



# A Year in the Life of St Christopher's Church (2024)

2024 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”; a summary of the life of St Christopher’s Church, Allesley Park and Whoberley, where we celebrate the different activities that make up the life of our church community, although this report only scratches the surface; much of what makes us who we are occurs outside of any formal activities - 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, youth and families’ ministry, community 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 look back on a year in which I was blessed by the gift of a sabbatical during the spring and summer, during which it was a wrench to leave you behind, yet I deeply appreciated the time and space to learn the value of responding to God’s invitation to “Be still and know that I am God” (Psalm 46). If you’d like to read more of my reflections on the significance of my sabbatical, then you can do so [here](#). I’m profoundly grateful for all those who stepped up in this time to enable me to take this opportunity; above all, for Stuart our churchwarden, who is stepping down from this role after years of unstinting service, and our ordinand, Ann, who has been a superb colleague and who will be greatly missed by us all when she moves on to serve her curacy this summer.

Thank you to all of you who work so hard to make this church community so special – many are mentioned in this report; others, also, are unsung heroes.

It would be remiss of me to fail to mention the grief that we have all felt as a church at the losses of people dear to us; former churchwarden, Pauline Blunt’s death in April was a real shock, and in September, we suffered the bereavement of Irene Foxwell and Nat Patterson in such a short space of time. While we mourn their passing, we are not without hope, for we know that they are now reunited with their Lord whom they loved and served.

As we approach Easter time, may we fix our eyes on him who walks with us through the valley of the shadow of death and whose goodness and love follows us all the days of our lives, and we’ll dwell in the house of the Lord forever (Psalm 23).

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



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.

**All Age Worship** takes place 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 our occasional **Cafe Church** services for special occasions, such as Advent Sunday and Mothering Sunday.

Some of the highlights of our year –

## March

Holy Week – including Palm Sunday parade; Maundy Thursday Agape meal; Messy Easter on Good Friday and All Age Service on Easter Sunday



## April

Café Church Annual Celebration and farewell to our curate, Revd Andy Clasper



## September

### Church Weekend Away at Cloverley Hall

On a beautiful weekend many of us gathered as a church family for worship, fellowship, and teaching. We're very grateful to Graham Archer for leading our sessions so insightfully and inspiring us to grow as people of prayer, and to Rob and Ruth from Children Worldwide for leading our children's ministry that weekend – the children had so much fun! A huge thank you to Louise Hicks and Amey Hanesworth for all their hard work in enabling this weekend to take place!



## December

### Messy Christmas, Carols by Candlelight and All Age Christmas Special



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.
- *Tom's team of helpers* – Ian, York, Jayne, George, Henry, Evelyn, Christopher and Emily
- *Sung Worship/Sound Team* - Emma Beasley, James Bowman-Powell, Susan Borrás, Kace Chiu, Cara Greenway, Amey Hanesworth, Stuart Hart, Christine Lo, Alicia March, Andy March, Isabelle March, Anthony Randall, David Summers, and Jacky Wong
- *Preaching/Service Leading and planning team* – Andy March, Ann McCabe, Nic Thorpe, Kace Chiu, Amey Hanesworth
- *Readers* - Heather Beasley, Barbara Bell, Veera Bhadra, Lisa Borrás, Kace Chiu, Martin Ellis, Diane Harrisson, Ginny Heath, Louise Hicks, Andy Houston, Margaret Knipe, Rosemary Lavens, David Summers, Nic Thorpe
- *Intercessors* - Tom Borrás, Diane Harrisson, Louise Hicks, Andy Houston, Rosemary Lavens, Nic Thorpe
- *The Prayer Ministry team* – Sandra and Stan Aldridge, Barbara Bell, Tom Borrás, Marie Ellis, Andy Houston and Ginny Heath.
- *Coffee & Tea Team* - Tina Barnett, Heather Beasley, Susan Borrás, Daniel Coupe, Katy Coupe, Amey Hanesworth, Dianne Harrison, Ginny Heath, Jenny Houston, Margaret Knipe, Ian and Rosemary Lavens, Emma Man, Alicia March, Isabelle March
- *Chalice* – Nic Thorpe, Stan Aldridge, 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 Harrisson, and Kay Law. We would appreciate donations towards the cost of these arrangements.

Our weekly **Wednesday morning 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. In November we returned to our pre-Covid pattern of beginning our service at 10:30am and following this with a time of coffee, cake and conversation, and it has been wonderful to spend this time together. All are welcome to join us for this precious time of worship and fellowship together.

## **Electoral Roll and Attendance**

All are welcome to attend our regular services. As of 2024, there were 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 61 - including 41 adults and 20 children on Sundays plus 10 at our Midweek Holy Communion service. An additional 6 people would join us online. Our Christmas services were well attended this year – Messy Christmas, a new service, was attended by over 80 people, Carols by Candlelight saw an increase in attendance to 74 (up from 54 in 2023), and our Christmas Eve All Age service was attended by a total of 115 people (slightly lower than in 2023, possibly due to families having been to Messy Christmas just a couple of days earlier). Although it's hard to be precise, over 200 people attended our Christmas services.

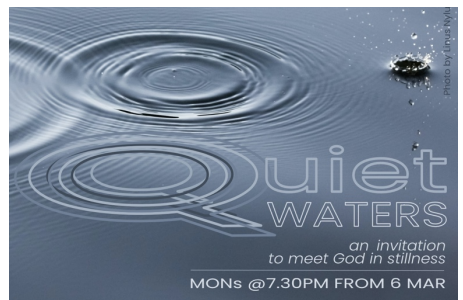
Our average weekly in person attendance for the whole of 2024 was a total of 68 (15 children and 53 adults), which compares to 68 in 2023 (14 children and 54 adults).

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 8 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.

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 2024 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 35 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 and Families

## 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.

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, Liz March, Lucy Lambert, Rosemary Lavens, Laura Greenway, Tina Barnett, Jo Harris, and Louise Hicks.

## Messy Church

- After a very successful Messy Easter and Messy Christmas seeing around 40 children attending each session. The decision was made to increase the amount of sessions run throughout the year.
- Messy Church is now looking to run a session for Lent, Easter, Summer, Harvest/All Saints and Christmas
- It is a fabulous outreach to the community and popular with church members.
- Thank you to all those who get involved by volunteering, with craft tables, refreshments or welcome.



Please pray for -

- Continued opportunity to reach the community and to show God's love for them
- Leadership once Ann leaves us for her curacy in summer 2025
- connections to grow with those attending so they might join us more regularly for worship.

We are looking to build on our work with children, young people, and families, by appointing a fulltime Children, Youth and Families' Minister. Please pray for this crucial appointment to be made.



# 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 2 meets fortnightly on a Thursday, mainly at 2pm, apart from the odd times when we change for a lunchtime get togethers! We hope to start our outings again as soon as the weather warms up.



We have a regular group of 18 people and are always happy to greet new people from the community and beyond.

The cost of each meeting is £2 pp which pays for the refreshments and the entertainment from outside of our group. Also, we have been able to make a generous donation to the church from our funds which we were very pleased to be able to do and was very well received.

When meeting in the Church Hall, we start with coffee, tea and cakes at 2 p.m., followed by entertainment, which varies each meeting and has included:



A variety of Games:

Wooden Games to play in teams... Bingo... Quizzes... Beetle Drive and on a couple of afternoons - Sing along with Chris.



Meal times:

Hot dogs followed by Bread pudding & custard, in November.

Christmas savoury buffet followed by Christmas pudding & custard....with a gift of a Christmas stocking. Plus music played by Marcus....this event was also attended by a few people from Hope Coventry.

Fish & Chip lunch.

Valentine's celebration - not all have a valentine of their own ...but this was to share our love for one another :-)) with cake, chocolate & Bucks Fizz.

Mother's Day Special.

Thank you to everyone who helps from making the drinks, buying/baking & serving the cakes etc, washing up, collecting the money, and tidying up after the events. We mustn't forget Tom Borrás, who sorts out the tables for us before and after each meeting, we couldn't manage without him.

Events coming up:

History of Antiques.

Easter Egg Hunt Games.

*Report by Margaret Knipe*

## Church Fellowship

Another year has gone by!

Members of the Church Fellowship have enjoyed ten sociable meetings between February and December, with up to twenty members and a number of visitors attending.

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.

We had visits from five guest speakers.

In April, a lady from Cats Protection gave us lots of information about their work, especially a really important service to find feral cats and neuter them, a service also available for people with pet cats. Many of us did not realise how quickly cats can procreate!

In May we had a talk from a lady who does 'Ghost Walks' in the City. She told us a very interesting factual tale about the last woman to be hanged in Coventry. August was time for a lady from the 'Weaver's Cottage' in Spon End to tell us its history and encourage us to visit on one of their Open Days.

In September we had an interesting talk on the History of the War Memorial Park.

The Park is supported by a Friends group who help to influence development of the Park for the benefit of everyone.

In November Andy March presented a talk on his sabbatical, giving us an insight in to the life of an Anglican clergyman.

We were very well fed at our meeting in June by Angela McCann and Max Patterson who produced a tasty and filling Afternoon Tea which was enjoyed by members and visitors alike.

It is becoming harder to find organisations who don't charge large amounts of money to supply a speaker but we have a full diary for the coming year.

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

*Report by Kay Law*

## **Puzzling Times**

Up to fourteen people have enjoyed another year of friendship and 'brain-training' by completing many jigsaws of various subjects from 250 to 500 pieces.

We unfortunately recently lost one of our founder members – John Reading – who will be sadly missed for his smiley face and dry sense of humour.

The group's library of about thirty large piece puzzles has been refreshed, with the Charity shops benefitting from our 'cast offs', giving others the opportunity to enjoy them. However, any donations of large piece puzzles would be gratefully received.

Our 'swap shop' is still going, meaning that the puzzling carries on in several homes in between our meetings.

We have continued to donate a small amount of funds to help with heating and lighting as we are grateful to have the use of warm comfortable surroundings each week.

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 were joined by some young puzzlers in half term week who brought their own puzzles to work on. Henry and George put us to shame with their skills as dissectologists.

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 are aware that much of our pastoral care relies on informal relationships, rather than an organised structure. We would like to form a Pastoral Care team to respond to the needs of those within our church. If you would like to join this, then please speak to Andy.

# 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 playgroup continues to run each week. Attendance has dropped a little in recent years but we usually have between 10 and 15 families each week.
- We continue to have many members who attend regularly for a year or two and often have new families join us as well.
- We focus on providing a variety of fun activities, an interactive Tots Church session and a warm welcome. We regularly see friendships grow because of the group and we try to share a message of truth about Jesus' love through our care and through the Tots Church session.
- We have had one social event for parents this year, which was a meal at a local restaurant which was well attended and well enjoyed, particularly by parents who are finding life hard.



- Caroline, Ann and Liz run the group together as Liz has stepped back a little since returning to work. Libbi joined our team as a long-standing member of the group, and Mark, Cara, Diane and Tina B continue to support. Their commitment and enthusiasm is wonderful and allows us not to just do the practical jobs but spend time caring for people. We may need another volunteer to join the group when Ann moves on, depending on the health and commitments of our existing team.

- Some Christopher Robin members have attended Messy Church and family disco events.

## Please Pray

- For the team to have wisdom, inspiration and capacity in nurturing and investing in the group more.
- For deeper relationships with families, especially those who are struggling, and opportunities to support them emotionally.
- For opportunities to share the good news of Christ with families. For God to draw families closer to him through relationships in the group and through being involved in other outreach events.
- 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.



## Family Disco

In November, we held our first ever Family Disco, which was a wonderful occasion, seeing lots of people from the community coming and having fun together as families. Thanks to the social committee team for making it happen. Look out for more family discos in 2025!

## Christmas Fair

At the end of November 2024, we held our Christmas Fair and were delighted to welcome hundreds of people from our community. Once again, it was a wonderful occasion. We raised over £2,200 of much needed funds for the mission and ministry of our church.



Thanks to Katy Coupe and her fantastic team who came together to make this happen. Particular thanks are due to Mat Hicks who worked tirelessly in the kitchen.



## 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. 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 27 parties in the year, and there were 27 one-off bookings. Faith Church Ministries, a Tamil-speaking Pentecostal church that originated in Sri Lanka, continue to worship every Sunday afternoon, using the church and hall.

There is still 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.

The hall is now looking much brighter and fresher as we have painted the walls brilliant white. The paint is hardwearing and washable, making it easier to clean, and the colour is easy to match when painting over damaged areas.

A number of repairs have been carried out during the year. The boiler room door frame, which had rotted and detached from the brickwork, has been fixed. The tap for the handwash basin in the kitchen was leaking and has been replaced. One of the rear hall doors (emergency exit) has rotted at the bottom and a temporary repair has been made. Various repairs have been made to the plumbing in the toilets.



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 - £20,402 in 2024, compared to £16,772 in 2023 (an increase of over £3,000) and £15,014 in 2022. The main reason for this increase compared to 2023 was the new weekly booking from Faith Church Ministries. This new booking brought income from the church hall close to pre-COVID levels (£21,805 in 2018 and £18,380 in 2019). 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 – Church Foyer Extension**

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. This will be completed with the addition of a glazed entrance foyer, which would become the new main entrance to the church building for all visitors. At the end of 2023 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.



This would provide a space of:

### Hospitality

- Clear entrance area for all users of the building
- Attractive, light and welcoming with clear signage
- Cafe area with a comfortable seating and servery,

### Accessibility

- All visitors can access every part of the building.
- Connection between church space and the toilets, kitchen and meeting room.
- New glass doors into worship space make it accessible throughout the week.

### Flexibility

- Greater use of the whole building throughout the week.
- More groups would be able to use the church at the same time.
- Used for children's groups on Sunday mornings, etc.

65 years ago, the church building with its church hall was built to be the focal point of this community, and the extension would ensure this continues to be the case. It would be a blessing to the wider community, providing a place of welcome to all, from parents who stand in all weathers waiting to pick up their children from school, to those who need a place to gather for fellowship, and to pray in our beautiful yet underused worship space.

We estimate the cost of this work to build the entrance foyer will be up to £210,000. Having received a legacy of £10,000 we are launching the building project to begin our journey of seeing our dream realised.

Could you get involved? While we believe the majority of the money needed will come from grants, we will need to contribute a substantial amount financially ourselves. As a comparison, of the £55,000 we spent on the hall refurbishment and new church shed in 2019, approximately £15,000 came from our own contributions.



So, how can you help? Become one of the **65 at 65** – to mark St Christopher’s Church’s 65<sup>th</sup> birthday, we are looking for 65 people to pledge £250 or more to give towards this project. You could club together as a family, or a group of friends. Could you support us through fundraising or doing sponsored events? Every amount you pledge would bring us a step closer to realising our dream of a foyer that would enable the church building to become one for the future.

# The wider community

## Schools

**St John's Church of England Academy** is our church school.

Headteacher, Mrs Laura Stevenson, writes,

“The links between St John's C of E Academy and St Christopher's Church are going from strength to strength. Andy March offers strong spiritual support and guidance to me as headteacher and is very generous with his time to support us with collective worship and with planning lessons in RE.



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 encourage children to take up a range of pupil leadership positions including Junior Leadership Team, Spotlight Worship Team, Kindness Ambassadors, Prayer Garden Team and Playleaders. Our faith community is developed through prayer times, shared prayer spaces and hosting our parent prayer group twice weekly.”

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. Members of the church attend the school and support it in a number of ways – including through “World Changers” after school club – more on that below!

Since September, Andy has also resumed the connection with **Allesley Hall Primary School**, coming in to lead regular assemblies and welcoming the school community to the church for Christmas. We look forward to this relationship being strengthened over the coming years.

## Uniformed Groups

Our uniformed groups 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 2024, 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 **Children Worldwide** (for their support for our weekend away) and **Resource** (for their assistance in leading a PCC morning).

# 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 met for the majority of the year on Tuesdays in term time between 3:30 and 5:30.
- Teenagers in school years 7-9 are invited to just drop in. with year 6's being invited for the summer term in preparation for secondary school.
- In summer 2024 a very successful partnership was developed with Coventry City Councils 'Be Active Be Healthy Team' who delivered sporting activities alongside the usual craft and boardgames format offered.
- Since the autumn term we have seen numbers dwindle and in February had to take the difficult decision to stop meeting in the Tuesday slot.
- The team are taking a step back to evaluate how to best redistribute the resources into a more appropriate format or time slot.
- Commitment remains to reaching out to the young people of Allesley Park but the season for this format has ended.

*Please pray.*

- A clear path forward for ministry to the young people of Allesley Park.
- For passionate volunteers to come forward to help support this outreach work.

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

*A new worshipping community.*

- World Changers is an after-school session at St John's School has continued to go from strength to strength this year.
- 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 and create links between school and church.
- It is a really special time seeing these children grow in their relationship with Jesus. Worshipping and praying for one another.

Please pray

- For continued blessings.
- For the wonderful work St Johns School are doing within the community.
- For leadership of this group once Ann leaves for her curacy in the summer term.
- For us to see children leading their parents to faith.



A special note of thanks to Cara Greenway who has been a valuable and much-loved member of the World Changers team.

# Financial Review

Total receipts on unrestricted funds were £72,652 of which £38,640 was unrestricted voluntary donations, and a further £9,035 was from Gift Aid. Income from fundraising events of £4,016 was also received, these included concerts, social occasions and the Christmas Fair. The planned giving, through the Parish Giving Scheme and standing orders decreased by 3%. Total income, including tax recovered was broadly in line with last year. This was due to increased fundraising income offsetting the fall in general donations.

£32,000 was spent from unrestricted funds to provide the Christian ministry from St. Christopher's Church, comprising our Parish Share contribution, this was a significant reduction from last year and was agreed before the end of the year with the Diocese in order to meet our reserves policy for the end of the year. The parish share 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. We have agreed that in 2025 we will contribute £30,000 to the Diocese with an additional balance of £10,000 to cover the church's contribution towards the employment of a children and families worker (The rest of the money would be achieved through grants). Our total ministry costs for 2024 will be £40,000. While we are grateful for the diocesan agreement to reduce our parish share for the next few years, in time we need to increase our parish share contribution so it is closer to the full amount in order to be able to continue to afford a fulltime vicar in future years. This could be achieved through increased giving, fundraising and hall income.

The drop in our parish share payments in 2024 brought our unrestricted spend in lower than our income and allowed us to restore our reserves, depleted in prior years. Adding bank and deposit balances brought forward at the beginning of the year, the balances carried forward at 31st December on unrestricted funds totalled £20,937 (general and designated funds).

## **Reserves Policy**

It is PCC policy to try to maintain a balance on general unrestricted funds equating to between 6 and 8 weeks of expense payments - equivalent to between £7,762 and £10,349 for 2024. It is held to smooth out fluctuations in cash flow and to meet emergencies. The balance of £9,537 held in general unrestricted funds at the year-end falls within the range defined by our reserves policy.



# 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. 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 2024 until the date this report was approved are:

Ex Officio members:

- Incumbent: The Reverend Andy March (Chairman)
- Curate: The Reverend Andy Clasper (until April 2024)
- Church Warden: Mr Stuart Hart

Deanery Synod Representatives:

- Mrs Heather Beasley (also Safeguarding Officer)
- Mrs Louise Hicks (also Electoral Roll Officer)
- Mrs Margaret Knipe (from April 2024)

Elected members:

- Mr Stan Aldridge (Member of Finance Committee)
- Mrs Barbara Bell
- Mrs Katy Coupe
- Mrs Marie Ellis
- Mr Graham Foxwell (Treasurer) until April 2024
- Ms Cara Greenway (from April 2024)
- Mx Amey Hanesworth
- Mr Thomas Hanesworth
- Mrs Johanna Harris (Treasurer; co-opted and then elected as full member from November 2024)
- Mr Andrew Houston (from April 2024)
- Mrs Rosemary Lavens (PCC Secretary)
- Mrs Tina Veasey (Planned Giving Secretary) until April 2024

Mrs Ann McCabe also attended PCC meetings in her capacity as our ordinand.

# 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. We’re so grateful to Jo Harris who stepped up as Treasurer, using her gifts and skills to help us understand the church’s accounts and its finances.

Finally, I want to pay tribute to our brilliant ordinand, Ann McCabe, who has been a fantastic part of the team, holding together the church during my sabbatical. We wish her all the best as she begins her curacy at All Saints, Allesley in June. Please do come for her ordination on 29<sup>th</sup> June at 4pm.

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 1<sup>st</sup> April 2025 and signed on their behalf by the Reverend Andy March (PCC chairman)*



# **Appendix One – Vicar’s Report**

## **Another year of blessing**

This time last year I was preparing to go on sabbatical, made possible thanks to the generosity of the Diocese of Coventry and to this church community in stepping up to fill the space that I left over the summer. Although many of you were involved in this, I particularly want to thank Stuart Hart, our churchwarden, Tom Borrás for all his help behind the scenes, and our ordinand, Ann McCabe, who has been a tremendous blessing during her time with us since September 2023 and who coped with an incredible amount with grace and skill. Of course, what makes St Christopher’s such a special church community is the sheer number of people who are involved in the life of the church in a myriad of ways - just look at the list at the beginning of the Annual Report, and those who lead various parts of our ministry, on Sundays and during the week - from Emma and James who coordinate our worship ministry; Margaret Knipe who leads Together at 2; Stan, who facilitates our Life Group and with Andy Houston, leads Quiet Waters.

A huge highlight of our year was the Church Weekend Away at the end of September, when we were blessed with wonderful weather, tremendous fellowship, excellent teaching from Graham Archer inspiring us to grow as people of prayer, sung worship beautifully facilitated by James and Emma and our band, and brilliant kids’ ministry led by Rob and Ruth from Children Worldwide. None of this would have been possible without Louise Hicks and Amey Hanesworth who put in so much hard work enabling this weekend to take place.

It’s been wonderful to see the relaunch of our social events committee – Katy Coupe, Margaret Knipe, Tina Barnett, and Jen Houston, who have put on some superb events this past year - Family Discos, bringing unfamiliar faces into our space to have fun together, a brilliant quiz night which would have been superb even if I hadn’t been on the winning team, as well as, once again a tremendous Christmas Fair, which raised over £2,200 for our church.

Many more of you contribute to making this church a vibrant and healthy community. We’re a resilient church community too, able to withstand substantial loss - and this past year has sadly been one tinged with grief. The deaths of Pauline Blunt, John Holt, Irene Foxwell, Tricia Dumbill, Nat Patterson, Sheila Pearson and John Reading have been significant for our church - we miss these dear ones a great deal, and yet, we are still able to flourish and look forward to the future God has for us.

## **A New Chapter**

Last month I had the privilege of attending the New Wine Leadership Conference in Harrogate, which had the theme, “The Time is Now.” It was a

precious time of worship and teaching and meeting with God. I had last attended the conference 5 years ago, at the beginning of March 2020. This felt very significant; I sensed God saying that these two conferences marked the beginning and end of a chapter of life for both me and the church; which, given that the time between encapsulated the COVID pandemic on a national level and a significant level of grief and upheaval for us as a church community - and for me and our family - over this time, could well be entitled, "The Storm". I sensed God saying this conference marked a new chapter for me and for the church, which would be called, "Dawn". It could be a new dawn for our nation too - people are more open to God than they were before, particularly those in their early 20s; they have realised that atheism doesn't give them the answers that they are looking for; they are turning to God and discovering Jesus. The issue is, how can we respond? How can we be ready to make the most of the missional opportunities that we have?

### **65 years of St Christopher's Church**

In Jeremiah 6, the Lord bids the Israelites, "Stand at the crossroads, and look, and ask for the ancient paths, where the good way lies; and walk in it, and find rest for your souls." In other words, when you are looking for a new way forward, you can often learn from the past.

As a church we can learn from our founders, from Bishop Gorton whose initial vision to build a church where a community could be formed to reach out with God's love to all the people who lived within this new housing estate; to the people of Allesley whose sacrificial giving enabled the church building to be built with the foresight to include the church hall which wasn't originally in the plans, and then that pioneering community who first met in St Christopher's School before making their home in this church building on 26 March 1960, almost exactly 65 years ago. That day was in the words of the Bishop of Coventry, "A remarkable and extremely hopeful beginning – you are going to build a family of fighters like Neville Gorton"

This founding story is a helpful reminder of what we're here for, and the people we're called to be. Although much has changed in the past seven decades, our mission remains the same. We are still called to work out what it means to be a church community that is "God's family; loving like Jesus" in Allesley Park and Whoberley; to be a people characterised by generosity, sacrifice, vision and a pioneering spirit. We are still called to be a "family of fighters", prepared to do everything possible to spread God's kingdom here.

What does this look like for this church community, as we enter the second half of the 2020s? For me, I believe it means being a people and having a building formed for the future.

## **A people for the future**

We have strong foundations. We are a worshipping community of all ages; with children and youth often forming a third of our congregation, a significant number of whom are actively involved in the life of our church, whether in the band, helping with the screen, or serving tea and coffee. These are young people who have grown up in the church, and unlike many, have stayed the course. Last year our PCC had 3 members who are 22 and under, who grew up in the church. Every week we run Christopher Robin, our preschool ministry which has been serving the families of our community for over 30 years, and World Changers, an expression of worship, for over 30 primary school aged children each week. It's a bit crazy, but we teach them the stories of Jesus and worship and pray together. This means every week, including our own church kids, we are working with around 60 children. We've been able to sustain this thanks to the wonderful ministry of Ann McCabe, who has done an astounding job of leading our midweek ministry and we will miss her very much when she leaves in May. Our wonderful team of volunteers are stretched. There is huge potential to build on this work - given that there are 3 other primary schools in our parish, with the right investment of time and money, we could be sharing the Gospel with over 100 children each week, and see our weekly church attendance grow to upwards of 30 children each week. This would meet one of the key outcomes of the Church of England's national vision and strategy, which is to double the number of children and active young disciples by 2030.

This is why the PCC, in agreement with the Diocese of Coventry, has chosen to reduce our parish share commitment to £30,000 per year. In addition, £10,000 per year will contribute to the salary of a full-time children, youth and families' minister to lead this essential mission. Thanks to a grant from the Coventry Diocesan Mission Fund, we have been able to start the recruitment process, in the hope that this worker can begin in the summer.

How can you get involved? Above all, pray. Pray that the right candidate will be found and for success in their work. Pray for the flourishing of our church community. Pray for those children and families who are so important to the life of the church both now and in the future. Pray for more families to become part of this church community. Think and pray about how you can practically support this vision and this essential ministry; to adapt the well-known phrase, "It takes a church family to raise a child."

## **A building formed for the future**

Secondly, we are called to have a building formed for the future. The church building we have is a great blessing and has been in constant use by all parts of the community for many different activities over its 65 years. This wouldn't have been possible without the vision and determination of the original congregation who

raised enough funds to ensure that the building would have a hall attached to the worship space.

Our most recent building work took place in 2019 when, thanks to the generosity of so many of you, and a substantial grant from the Veolia Trust, we were able to refurbish the church hall and build much needed storage. This has been such a blessing for many within the community over the past 5 years, but it is only part of a longer-term project. This will be completed with the addition of a glazed entrance foyer, which would become the new main entrance to the church building for all visitors.

This would provide a space of:

#### Hospitality

- Clear entrance area for all users of the building
- Attractive, light and welcoming with clear signage
- Cafe area with a comfortable seating and servery.

#### Accessibility

- All visitors can access every part of the building.
- Connection between church space and the toilets, kitchen and meeting room.
- New glass doors into worship space make it accessible throughout the week.

#### Flexibility

- Greater use of the whole building throughout the week.
- More groups would be able to use the church at the same time.
- Used for children's groups on Sunday mornings, etc.

65 years ago, the church building with its church hall was built to be the focal point of this community, and the extension would ensure this continues to be the case. It would be a blessing to the wider community, providing a place of welcome to all, from parents who stand in all weathers waiting to pick up their children from school, to those who need a place to gather for fellowship, and to pray in our beautiful yet underused worship space.

### **From vision to reality**

We estimate the cost of this work to build the entrance foyer will be £150,000. We have just been blessed with a legacy of £10,000 which can be the seed of this development.

Could you get involved? While we believe the majority of the money needed will come from grants, we will need to contribute a substantial amount financially ourselves. As a comparison, of the £55,000 we spent on the hall refurbishment and new church shed in 2019, approximately £15,000 came from our own contributions.



So, how can you help? Become one of the **65 at 65** – to mark St Christopher's Church's 65<sup>th</sup> birthday, we are looking for 65 people to pledge £250 or more to give towards this project. You could club together as a family, or a group of friends. Could you support us through fundraising or doing sponsored events? Every amount you pledge would bring us a step closer to realising our dream of a foyer that would enable the church building to become one for the future.

**Now is the time!**

Now is the time for us to step into the future God has for us as a church, building on the legacy of 65 years and more of faithful witness to Allesley Park and Whoberley, so that we ourselves can leave a legacy that lasts into the next century.

Finally, thank you to you all for being part of our community and serving in your own unique way. Whether your contribution is big or small you are valued by me and the wider church.

Rev Andy March  
March 2025

# Appendix Two – PCC Report

PARISH CHURCH OF ST CHRISTOPHER  
ALLESLEY PARK AND WHOBERLEY

## PCC REPORT FOR THE ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING SUNDAY 6th APRIL 2025

There were 6 Meetings of the Parochial Church Council in 2024. Each of the meetings were well attended by members. All meetings started with a bible reading and prayer at 7.45pm.

From September 2023, the shape of PCC meetings was changed. Of the 6 meetings per year, 3 would be focused on Strategic Governance (covering finance, building maintenance, hall use, etc) and 3 would be focused on Mission and Ministry, freeing the PCC to discuss the life of the church in more depth.

### 24th January 2024 (Strategic Governance)

The meeting began with matters arising from previous meetings.

#### **Finance Update:**

- The **deficit** at the start of 2024 is **£1,209**. **Hall rents** will be increased, and hall usage needs to be maximized. **Parish Share** for 2024 is **£45,000**, reduced from £50,000 in 2023.
- **Christmas Fair** raised **£2,100**, and **Rob Halligan concert** raised **£72**.
- **£499.39** has been raised for the **Bethlehem School**.
- Church-run groups **Jigsaw Club**, **Together at 2**, and **Youth Café** will pay normal rent, but this will be offset by funds from **Martha Flint Fund** and the **Welfare Fund**.
- **Christine Lo** is temporarily handling administrative duties. An advertisement for a new administrator will be posted in two weeks.
- **Andy March** shared a leaflet about an organization that helps with church hall rentals, and it was agreed to explore this option.

#### **Arrangements during Vicar's Sabbatical:**

- Plans were discussed for how ministry would be covered during Andy's sabbatical, including services on Sundays and midweek, and midweek children's groups. Ordinand, Ann McCabe would be taking a lead role. More help needed for the children's work.

- As Churchwarden, **Stuart Hart** will be in charge, with support needed, including recruiting Assistant Wardens.
- A meeting to discuss volunteer needs will be held after a church service.

#### **Other matters discussed:**

- Preparation for **APCM**, including reports required.
- Social and Fundraising Events.

## **20th March 2024 (Mission and Ministry)**

#### **Zoom Presentation:**

**Christopher Landau** from Resource joined the PCC via Zoom. Resource helps small churches engage with the Holy Spirit for renewal, discipleship, and mission. A **PCC Vision Morning** is planned for **November 9th, 2024**.

#### **Safeguarding:**

PCC approved **World Changers**, held at St John's School, as a church-run activity.

#### **Eco Church:**

PCC agreed to support Eco-Church initiative, proposed by **Barbara Bell**, who outlined steps that needed to be taken. An action plan would be required.

#### **APCM Preparation:**

- **Approval of Accounts and Annual Report:**
- **PCC Membership:** **Graham Foxwell** and **Tina Veasey** are stepping down. **Rosemary** will contact members about their tenure on the PCC.
- **Church Warden:** **Stuart Hart** agreed to continue in the role.
- **Treasurer:** **Andy** thanked **Graham Foxwell** for his long tenure. **Jo Harris** will take over as Treasurer, with **Christine** supporting her.

#### **Church Administrator Update:**

**Sue Williams** will start as Administrator on **8th April**.

#### **Update of Signatories:**

New signatories for the bank were agreed.

#### **Prayer:**

The remaining part of the meeting was dedicated to prayer, focusing on:

- **Ann McCabe** and **Stuart Hart** during the sabbatical.
- Events during **Holy Week**.
- **Peace of God** during the sabbatical.
- **Encouragement** for those attending **Christopher Robin** to start attending Sunday services.

## 22nd May 2024 (Strategic Governance)

### General:

Welcomed newly elected PCC members **Margaret Knipe, Johanna Harris,** and **Cara Greenway.**

### Finance Update:

- **Jo Harris** provided a financial update for January to April 2024.
- **Stan Aldridge** will assist **Jo** with the financial report for the PCC.
- **Stuart Hart** will search for a new building society after the Skipton account is closed.
- **Jo** confirmed there is no restricted fund for music.
- **PCC** thanked **Jo Harris** for her work as Treasurer.

### Feedback on Sabbatical Cover:

More preparation is needed for covering services and pastoral care during **Andy March's** sabbatical. Actions proposed including recruiting more volunteers in this area.

### Safeguarding:

- **Andy Houston** was approved to work in the **Youth Café.**
- The **Safeguarding Action Plan** was agreed upon, and **Katy Coupe** will handle risk assessments for children's groups.
- The **PCC** agreed to use the **new hub system** for safeguarding records and to store recruitment information electronically. **Sue** will manage this task.
- **Katy Coupe** will assist **Heather Beasley** with safeguarding and DBS checks in the short term.
- **Heather Beasley** was formally approved as the **Safeguarding Officer,** and **Katy Coupe** as **Safeguarding Administrator.**

### Other items discussed:

- **Parish Weekend:** **Louise Hicks** is handling the recording of payments for the church weekend. The **PCC** thanked **Louise** for organizing the church weekend.
- **Hall Rentals:** **Amey Hanesworth** would lead review of St. Christopher's hall rental pricing.
- **PCC** approved the use of **Smart Water** for the hall roof at a cost of £320 for insurance purposes.
- **Use of Common Cup:** **The Archdeacon** raised concerns about the use of individual cups for communion. The PCC will revisit this topic after **Andy March** returns from his sabbatical.
- **Eco Church:** A group will be formed to follow up on becoming an **Eco Church.** **Barbara Bell** and **Andy Houston** will lead discussions and invite people to join. The group will report back to the PCC at the meeting on **September 18th.**

## 17th July 2024 (Mission and Ministry)

The PCC met for fellowship at 38 Polperro Drive, but began with a brief meeting to discuss church matters.

The main agenda items discussed were:

- **Syrian Orthodox Church in Bethlehem**  
Barbara Bell gave an update from the school and church community, explaining the pressures that they face due to the conflict, including lack of revenue due to the conflict. The school community currently numbers 650 students and 63 staff.
- **Eco Church Survey**  
There is a lot of work to be done to reach the Bronze Standard for Eco Church. Some errors were noted in the survey which need correcting. Further work is needed in this area from PCC.

Other matters briefly discussed:

- New **Building Society account** for the church .
- **Pastoral Care Team** development.
- **Parish Weekend away**, including need for safeguarding checks to be completed for those working with the children.
- **Repairs** made to speaker in Church
- A request was made that the PCC continue to pray for Irene and Graham Foxwell.

## 24<sup>th</sup> September 2024 (Strategic Governance)

### **Matters Arising:**

Following archdeacon's comment about using single cup for communion, after a discussion, the PCC decided to continue using individual cups but would review the issue in the future.

### **Finance Update:**

**Jo Harris** presented a breakdown of the church's finances, which are in a challenging state. A subgroup will be formed to promote better usage of the hall. The congregation is encouraged to consider leaving legacies in wills.

**Actions** include:

- **Stuart** to research local savings accounts.
- **Andy** to discuss the Parish Share with the archdeacon.
- **Jo, Amey, Marie, and Stuart** to form a group to increase hall usage.
- Church employees should receive the living wage, and hall rents will be compared to other venues.

### **Eco Church:**

**Barbara Bell** reported on the **Eco Church Survey**, identifying areas for improvement, especially on the church premises. The first goal is to become a **Fair Trade Church**, and future plans include installing solar panels and building a foyer.

#### **Other items discussed:**

- **Christmas Fair: practical arrangements needed for the day.**
- **Christmas Services:** Different events/services planned and practical arrangements needed to be in place to support these.
- **PCC Vision Morning.**
- **Safeguarding:** **Heather** emphasized the need for risk assessments, safeguarding training, and hire agreements for non-church activities. The **Safeguarding Policy** and **Recruitment of Offenders Policy** need approval. Members were asked to read and approve these documents.
- **Any Other Business:**
  - Repairs required to **kitchen sink**.
  - **Pathfinder leaders** are needed.
  - **Andy** reported strong attendance of children in church, with 3 youth members now serving on the PCC.
  - Donations will be requested for the **Christmas tree**.
  - **Stuart Hart** is stepping down as **Church Warden** in April, and two new wardens will be needed.

#### **Prayer:**

- Prayer was said for the upcoming **Church Weekend**, the **church crisis**, and the **church globally**.

## **20<sup>th</sup> November 2024 (Mission and Ministry)**

#### **Matters Arising:**

- **Parish Share for 2025** will be **£30,000**, with **£10,000** allocated for youth work, and grant applications will be pursued to enable us to recruit someone to lead this work fulltime.
- **Hall rents** will be increased, and **winter rates** will apply year-round.
- A **giving appeal** will be launched in **Spring 2025**.
- **Delivery of Christmas flyers** to the entire parish.
- Arrangements for **Christmas Fair**.

#### **Vision Meeting:**

- A **Renewal Day** open to the whole church is planned for **Spring 2025**.
- A fortnightly **prayer meeting** will take on **Mondays at 9:15 am** at the vicarage.

#### **Safeguarding:**

- **Heather** provided a safeguarding update showing areas that the PCC needs to complete in order to be fully up to date: work on induction plan; discuss how to promote a healthy and safe culture; and how we proceed with Supervision and oversight. Also, non-church activities must provide a copy of their **safeguarding policy** to the church.
- The **use of a bolt on the church hall door** during children's sessions was approved for safety, ensuring fire safety compliance.
- **All volunteers and PCC members** must complete **Domestic Violence awareness** training online.
- **Amey** was formally approved as a volunteer with the **Youth Café** after completing the safe recruitment process.

### **Children, Youth, and Families Focus – Ministry and Mission:**

- **Scramblers:** More **helpers** are needed, and leaders should plan together, as they are currently working in isolation. They aim to plan stories for the year and welcome more families from **Whoberley**.
- **Explorers:** More **helpers** are needed. The children are realizing the importance of God, and it's exciting to hear their views.
- **Christopher Robin:** There are a **good number of volunteers**, and nearly all parents participate meaningfully in **Tot's Church**.
- **Pathfinders: Katy, Jo, and Laura** have stepped in to support the group, but attendance is unpredictable.
- **World Changers:** There is **great attendance and engagement**, and **Cara's work** is highly appreciated.
- **Youth Café:** Numbers have **decreased**, and the café may be adapted. A review will take place at **Easter**.
- **Future Hopes:** There are ambitions for **mission work** that includes the 4 schools and **Uniformed Groups**.

The meeting concluded with discussions focused on the ongoing growth and challenges in the children's and youth ministry.

PCC report written by Andy March. March 2025.

Thanks to Rosemary Lavens, Katy Coupe and Chirstine Lo for writing PCC minutes.

Full minutes available on request.

# **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.

We continue to strive to implement the requirements laid out to us from the Church of England.

To aid us, we now have an online system that we can record information on all safely recruited volunteers within church. This will be a helpful tool to support the church. The safeguarding officer is currently transferring information onto the system from a manual document.

Going into next year we need to ensure that the church website is up to date and supervision of volunteers happens

As a church we also need to ensure that the regular groups hiring the hall that are set up for children and young people have safeguarding policies or adopt the church’s policy.

We currently have 21 volunteers that work with Children and young people and are subject to DBS checks and training.

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 the safeguarding officer 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.**

Heather Beasley  
Parish Safeguarding Officer for St. Christopher’s Church 2024

## **Note**

Heather is stepping down as Parish Safeguarding Officer at the APCM after many years of diligent service. We are very grateful for her incredibly hard work.



# Appendix Four – Financial Accounts 2024

## Parochial Church Council of St Christopher

### Allesley Park and Whoberley

### Balance Sheet at 31 December 2024



	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total 2024 £	Total 2023 £
<b>FIXED ASSETS</b>				
Tangible	-	-	-	-
Investment	-	-	-	-
<b>Total fixed assets</b>	-	-	-	-
<b>CURRENT ASSETS</b>				
Stock	-	-	-	-
Short-term deposits (Skipton)	-	-	-	7,951
Cash at bank and in hand	22,056	6,841	<b>28,897</b>	4,579
<b>Total current assets</b>	<b>22,056</b>	<b>6,841</b>	<b>28,897</b>	12,530
<b>DEBTORS</b>				
Due within one year	240	918	<b>1,158</b>	-
<b>LIABILITIES</b>				
Due within one year	(1,359)	(2,208)	<b>(3,567)</b>	-
<b>TOTAL NET ASSETS</b>	<b>20,937</b>	<b>5,551</b>	<b>26,488</b>	12,530
<b>CHURCH FUNDS</b>				
Reserves (General Fund)	9,537	-	<b>9,537</b>	425
Designated Funds				
- Building Development Fund	-	-	-	-
- Charitable Giving Fund	900	-	<b>900</b>	1,000
- Family Worker Fund	3,500	-	<b>3,500</b>	2,000
- Maintenance Fund	4,000	-	<b>4,000</b>	952
- Mission & Ministry Fund	1,000	-	<b>1,000</b>	330
- Parish Share (future years)	2,000	-	<b>2,000</b>	2,000
Total Designated Funds	11,400	-	<b>11,400</b>	6,282
Restricted Funds				
- Building Fund	-	140	<b>140</b>	140
- Christopher Robin Fund	-	134	<b>134</b>	135
- Church Weekend Fund	-	-	-	64
- Education Fund	-	2,187	<b>2,187</b>	2,325
- Special Projects Fund	-	356	<b>356</b>	356
- Welfare Fund	-	2,734	<b>2,734</b>	2,804
Total Restricted Funds	-	5,551	<b>5,551</b>	5,824
	<b>20,937</b>	<b>5,551</b>	<b>26,488</b>	12,530

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: 1 April 2025

**Parochial Church Council of St Christopher**

**Allesley Park and Whoberley**

**Statement Of Financial Activities**

**for the year ending 31 December 2024**



	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	<b>Total 2024 £</b>	Total 2023 £
<b>INCOMING RESOURCES</b>				
Voluntary income	47,675	9,085	<b>56,760</b>	55,524
Activities for generating funds	4,016	-	<b>4,016</b>	2,697
Income from investments	119	-	<b>119</b>	231
Income from church activities	20,842	-	<b>20,842</b>	19,113
<b>Total incoming resources</b>	<b>72,652</b>	<b>9,085</b>	<b>81,737</b>	<b>77,565</b>
<b>RESOURCES EXPENDED</b>				
Cost of generating voluntary income	100	-	<b>100</b>	100
Fund-raising costs	212	-	<b>212</b>	522
Church activities	57,910	9,358	<b>67,268</b>	80,905
Governance costs	200	-	<b>200</b>	200
<b>Total resources expended</b>	<b>58,422</b>	<b>9,358</b>	<b>67,780</b>	<b>81,727</b>
<b>NET MOVEMENT OF FUNDS</b>				
	<b>14,230</b>	<b>(273)</b>	<b>13,957</b>	<b>(4,163)</b>
BALANCES B/FWD 1 JANUARY 2024	5,206	7,324	<b>12,530</b>	
BALANCES C/FWD 31 DECEMBER 2024	20,937	5,551	<b>26,488</b>	

**Parochial Church Council of St Christopher**  
**Allesley Park and Whoberley**  
**Notes to the Financial Statements**  
**for the year ending 31 December 2024**



INCOMING RESOURCES	Fund	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total 2024 £	Total 2023 £
<b>Voluntary income</b>					
Church collections (open plate)	General	2,317	-	2,317	1,507
Donations for general use	General	2,177	-	2,177	5,945
Gift Aid	General	9,035	-	9,035	8,490
Planned Giving	General	34,146	-	34,146	35,288
Running costs (energy support)	General	-	-	-	1,470
Income - Restricted Funds:					
Building Fund	Restricted	-	-	-	125
Christopher Robin Fund	Restricted	-	-	-	104
Church Weekend Fund	Restricted	-	7,135	7,135	-
Education Fund	Restricted	-	-	-	145
Special Projects - Audio/Visual Improvements	Restricted	-	-	-	-
Welfare Funds	Restricted	-	-	-	-
Grants - Restricted Funds:					
Education Fund	Restricted	-	1,500	1,500	2,100
Special Projects - Love Christmas 2022	Restricted	-	-	-	-
Welfare Funds	Restricted	-	450	450	350
		47,675	9,085	56,760	55,524
<b>Activities for generating funds</b>					
Fundraising for general use	General	4,016	-	4,016	2,697
		4,016	-	4,016	2,697
<b>Income from investments</b>					
Interest from Savings Account (Skipton)	General	119	-	119	231
		119	-	119	231
<b>Income from church activities</b>					
Administration	General	-	-	-	17
Clergy expenses (vicar and curate)	General	-	-	-	36
Church Fees (weddings and funerals)	General	440	-	440	50
Hall Rents	General	20,402	-	20,402	16,773
Wages (admin, cleaner, organist and youth worker)	General	-	-	-	10
Family Worker	Designated	-	-	-	-
Maintenance Fund	Designated	-	-	-	-
Mission & Ministry Fund	Designated	-	-	-	118
Collections for good causes (In and Out)	Restricted	-	-	-	639
Diocese Energy Support	Restricted	-	-	-	1,470
Fees (In and Out)	Restricted	-	-	-	-
		20,842	-	20,842	19,113
<b>Total incoming resources</b>		72,652	9,085	81,737	77,565

**Parochial Church Council of St Christopher**  
**Allesley Park and Whoberley**



**Notes to the Financial Statements**  
**for the year ending 31 December 2024**

RESOURCES EXPENDED	Fund	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total	Total
		Funds	Funds	2024	2023
		£	£	£	£
<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	212	-	212	522
		212	-	212	522
<b>Church activities</b>					
Administration	General	277	-	277	1,272
Clergy expenses (vicar, curate and ordinand)	General	763	-	763	668
Donations for general use	General	-	-	-	-
Fees (bank, card and service charges)	General	412	-	412	245
Hall Rents	General	-	-	-	-
House Keeping (church, hall and grounds)	General	148	-	148	65
Items used in church services	General	719	-	719	729
Parish Share - Cost of Minister	General	32,000	-	32,000	50,000
Running costs (utility bills, rent etc.)	General	8,097	-	8,097	9,659
Wages (admin, cleaner, organist and youth worker)	General	14,283	-	14,283	10,875
Expenditure from designated funds:					
Charitable Giving	Designated	100	-	100	-
Family Worker Fund	Designated	-	-	-	1,501
Maintenance Fund	Designated	-	-	-	48
Mission & Ministry Fund	Designated	1,111	-	1,111	788
Expenditure from restricted funds:					
Building Fund	Restricted	-	-	-	485
Christopher Robin Fund	Restricted	-	-	-	3
Church Weekend	Restricted	-	7,199	7,199	-
Diocese Energy Support	Restricted	-	-	-	1,470
Education Fund	Restricted	-	1,639	1,639	2,047
Special Projects - Audio/Visual Improvements	Restricted	-	-	-	-
Special Projects - Diamond Blessing	Restricted	-	-	-	411
Collections for good causes (In and Out)	Restricted	-	-	-	639
Fees (In and Out)	Restricted	-	-	-	-
		57,910	9,358	67,268	80,905
<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>		<b>58,422</b>	<b>9,358</b>	<b>67,780</b>	<b>81,727</b>
<b>Net Movement</b>		<b>14,230</b>	<b>( 273 )</b>	<b>13,957</b>	<b>( 4,163 )</b>

# Appendix Five – Deanery Synod Report

There have been a few meetings of the Deanery Synod since the last meeting was reported.

Meetings open with prayer and worship and close with prayer.

**Tuesday 5th March** (St John the Baptist, Berkswell, 19:30 - 21:30), led by Rev Mark Bratton.

- Parish presentation for St John's, including battles, blessings and breakthroughs.
- Three parish presentations for prayer, each parish was given 5 minutes to present their battles, blessings and breakthroughs.
  - St Barbara's Earlsdon by Ian Leitch.
  - Warwick University Chaplaincy - Thoughts from David Hammond.
  - Rowington by Jude, the Churchwarden.
- Prayer for the four parishes that made presentations.
- Local business
  - Approval of the minutes from the last meeting.
  - Questions, queries or ideas brought by PCC, reps or clergy. A request was made that the Diocesan Synod report is passed to the Deanery Synod.\*
- Presentation by Rev Esther Peers - Dean of Women's Ministry.
  - Esther recently took on the role of Pioneer Minister at All Saints Leamington and Assistant Area of Dea of Warwick and Leamington and now also Dean of Women's Ministry. It's soon going to be the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Women as priests, women needed lots of help and support behind the scene. The role is still important.
  - Leadership - recruitment, 50% of incumbents are women, not quite as many higher up.
  - Pastoral - church can be a sexist organisation, in congregation and outside the church, that is painful and women need some support to address the situations and to prevent them.
  - Church has a power to have a voice in society to help women and girls.
  - How can Esther help in your parish - if you have any issues please let her know. If you have some good news such as mentoring of girls please also let her know.
  - 30th anniversary service 21st April, 16:00, at the cathedral.
  - They are looking to work with other organisations such as Mother's Union.
- Report on discussions held by Deanery Leadership Teams.

## **Tuesday 11th June (St Christopher's Church, Allesley Park and Whoberley, 19:30 - 21:30), chaired by Tim Pollard.**

- Ann McCabe led liturgy from Northumbria Community.
- Worship led by Cara Greenway.
- Talk, led by Laura Stevenson, headteacher at St John's CofE Academy. School vision "I will Shine" Matthew 5:16. Laura talked about the school values, learning forums, and World Changers which was born out of Alive 2023.
- Four parish presentations for prayer, each parish was given 5 minutes to present their battles, blessings and breakthroughs.
  - St Christopher's by Louise Hicks.
  - St Andrew's, Eastern Green by Rev Jo Joyce.
  - St Barnabas, Kenilworth, by Rev Eira Hale.
  - St Laurence, Meriden, written by Rev Kevin Flangan, read by Rev Jim Perryman.
- Prayer for the four parishes that made presentations.
- Local business
  - Matters arising from prayer/discussion that we want to feed up the chain.
  - Questions, queries or ideas brought by PCC, reps or clergy.
  - Questions about the Environment Newsletter that was sent out before the meeting - apologies that it was not sent out.
- Diocesan Synod Elections
  - Timetable given.
- Net zero and how to get there?
  - Colin Angus - Net Zero Project Officer, played a short video and gave a presentation. The church has a position of influence, each church does not emit a significant amount but we can influence church members and the wider society.\*\*
- Announcements.

## **Thursday 14th November (St Nicholas Church, Kenilworth, 19:30 - 21:30)**

- Opening worship led by Rev Eira Hale, evening prayer in Celtic form, reading Matthew 19:21-22.
- Talk - The Pathway to Fundraising Success by Andy Duncan - Church Buildings Funding Support Officer.
- Parish presentation host parish, St Barnabas by by Thelma Mitchell and St Nicholas by Rev Eira Hale.
- Three parish presentations for prayer, each parish was given 5 minutes to present their battles, blessings and breakthroughs.
  - Christ Church, Cheylesmore by Rev Arthur Woo.

- St John's Westwood by Steve Elton.
- Honiley and Wroxall by Rev Ann Peachey, script written by Sheila Cole.
- Prayer for the four parishes that made presentations.
- Local business
  - Approval of the minutes of the last meeting.
  - Matters arising from prayer/discussion that we want to feed up the chain.
  - Questions, queries or ideas brought by PCC, reps or clergy.
  - Questions about the Environment Newsletter that was sent out before the meeting.
- Recent Election results given.
- Introduction to the format of Deanery meetings in 2025.
- Colin Angus - Net Zero Project Officer, played a short video and gave a presentation. The church has a position of influence, each church does not emit a significant amount but we can influence church members and the wider society.\*\*
- Closing prayer included prayer for Nicola and Jim Perryman as Jim moves towards retirement.

\* A copy of this report is available on request from Louise Hicks.

\*\* Video and presentation available on request from Louise Hicks.

A full copy of all Deanery Synod minutes are available on request from Louise Hicks.

# Appendix Six – APCM Minutes 2024

## **MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING APRIL 14<sup>TH</sup> 2024 AT 10.00AM IN THE CHURCH.**

Attendees signed in. A list is available in the records.

### **Worship**

A time of songs, bible reading – Luke 24, 35-48, Sermon by Andy March.

### **Annual Meeting of Parishioners**

**Appoint clerk to the meeting** Rosemary Lavens was appointed.

**Approval of Minutes** The minutes of the APCM held on April 23<sup>rd</sup> 2023 had been distributed. It was nominated by Katy Coupe and seconded by Tina Veasey that the minutes be approved. All were in agreement.

### **Election of Church Warden**

Stuart Hart has agreed to continue as Church Warden.

Andy March thanked him for his support, and also Tom Borrás for all that he does. Gifts were presented.

### **Annual Parochial Church Meeting**

**Apologies** – Stan and Sandra Aldridge, Pauline Blunt, Doreen Tew, Sheila Ingram, Irene Foxwell.

### **Eco Church**

Barbara Bell explained about becoming an eco church. To do this a group of around three people could join together to build this structure for the church to follow the theme of ‘Here, there and everywhere’.

Basic ideas – 1. Use buses rather than the car.

2. Do not mow the lawn in May – ‘No Mow May’.

3. Plant a bush or tree.

### **Vicar’s Report**

Andy hoped the congregation had looked at the annual report. There is so much going on in the life of the church, so much to celebrate. Andy expressed his gratitude to God and to everyone for the flourishing of the church community in the past year. He highlighted the contribution made by



so many to the work of the church. The age of the congregation is spread evenly through the church, with 15 children in church on a Sunday. We are a multinational church too. The church offers support and fellowship through daytime groups. Andy thanked Graham for a decade of service., and Andy Clasper who has been a wonderful curate, and Ann who is a great gift to the church.

### **Electoral Roll Report and Deanery Synod Report**

Louise Hicks reported that there are 85 names on the electoral role. The youngest is 16, and 28 people do not live in the parish.

There is a vacancy on the Deanery Synod.

### **Finance Report**

Graham explained the various funds – restricted funds, general funds and designated funds. More details in Graham’s written report.

Approval of accounts – proposed by Tina Veasey, seconded by Heather Beasley, all in agreement.

Andy thanked Graham for his decade of service as Treasurer. A presentation was made to Graham.

Andy introduced Jo Harris as the new treasurer.

### **Independent Examiner**

The same examiner will continue to be used.

Proposed by Tina Veasey, seconded by Louise Hicks.

### **Giving Update**

Andy Clasper gave an update. There was a giving date in May 2023. For various reasons there was a drop off in giving, so a second date in November was made for a second giving day. £4000 including gift aid was raised. Andy thanked the congregation for this.

### **Election of PCC Members**

Graham Foxwell and Tina Veasey are stepping down. Many thanks for their hard work.

Katy Coupe, Barbara Bell and Marie Ellis are due for re-election. All three agreed to stand. Proposed by Thomas Hanesworth, seconded by Heather Beasley. All in agreement.

Cara Greenway agreed to join the PCC. Proposed by Thomas Hanesworth, seconded by Louise Hicks.

## **Election of Deanery Synod Representative**

Margaret Knipe agreed to stand and was nominated by Marie Ellis and seconded by Barbara Bell.

## **Sides people**

The following agreed to act as sides people to welcome people to church and hand out information. Heather Beasley, Margaret Knipe, Laura Stevenson, Susan Borrás and Andy Houston.

## **Any other business**

There was none.

## **Presentation**

A presentation and thanks were given to Andy Clasper on his last day as Curate.

This was followed by a bring and share lunch.





# St Christopher's Church

Allesley Park and Whoberley

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

**GROWING**  
in God

**LOVING**  
each other

**SERVING**  
our community

**SHARING**  
good news



THE CHURCH  
OF ENGLAND