## Community Christmas

*Reducing isolation in Allesley Park*

- Once again, St Christopher and Allesley Park Community Centre have been involved in a joint outreach project.
- 60 Christmas gift bags were delivered to older people within the parish.
- In January a Tea Party was held at the Community centre.
- 36 locals attended for a jolly good afternoon.
- Volunteers from the community centre and St Christopher's ran the event and chatted with the guests.





they are loved by God.

### Please Pray

- For the recipients of the gift bags to be drawn further into the community.
- For future opportunities for joint working with the Community Centre.
- For the Allesley Park Community Centre to continue to flourish.
- For all those involved to know

A special note of thanks to Lynn at the community centre for all of her amazing effort.



## Church Hall

We want our church building to be available to our community as much as possible, and for it to be a space where all feel welcome and at home. This was the reason for the extensive refurbishment of the church hall in 2019. Currently, 9 community groups regularly use the hall from Drama Tots and Jujitsu, to Jigsaw, Zumba and Tea Dance groups. The church hall was also used for 36 parties in the year, and there were 8 one-off bookings. There is scope for more regular users, which would be a benefit to the community and to us financially, as Hall Hire provides a much-needed income.



Various minor repairs have been carried out during the year, including the hinges to the inner front door that were failing to close properly. There are still several 'opportunities' that we will hopefully be able to address in 2024, including sealing the hall floor to make it more resilient, and energy saving lighting.

A new signage display has been installed in the hall. This displays changing images of events and attractions at the church, for both churchgoers and anyone renting the hall for parties or other private events.

A defibrillator was kindly donated to the church, which we have installed on the outside of the hall in a position that is always publicly accessible. There is only one other defibrillator on the estate that is publicly accessible 24/7 (at the golf pavilion in the park), so this new addition will provide a more readily accessible, potentially lifesaving service for the local community.

Thanks to Jo and Garry Cooke for the hard work they put in as caretakers and cleaners of the church hall, and for sorting access for community users of the hall.

Rental from hall hire brings in a significant income to our church - £16,772 in 2023 compared to £15,014 in 2022. This compares to £21,805 in 2018 and £18,380 in 2019 - the last full years not affected by the COVID pandemic. We would love to see the hall used even more by the wider community and are aware that in order to maximise the revenue we receive from hall rental, it needs to be as attractive a space as possible. We would like to form a small team to address this. Please speak to Andy if you're interested in helping.

### **Building Development Plans**

Our church building has been a tremendous blessing to us and the wider community – it has been a venue for many gatherings of families and community groups over the years. But we have long held a desire for it to be even more of a blessing. This was the reason for the hall refurbishment in 2019, which itself was part of a phased project of building improvement, which we hope will culminate in the building of a new entrance foyer. At the end of the year we commissioned architects to draw some visualisations of what could be an incredibly welcoming space for the community, comprising a new entrance foyer improving access to the whole church building and café area, giving a new seating area where people can gather, relax and grab a coffee.





*Can you help?*

We would love to form a team of people who can help this vision become a reality. We will need to raise money as well as support from the wider community, through community surveys, fundraising events and grants applications. Speak to Andy, Ann or Stuart if you're interested.

# The wider community

## Schools

St John's Church of England Academy is our church school. Headteacher, Mrs Laura Stevenson, writes,



“St John's Church of England Academy are proud of the strong links we have with St Christopher's Church. Whether through sharing collective worship, the creation of faith-based extra-curricular opportunities for children or spiritual guidance for staff, the established relationship with the church enables us to offer the best experiences for our children. Our vision, 'I Will Shine' comes from Matthew's Gospel chapter 5 verse 16, which says, 'In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.' The vision was created to inspire and guide all children to be proud of their own uniqueness and understand the impact that their lives can have on the people and the world around them. Linked with our vision are six Christian values which teach



us how to be the best we can be: Drive, Character, Teamwork, Stewardship, Identity and Excellence. All of these are linked to passages from the Bible and were carefully chosen to inspire and guide our school community as we work together in our journeys of faith and learning. We are proud to be an International Cross of Nails School (ICONS) and St John's was presented with our own Cross of Nails in a ceremony at Coventry Cathedral in March 2023. The recognition of St John's as an ICONS school was due to the way we teach peace and reconciliation, both within school and encouraging children to have a positive impact on their community and the world beyond. We will always work hard to show care, love and respect to ourselves and those around us."



As part of his role as Vicar of St Christopher's Church, Andy March serves as an Ex-Officio Foundation Governor at St John's Church of England Academy, our church school. Andy's role has mainly focused on seeking to be a support to the headteacher and staff, meeting monthly with the headteacher, as well as leading worship for the whole school community through assemblies once a month and hosting the school at Harvest, Christmas and Easter.



Andy also welcomes class visits to the church and supports the RE provision, coming in for occasional lessons. Andy Clasper has also supported the school with RE lessons, assemblies and school services. Members of the church attend the school and support it in a number of ways – including through the new weekly "World Changers" after school club – more on that below!

## **ALIVE – June 2023**

(from <https://alivefamilyworship.com/news/alive-2023-highlights/>)



On the 15th and 16th June 2023, 9,000 children, teachers and church leaders attended ALIVE 2023, a massive praise party organised by the Coventry Diocesan Board of Education, Imagine Ministries and Feed the Hungry.

Taking place at the NAEC, Stoneleigh Park, ALIVE 2023 comprised four worship concerts and two mass picnics over the two days! Key Stage 2 children from the family of 76 Church of England primary schools in the Diocese of Coventry were treated to live performances from a variety of contributors. ...

Together, the DBE, Imagine Ministries and Feed the Hungry recruited over 100 staff, contractors and volunteers to help ensure the day was a success. Many volunteers were local clergy and church members.

April Gold, Coventry Diocesan Director of Education says:

*Many of our children attend very small schools, and the Covid pandemic meant that their experience of worship had been quite 2 dimensional on a screen! I wanted them to experience what it was like to worship God with thousands of others, to create a memory to take with them in life.*

*As a DBE we are passionate about local schools partnering with their parish Churches to inspire the next generation to become Kingdom Imagineers. ALIVE 2023 challenged children of all faiths and none to be emboldened and work together to challenge the adults around them to dream big and change the world.*

Shell Perris, Director of Imagine Ministries and ALIVE 2023 Event Manager, Host and Performer says:

*ALIVE 2023 was, by far, the biggest gathering of children praising God I have ever seen! Children, teachers and church leaders were fully engaged with every aspect of the event – the music, the dancing, the teaching, times of personal reflection and prayer, the picnic – and they were all having so much fun. It just goes to show that the church of Jesus Christ is very much ALIVE and children are leading the way! ...!*

The Right Reverend Dr Christopher Cocksworth, Bishop of Coventry, says:

*The Church of England's vision for education is that children and young people will have 'life in all its fulness'. ALIVE 2023 gave thousands of children a chance to sing and dance, listen, laugh and learn, to be loud and to be silent, and discover the fulness of life that comes from being world changers – people who have caught the vision of the sort of world of peace, kindness and justice that Jesus saw, and who decide to work with God for a better world for all.*



## **Uniformed Groups**

Our uniformed groups for have joined us for Parade Services at Palm Sunday and Harvest. These groups are also attended and supported by members of our church community and PCC.

## **Supporting Good Causes**

Another key way we serve our community is through financial giving, either through hosting fundraisers or giving money from the church. In 2023, as well as supporting the **Love Christmas** appeal (see above), we supported **Coventry City Mission** through

their Giving Tree campaign, providing unwrapped new gifts for children; held a special offering for the **Syrian Orthodox Christian School** in Bethlehem and gave donations to **Hope Coventry**.

# Sharing good news

Witnessing in word and action - *We reach out to our community with God's love and are confident to share our faith.*

## Youth Cafe



*A space for teenagers to meet.*

- Youth café runs on Tuesdays in term time between 3:30 and 5:15.
- This year we have seen 32 young people join us for sessions.
- On an average week between 10 and 15 young people join us for chat, craft, games, pool and table tennis.
- Teenagers in school years 7-9 are invited to just drop in.
- The initiative was set up originally in partnership with Youth for Christ, we really valued the input of Steph Pring who helped us to get started.
- Since October the team has decided to run Youth Café internally and delighted that we can pay Cara Greenway to be a regular team member and build relationships with the young people.
- Since September a thought for the day slot has been added to the sessions, these times help us care for the young people pastorally and to share the good news of Christ.

*Please pray.*

- For growth in this ministry.
- For Cara as she develops as a leader.
- For passionate volunteers to come forward to help support this outreach work.

A special note of thanks to Steph Pring who helped us make Youth Café a success.

## World Changers (at St John's School)



### *A new worshipping community.*

- World Changers is an after-school session started in September by Ann McCabe and is currently supported by Andy March and Cara Greenway.
- Each week between 30 and 35 primary school children attend.
- A session involves a bible story, prayers, singing, craft and games.
- The sessions are designed to disciple children following on from Alive 2023, a diocesan wide praise event for all Church of England Primary School Children held last summer.
- It is a really special time seeing these children grow in their relationship with Jesus.



### *Please pray*

- For continued blessings.
- For the wonderful work St Johns School are doing within the community.
- For passionate volunteers to come forward and support this outreach work.
- For us to see children leading their parents to faith.



A special note of thanks to Tina Veasey who helped us to get the group established during the autumn term.

# Financial Review

Total receipts on unrestricted funds were £72,632 of which £44,210 was unrestricted voluntary donations, and a further £8,490 was from Gift Aid. Income of £4,933 was also received and is detailed in the Financial Statements. We were blessed by these donations which, in light of the increased use of on-line streaming services, allowed us to further update our audio/visual facilities to improve the congregation's experience. In addition, the return to a full Christmas Fair made over £2,000.

The planned giving, through Parish Giving Scheme, envelopes and standing orders decreased by 11%. Total income, including tax recovered was down by 13% compared with last year.

£50,000 was spent from unrestricted funds to provide the Christian ministry from St. Christopher's Church, comprising our Parish Share contribution, the same as last year and largely provides the stipends and housing for the clergy. The sum that the churches in the deanery have to find is shared between the churches, and worked out annually by a deanery meeting of clergy and treasurers. It is expected that churches who have a full-time clergy would contribute the full cost of this, which last year was calculated as £62,040. Due to the fall in income during 2023, we have proposed a reduction in our Parish Share contribution to £45,000 for 2024.

Through diligent control of our expenditure throughout the year, we reduced our unrestricted expenditure by 15.5%. However, the net result for the year was an excess of payments over receipts of £4,041 on unrestricted funds. Adding bank and deposit balances brought forward at the beginning of the year, the balances carried forward at 31st December on unrestricted funds totalled £5,207.

## Reserves Policy

It is PCC policy to try to maintain a balance on unrestricted funds equating to between 6 and 8 weeks of unrestricted payments - equivalent to between £8,847 and £11,796.

It is held to smooth out fluctuations in cash flow and to meet emergencies. The balance of £5,207 held in unrestricted funds at the year-end falls significantly below the range defined by our reserves policy. It is the PCC's hope to increase this over time, as and when income from planned giving and hall income recovers.

# **Structure, Governance Management & Team**

The method of appointment of PCC members is set out in the Church Representation Rules. At St. Christopher's Church the membership of the PCC consists of the incumbent (our vicar), churchwardens, our curate, and members elected by those members of the congregation who are on the electoral roll of the church. All those who attend our services / members of the congregation are encouraged to register on the Electoral Roll and stand for election to the PCC. The PCC members are responsible for making decisions on all matters of general concern and importance to the parish including deciding on how the funds of the PCC are to be spent.

The full PCC met six times during the year. From July these meetings were divided into those meetings focusing on Strategic Governance (finance and buildings, etc), and those focusing on Mission and Ministry (children's work, life groups, outreach, etc. with an emphasis on our vision areas). This was born from the desire to make our meetings as effective as possible.

## **Administrative information**

St. Christopher's Church is situated in Allesley Park and Whoberley, Coventry. It is part of the Diocese of Coventry within the Church of England. The correspondence address is 173 Winsford Avenue, Coventry CV5 9NJ. The PCC is a body corporate (PCC Powers Measure 1956, Church Representation Rules 2006) and a registered charity with the Charity Commission.

## **Deanery Synod**

St Christopher's Church is part of Coventry South deanery, formed of 11 parishes. Three members of the PCC sit on the deanery synod. This provides the PCC with an important link between the parish and the wider structures of the church. See Appendix Five for the deanery synod report, which details the discussions that took place in Deanery Synod meetings since February 2023.

## **PCC Membership**

PCC members who have served at any time from 1st January 2023 until the date this report was approved are:

Ex Officio members:

- Incumbent: The Reverend Andy March (Chairman)
- Curate: The Reverend Andy Clasper
- Church Warden: Mr Stuart Hart

Deanery Synod Representatives:

- Mrs Heather Beasley (also Safeguarding Officer)
- Mrs Louise Hicks (also Electoral Roll Officer)

Elected members:

- Mr Stan Aldridge (Member of Finance Committee)
- Mrs Barbara Bell
- Mrs Katy Coupe
- Mrs Marie Ellis
- Mr Graham Foxwell (Treasurer)
- Mx Amey Hanesworth
- Mr Thomas Hanesworth
- Mr Andrew Houston
- Mrs Rosemary Lavens (PCC Secretary)
- Mrs Tina Veasey (Planned Giving Secretary)

## **Ministry Leaders & Team**

In Ephesians 2 St Paul writes,

*“You belong to God’s family. You are like a building that was built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets. Christ Jesus himself is the most important stone in that building, and that whole building is joined together in Christ. He makes it grow and become a holy temple in the Lord. And in Christ you, too, are being built together ... into a place where God lives through the Spirit.”* (vv.19-22)

This image is at the heart of our vision, “God’s family; loving like Jesus”, reflecting the reality that, as with a building, there are many different, equally essential, parts that come together that makes the whole. We simply couldn’t function without everyone playing their part in the church’s life as you do. We are richly blessed by the variety within our community and the different gifts you offer.



If you would like to get more involved in the life of St. Christopher's in the year ahead then do look at the Team page of our website for inspiration. For now, though, we want to thank the team for all you have done this year to make our little church family the lively and vibrant community it is.

In this report, we have already mentioned a whole host of people who have led and supported all we have done this year. In addition, to this already long list, I would only need add a big mention to our faithful, stalwart churchwarden, Stuart Hart and Tom Borrás, who have both worked so tirelessly on our behalf this year. And, a big thank you to Graham Foxwell who has helped us all to understand the church's accounts and its finances, who will be stepping down from his role after a decade of brilliant service.

Finally, I want to pay tribute to the colleagues I have had the privilege of ministering with over the year – Andy Clasper, our funny, imaginative curate – we'll miss him terribly when he moves on; and Ann McCabe, our brilliant ordinand who has been a fantastic part of the team since September.



A good number of us were delighted to be present at the induction service of former curate, Carolyn Powell, who began as Associate Minister with a focus on building new monastic community at Holy Trinity, Coventry, in August. We wish her well in this new adventure.

Although, it would also be remiss of us not to also mention Vikki Booth, our excellent, unfussy administrator, who left her role at the end of the year, and Christine Lo who stepped in to replace her on an interim basis from January until the beginning of April.

And, of course, you. As the apostle Paul puts it so appropriately:  
*'You are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it.'* (1 Cor 12.27)

*Report approved by the PCC on 27<sup>th</sup> March 2024 and signed on their behalf by the Reverend Andy March (PCC chairman)*

## Appendix One – Vicar’s Report

I hope you’ve had the chance to look at our annual report. As you’ll see, there’s so much going on in the life of our church; so much for us to celebrate. I won’t go over everything that’s mentioned there, because it’d take too long, but I do want to highlight some things especially for those who haven’t had the chance to read it yet.

Firstly, I want to express my gratitude to God and to everyone for the flourishing of this church community in the past year – week by week there is a sense of the Spirit at work within us as we worship and learn from God’s word. So many of you contribute in various ways to make this happen – from the worship band diligently and skilfully led by Emma and James who work so hard to equip others to grow as musicians and worshippers; to those who lead our prayers of intercessions with sensitivity and wisdom; those who read the Word of God out loud and bring it to life; those who serve to give our children and young people the best experience possible on a Sunday morning; those who serve in the kitchen; the flower arrangers who beautify this space so skilfully; those who keep the place clean and tidy; our budding team of preachers; the list could go on. I look forward so much to our Sunday gatherings knowing that we are giving our best to serve the Lord and enable people to worship him. I’ve also been hugely encouraged by the way our congregation has grown especially in the past few months. To be a congregation of all ages spread fairly evenly across the generations, to regularly have over 15 children in church on a Sunday, to be a church with a good mixture of men and women worshipping together – none of this should be taken for granted. It demonstrates that we are a healthy church – and I’ve loved the fact that we’re a multinational church too – it’s wonderful to have people from as far apart as Hong Kong and Brazil as part of our family. There is something beautiful about this – and it gives us a taste of heaven. In Revelation 7, St John is given a vision:

*I looked, and there before me was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and before the Lamb. They were wearing white robes and were holding palm branches in their hands. And they cried out in a loud voice:*

*“Salvation belongs to our God, who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb.”,*

We’re not a great multitude, but more of this vision is happening – especially now that our church building is being used for worship by a Tamil speaking Pentecostal congregation – to hear them worship on a Sunday afternoon is wonderful – and one of the ways that we see the declaration on our foundation stone being fulfilled – this will be a house of prayer for all nations.

Outside of Sunday worship it has been good to witness the recent relaunch of our social team, headed up by Margaret Knipe and Tina Barnett. We had a lovely bread and soup lunch in March and next weekend we look forward to the Auction of Promises, which should be a wonderful evening – and more events through the year. Although those head up the team, many more work to make these things happen, faithfully serving behind the scenes.

Through the week we offer support and fellowship through our daytime groups like Together at 2 and the Jigsaw Puzzle group; and Life Groups enable us to grow in faith and fellowship. This isn't just for those who are part of the church – all are welcome. We provide this space for young people in Youth Café. Again, Christopher Robin continues to be an area of strength in our outreach, being a lifeline for so many mums who find support and strength from us and from each other – and they join in worship through Tots Church. Wonderfully, we've begun to see some families coming to church on Sunday having experienced a welcome through Christopher Robin first.

Our Christmas Fair again brought in a significant number of people from the wider community, and Community Christmas initiative demonstrated the love of Jesus in a practical way to some of the most vulnerable and struggling people in the parish at Christmas time; over 40 people were blessed in this way.

Our relationship with our church school, St John's School has grown from strength to strength. I myself spend a significant amount of time with the school, through delivering assemblies, lessons, and supporting the headteacher. Since September, following the Alive event at Stoneleigh we have had the wonderful World Changers after school club, which is basically church for them – and it's wonderful to lead this with Ann and Cara, and Tina in the autumn term.

As you know, I will be on sabbatical over the late Spring and early Summer. My focus during this time will be on Jesus – seeking to return to my first love, learning from him and encountering him and I will spend time in Scripture and in worship, using the Gospels for my inspiration. I'll be using a wonderful tool, "A Blended Harmony of the Gospels", which weaves the four Gospels into one chronological narrative. This has been divided into 40 daily readings. I'll work through them over the summer, reading and writing and worshipping in response to this.

But, I'd like this to be something we do together as a church – a journey we go on together, even if I'm apart from you over this time. I'd like to invite you to buy your own copy of the Blended Harmony of the Gospels – you can buy it on kindle, or there are paperback versions available in church for £15 – and then over the summer, I'd like to invite you to take that 40 day journey with Jesus. Then, when

we go on our weekend away together at the end of September, as well as experiencing teaching from Graham Archer, I will share some of what I've sensed God teaching me, and we will give space to share with each other. This could be fruitful for the whole church family. Together we can recapture our first love for Jesus, the Saviour and redeemer of the world – and as we do so, I honestly believe that it could have a transformative impact not only on us but on our community. I look forward to discovering what God has in store for us in the future as we continue to be a family on a mission, loving the people God has called us to serve here.

Looking back on this past year, I can genuinely see that we are a community living out our vision of being “God’s family; loving like Jesus”. I want to pay tribute to you all who play your part in making this such a special community to be part of – all of you who were named in the annual report. I want to pay special tribute to Stuart as church warden and Tom, who does so much behind the scenes – thank you; to Graham who is stepping down as church treasurer after a decade of faithful service – we would have been in a tremendous pickle without you; to my colleagues – Andy, who has been a wonderful curate in the past couple of years, and a friend too – we will miss you a great deal; and finally, Ann, who has been such a gift since your arrival as our ordinand in September.

The final thanks, of course, goes to God, the source of our life and hope –

*“Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, and into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade.”*  
(1 Peter 1:3-4)

Rev Andy March  
April 2024

# **Appendix Two – PCC Report**

## Parish Church of St Christopher, Allesley Park and Whoberley

### **25th January 2023**

- Finance. Closing of financial year 2022. £9247 in reserves. Gas and electricity prices 300% higher than last year. Anticipated support from government and grant from diocese will reduce bills. Plate donations £20-£30 per week after relaunch. A Budget Management team to be appointed. Hall rates need to be increased from April 2023.
- Growing in God. Relaunch of Life Groups in February. Quiet Waters to be started.
  - Serving our Community. Positive feedback from Christmas Services.
- Christmas Fair was a success but lower numbers than previous years. Simplify selling of raffle tickets online.
  - Fundraising ideas – a strawberry tea and Summer fair.
- Safeguarding. PCC agreement that the Safeguarding Officer and incumbents are aware of the tasks they need to undertake of a known offender is part of the congregation. PCC approved groups on our premises that work with children or vulnerable adults. PCC support to promote training of our volunteers.
  - Sharing good news. Alpha Course Spring/Summer 2023.
- Heather Beasley stepped down as trustee for Martha Flint and Allesley General Charities. Louise agreed to take on role.

### **22nd March 2023**

- Preparation for APCM – Annual reports.
- PCC Membership vacancies as Irene, James and Emma stepping down.
  - Gift Day – May 14th 2023. Andy Clasper to lead this.
- Finance Update. Finance Team Meeting suggested project to uplift hall income.
  - Safeguarding. Permission of parents re live streaming involving children. Volunteers need the Church of England Safeguarding Handbook and to complete training.
    - Nexus financial Appeal Maybe donate £250.
- Giving Tree. Darren Burgess to speak on April 30th. Receive toys on December 3rd.
  - Loving Christmas. Gifts for isolated adults and the elderly.
  - Easter Week – dates given for various events.
    - Alpha Course - 26th April at 7.30pm.
- King's Coronation – May 7th- All age service and possibly a Parade Service.
  - Electoral Roll. Barbara stepping down and Louise taking over.

*I started the role as Secretary after the APCM in 2023. Therefore, my first meeting on the role was on May 2023.*

### **24th May 2023**

- Officers appointed were Graham Foxwell – Treasurer, Tina Veasey – Planned Giving, Stuart Hart – Church Warden.
  - Graham shared update on finances. A review of Gift Day was given.
- Feedback on Easter Services. Early service was quiet -20 attended. The Good Friday Messy Church and Service were well attended.
  - Possible Church weekend for 2024 was suggested.
- Church Fellowship. It was felt the Church Fellowship had the potential to reach beyond the congregation and bring people in.

### **19th July 2023**

- Weekend away was discussed for September 2024 and a variety of venues were suggested.
- It was decided to continue with the individual cups at the Communion Service.
  - Reshaping the PCC meetings. It was agreed to focus individual meetings on certain subjects. Safeguarding would be on the agenda at all six meetings.
  - Coventry YFC were changing their focus and from December 3rd the Sunday Evening Youth would not be led by YFC.
- Finances Government support for gas and electricity has virtually stopped since March.
  - Safeguarding. Members need to complete a Domestic Violence Course.
- Amey asked for financial help with a Youth Growing Leadership Course. This was agreed.
  - The meeting was followed by a social evening.

### **27th September 2023**

#### **Strategic Governance**

- Youth are meeting in the Vicarage on Sunday evening.
- Finances. Graham explained new contract quotes from October.
  - Hall rents to be increased.
  - Extension to building. Andy has met with architects.
- Giving Tree. Donations of toys to be made at the Toy Service on December 3rd.
  - Love Christmas. Elderly to be supported, working with the community.
- Dates for Christmas Services and events were given. There would be no morning service on Christmas Eve. Rob Halligan concert on December 15th.
  - Safeguarding. Reminder of Domestic Violence training.
  - Christmas Fair – November 25th. Katy reported that planning was going well. New decorations need to be bought. A community Christmas tree to be donated.
    - Church has been offered a defibrillator.

- An intruder in the kitchen had stolen cash.
- Andy notified he would be having a sabbatical from the end of April until the middle of August 2024.

## **22nd November 2023**

### ***Mission and Ministry***

- Safeguarding documents for the coming year were approved.
- Finance. Income had dropped as a result of pledges not given, costs beyond forecast and people leaving church. A second appeal to be sent out to the congregation.
- Church Weekend – Cloverley Hall booked for September 27th-29th 2024.
- The rest of the evening was taken up with group discussion led by Andy Clasper. Four groups discussed Growing in God, Loving each other, Sharing good news and Serving the Community.

Rosemary Lavens – PCC Secretary since May 2023.

# Appendix Three – Safeguarding Report

The Diocese of Coventry is committed to the safeguarding, care and nurture of everyone within our church community.

We believe that making our churches safe for all is everyone's responsibility. (taken from the Coventry Diocese safeguarding website) 2024.

The safeguarding officer has worked on embedding the safer recruitment & peoples management (SRPM) that was implemented last year. Moving through the coming year they will ensuring that volunteers get supervision that is laid down in the SRPM.

The safeguarding officer will also continue to ensure DBS checks and training are up to date for the volunteers within Church.

There has been a focus this year, from the Church of England on domestic violence and volunteers and PCC have been asked to complete an awareness from the Church of England training course.

Currently St. Christopher's has 18 volunteers that are required to have a DBS check and complete safeguarding training. We also have 3 people going through the recruitment process.

If there is anyone that would like to read about safeguarding and the role the church plays both for Children and Vulnerable adults then please talk to me or go to the Coventry diocese website, read more or undertake the training! It is informative. You may not be involved in volunteering but safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. It is not just the responsibility of those in volunteer roles. **Please speak to the safeguarding officer or clergy if you have any concerns.**

If anyone would like to support the safeguarding officer particularly around admin tasks, please speak to me.

Heather Beasley  
Safeguarding officer for St. Christopher's Church 2024



# Appendix Four – Financial Accounts

## 2023

### Parochial Church Council of St Christopher

#### Allesley Park and Whoberley

#### Balance Sheet at 31 December 2023



	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total 2023 £	Total 2022 £
<b>FIXED ASSETS</b>				
Tangible	-	-	-	-
Investment	-	-	-	-
<b>Total fixed assets</b>	-	-	-	-
<b>CURRENT ASSETS</b>				
Stock	-	-	-	-
Short-term deposits (Skipton)	628	7,324	7,951	7,721
Cash at bank and in hand	4,579	-	4,579	8,972
<b>Total current assets</b>	5,207	7,324	12,530	16,693
<b>DEBTORS</b>				
Due within one year	-	-	-	-
<b>LIABILITIES</b>				
Due within one year	-	-	-	-
<b>TOTAL NET ASSETS</b>				
	5,207	7,324	12,530	16,693
<b>CHURCH FUNDS</b>				
Reserves (General Fund)	425		425	7,375
Designated Funds				
- Building Development Fund	-	-	-	-
- Charitable Giving Fund	1,000	-	1,000	-
- Family Worker Fund	499	1,501	2,000	499
- Maintenance Fund	952	-	952	( 202 )
- Mission & Ministry Fund	330	-	330	( 426 )
- Parish Share (future years)	2,000	-	2,000	2,000
Total Designated Funds	4,781	1,501	6,282	1,872
Restricted Funds				
- Building Fund	-	140	140	500
- Christopher Robin Fund	-	135	135	34
- Church Weekend Fund	-	64	64	64
- Education Fund	-	2,325	2,325	3,628
- Special Projects Fund	-	356	356	150
- Welfare Fund	-	2,804	2,804	3,071
Total Restricted Funds	-	5,824	5,824	7,446
	5,207	7,324	12,530	16,693

Two pages of Notes form part of these accounts.

Approved by the PCC and signed on its behalf by Rev'd A March (PCC Chair).

Signed:  Date: 12/3/24

# Parochial Church Council of St Christopher

## Allesley Park and Whoberley

### Statement Of Financial Activities

#### for the year ending 31 December 2023



	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total 2023 £	Total 2022 £
<b>INCOMING RESOURCES</b>				
Voluntary income	52,700	2,824	<b>55,524</b>	66,897
Activities for generating funds	2,697	-	<b>2,697</b>	3,103
Income from investments	231	-	<b>231</b>	111
Income from church activities	17,004	2,109	<b>19,113</b>	19,440
<b>Total incoming resources</b>	<b>72,632</b>	<b>4,933</b>	<b>77,565</b>	<b>89,551</b>
<b>RESOURCES EXPENDED</b>				
Cost of generating voluntary income	100	-	<b>100</b>	100
Fund-raising costs	522	-	<b>522</b>	5,060
Church activities	75,851	5,055	<b>80,905</b>	91,406
Governance costs	200	-	<b>200</b>	200
<b>Total resources expended</b>	<b>76,673</b>	<b>5,055</b>	<b>81,727</b>	<b>96,766</b>
<b>NET MOVEMENT OF FUNDS</b>				
	<b>( 4,041 )</b>	<b>( 122 )</b>	<b>( 4,163 )</b>	<b>( 7,215 )</b>
BALANCES B/FWD 1 JANUARY 2023	9,247	7,446	<b>16,693</b>	
BALANCES C/FWD 31 DECEMBER 2023	5,207	7,324	<b>12,530</b>	

Two pages of Notes form part of these accounts.

**Parochial Church Council of St Christopher**  
**Allesley Park and Whoberley**  
**Notes to the Financial Statements**  
**for the year ending 31 December 2023**



INCOMING RESOURCES	Fund	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total 2023 £	Total 2022 £
<b>Voluntary income</b>					
Church collections (open plate)	General	1,507	-	1,507	1,106
Donations for general use	General	5,945	-	5,945	7,379
Gift Aid	General	8,490	-	8,490	8,930
Planned Giving	General	35,288	-	35,288	39,773
Running costs (energy support)	General	1,470	-	1,470	-
Income - Restricted Funds:					
Building Fund	Restricted	-	125	125	500
Christopher Robin Fund	Restricted	-	104	104	263
Church Weekend Fund	Restricted	-	-	-	4,504
Education Fund	Restricted	-	145	145	54
Special Projects - Audio/Visual Improvements	Restricted	-	-	-	1,108
Welfare Funds	Restricted	-	-	-	100
Grants - Restricted Funds:					
Education Fund	Restricted	-	2,100	2,100	1,600
Special Projects - Love Christmas 2022	Restricted	-	-	-	1,230
Welfare Funds	Restricted	-	350	350	350
		52,700	2,824	55,524	66,897
<b>Activities for generating funds</b>					
Fundraising for general use	General	2,697	-	2,697	3,103
		2,697	-	2,697	3,103
<b>Income from investments</b>					
Interest from Savings Account (Skipton)	General	231	-	231	111
		231	-	231	111
<b>Income from church activities</b>					
Administration	General	17	-	17	-
Clergy expenses (vicar and curate)	General	36	-	36	3
Fees	General	50	-	50	1,276
Hall Rents	General	16,773	-	16,773	15,122
Wages (administrator, cleaner and organist)	General	10	-	10	131
Charitable Giving	Designated	-	-	-	65
Maintenance Fund	Designated	-	-	-	600
Mission & Ministry Fund	Designated	118	-	118	506
Collections for good causes (In and Out)	Restricted	-	639	639	1,070
Diocese Energy Support	Restricted	-	1,470	1,470	-
Fees (In and Out)	Restricted	-	-	-	667
		17,004	2,109	19,113	19,440
<b>Total incoming resources</b>		72,632	4,933	77,565	89,551

**Parochial Church Council of St Christopher**  
**Allesley Park and Whoberley**  
**Notes to the Financial Statements**  
**for the year ending 31 December 2023**



RESOURCES EXPENDED	Fund	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total 2023	Total 2022
		Funds £	Funds £		
<b>Cost of generating voluntary income</b>					
Administration	General	50	-	50	50
Wages of administrator	General	50	-	50	50
		100	-	100	100
<b>Fund-raising costs</b>					
Fundraising for general use	General	522	-	522	5,060
		522	-	522	5,060
<b>Church activities</b>					
Administration	General	1,272	-	1,272	1,368
Clergy expenses (vicar and curate)	General	668	-	668	1,669
Donations for general use	General	80	-	80	-
Fees	General	167	-	167	264
Fundraising for general use	General	-	-	-	358
Hall Rents	General	-	-	-	108
HouseKeeping (church, hall and grounds):	General	65	-	65	164
Items used in church services	General	729	-	729	1,636
Parish Share - Cost of Minister	General	50,000	-	50,000	50,000
Running costs (utility bills, rent etc.)	General	9,659	-	9,659	5,107
Wages (administrator, cleaner and organist)	General	10,875	-	10,875	10,488
Expenditure from designated funds:					
Charitable Giving	Designated	-	-	-	1,065
Family Worker Fund	Designated	1,501	-	1,501	1,501
Maintenance Fund	Designated	48	-	48	2,802
Mission & Ministry Fund	Designated	788	-	788	1,932
Expenditure from restricted funds:					
Building Fund	Restricted	-	485	485	-
Christopher Robin Fund	Restricted	-	3	3	230
Church Weekend	Restricted	-	-	-	4,801
Diocese Energy Support	Restricted	-	1,470	1,470	-
Education Fund	Restricted	-	2,047	2,047	2,103
Special Projects - Audio/Visual Improvements	Restricted	-	-	-	2,227
Special Projects - Diamond Blessing	Restricted	-	411	411	-
Special Projects - Love Christmas 2022	Restricted	-	-	-	1,547
Special Projects - Love Christmas 2022 - Grants	Restricted	-	-	-	300
Collections for good causes (In and Out)	Restricted	-	639	639	1,070
Fees (In and Out)	Restricted	-	-	-	667
		75,851	5,055	80,905	91,406
<b>Governance costs</b>					
Administration for Annual Meeting and PCC	General	100	-	100	100
Wages of administrator	General	100	-	100	100
		200	-	200	200
<b>Total resources expended</b>		76,673	5,055	81,727	96,766
<b>Net Movement</b>		<b>(4,041)</b>	<b>(122)</b>	<b>(4,163)</b>	<b>(7,215)</b>

# Appendix Five – Planned Giving Update

Last May, we held our 2023 St. Christopher’s Giving Sunday. We were delighted with the excellent response. In November, however, a number of circumstances meant that we needed to ask for even greater generosity and so we issued a second appeal; and, again, the response was most encouraging. Our PCC has now signed off our year-end accounts and I am delighted to say that we were able to meet all our financial commitments. We want to thank you for your amazing support.

I am so incredibly grateful for all the ways the St. Christopher’s family gives support: to each other, to our activities, and to the community of Allesley Park. Financial support to the church has always been both faithful and generous, and both our May Giving Sunday and our follow-up appeal in November were in keeping. As the table shows, our November appeal led to one-off gifts of £2317 and regular giving commitments which will be worth £1440 in the year ahead. In total, with Gift Aid, this will provide **£4500** for our work over the 12 months from the appeal date.

	<b>Per month</b>	<b>Additional value per year</b>
Pledged increases in regular giving	+ £120	£1440
One-off gifts	N/A	£2317
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>£3757 (or c£4500 inc. Gift Aid)</b>

In November we were predicting ending the year with an £11,000 deficit. Through cost savings, however, in the last months of 2023, we were able to reduce this to £9,745. Your response to the November appeal meant this shortfall was reduced further, to a level that we could meet from our reserves. We finished 2023 with more than £1,000 in our general reserve: less than we would like, and still challenging, but your generosity means we begin the year in better shape and full of hope.

If you require any additional information or would value any support regarding giving to the St. Christopher’s family, then do not hesitate to get in touch. As always you can contact us via the church office, on [admin@stchristopher.org.uk](mailto:admin@stchristopher.org.uk). In the meantime, we simply wanted to thank you so much for the response you made. Giving by the church family is the principal source of St. Christopher’s income. Without your generosity we could not continue to function. I pray that our God, who can never be outdone in generosity, would bless you richly in the coming year. Thank you for all you bring to St Christopher’s, we love and appreciate you!

# Appendix Six – Deanery Synod Report

There have been a few meetings of the Deanery Synod since the last meeting was reported on (Thursday 9th February 2023).

Meetings open with prayer and worship and close with prayer.

**Wednesday 17th May 2023** (St John's Church, Kenilworth, 19:30 - 21:30), led by Andrew Attwood

- Opening reading (Song of Songs 2: 8-13) and worship.
- All members were asked to write down old things that we are thankful for, and new things that are giving us hope.
- Parish presentation for St John's given by Andrew Attwood.
- Three parish presentations for prayer, each parish was given 5 minutes to present their battles, blessings and breakthroughs.
  - Halsey by Anita White, Churchwarden
  - St Martin's Finham by Matt Taylor, Vicar
  - St James's Fletchamstead by Tim Pollard.
- Prayer for the four parishes that made presentations.
  - All members gathered into four groups to pray for the four different churches.
  - We all listened to God for 2 minutes about any of the churches and then shared thoughts for the churches, anyone that had thoughts that needed sharing could send them through to David Hammond.
  - Prayer for each other, whatever you want God to do for you.
- Local business.
  - Reconstitution on the Deanery Mission and Pastoral Committees, now to be called Deanery Leadership Team.
  - Approval of the minutes of the last meeting.
  - Kenilworth and Coventry South are both in need of a treasurer, Coventry South also need a Deanery Environmental Representative.
  - Matters arising - should the Diocese help Finham solve the problem of insurance? The insurance company is investigating, it is all very new and so they are not sure how to deal with it.
  - No other questions or queries.
  - Any questions about the Environment Newsletter should be sent before the next meeting.
  - Elections for Deanery Synod lay reps to be held at APCMs this year.
- Presentation by Sarah Ashleby to talk about **Alive 2023** this is a 2 day event to be run by Coventry Diocese Board of Education at Stoneleigh Park. 9000

children and staff were expected to attend from years 3 - 6 from Church of England primary schools in the Diocese.

**Monday 9th October 2023** (St James's Church, Styvechale, 19:30 - 21:30), led by Rev Josh Maynard

- Opening worship.
- Parish presentation for St James's given by Rev Josh Grimwood and Josh Lumwagi the Youth Worker.
- Three parish presentations for prayer, each parish was given 5 minutes to present their battles, blessings and breakthroughs.
  - St Mark Magdalen, Chapelfields by Rev Edward Le Brun Powell
  - Hatton by Donna Bothamley
  - Ashow by Audrey Rowberry.
- Prayer for the four parishes that made presentations.
- Local business.
  - Approval of the minutes of the last meeting.
  - Paper from Diocesan Synod and one about the Deanery Leadership Team from David had been circulated. The committees will report back to Synod. This was agreed unanimously.
- A presentation from Rob Harrison - Director of Ministry and Leadership Lay Ministry.
  - How do you understand Lay Ministry in your Church? What does it look like?
  - Lay means people. Release, recognise and resource.
  - Rob would like to know what we have so that he can offer training and support.
  - Training pathways created to support:
    - Community or pastoral
    - Bereavement
    - Children/youth/families
    - Leading worship
    - Evangelism/preaching
  - Pathways can be started at any stage.
  - New Worshipping Communities Taster Day 21st October.

There was another meeting held on Tuesday 5th March at St John the Baptist, Berkswell. However the minutes for this meeting had not been provided before this report was created.

The original Deanery Synod minutes are available from Louise Hicks by request.



# St Christopher's Church

Allesley Park and Whoberley

*"God's family; loving like Jesus"*

<b>GROWING</b> in God	<b>LOVING</b> each other	<b>SERVING</b> our community	<b>SHARING</b> good news
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THE CHURCH  
OF ENGLAND