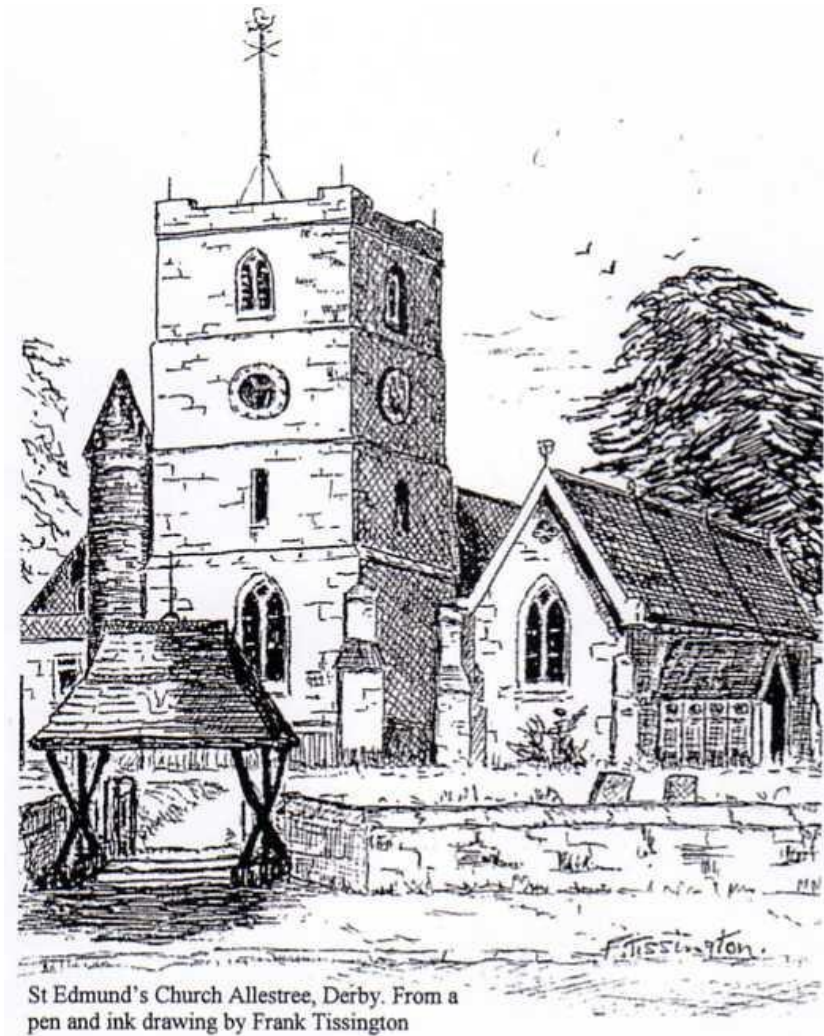


The Parish of St Edmund, Allestree



Election of Churchwardens

and

Annual Parochial Church Meeting 2024

Sunday 28th April 2024

After the 10am service in the Church

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Agenda

Meeting of Parishioners

1. Prayers
2. Apologies
3. Minutes of the Churchwardens' Meeting 2023 (see page 4)
4. Election of Churchwardens
5. Land Charity Accounts (see page 5)

Followed by:

Annual Parochial Church Meeting

1. Apologies
2. Minutes of the 2023 APCM (see page 7)
3. Presentation of the Electoral Roll – this year we have 124 people on the roll
4. Election of Laity Representatives
5. Annual Report of the PCC (see page 11)
7. Financial Report (see page 14)
8. Appointment of Auditor
9. Presentation of other Reports (see page 19)
10. Churchwardens' Report (see page 26)
11. Parish Priest Report (see page 28)
12. Opportunity for questions

THE PARISH OF ST. EDMUND ALLESTREE
MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL CHURCH WARDENS' MEETING

23rd April 2023

Present: Rev Rachael Brooks, Chair.

Parishioners: 40

1. Rev Rachael Brooks welcomed everyone and opened the meeting with prayers especially for Peter and Julie. She welcomed Sarah Watson, the Area Dean.

2. Apologies

Rev Peter Barham, Julie Barham, Dot Lawer, Richard Wood and John Aspinall.

3. Minutes of the Churchwardens' Meeting on 8th May 2022

The minutes were read and accepted as a true record.

4. Election of Church Wardens

Paul Smith is happy to stand again as Church Warden and was nominated by Kate Smith and seconded by Julie Barham. No other nominations had been received.

Rachael thanked Paul for standing again and for his hard work during this last year. Parishioners showed thanks with a round of applause.

5. Land Charities Accounts

The final accounts were presented in the APCM booklet and both the Church wardens' Land Charity and the Parish Clerk's Land Charity accounts are now closed. The funds have now been moved into the PCC accounts. Rachael thanked everyone who had been involved in this.

This concluded the Church Wardens' meeting.

ST. EDMUND'S ALLESTREE, CHURCHWARDEN'S LAND CHARITY
 (Registered Charity No 219394)

(A) INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DEC 2023

RECEIPTS	£	PAYMENTS	£
	0.00		0.00
EXCESS OF RECEIPTS OVER PAYMENTS	0.00		
<hr/>			
Cash at Bank and in Hand (1st Jan 2023)			0.00
Cash at Bank and in Hand (31st Dec 2023)			0.00

(B) STATEMENT OF ASSETS AND LIABILITIES

	2022 £	2023 £
CASH FUNDS	0.00	0.00
TOTAL CASH ASSETS	0.00	0.00
ENDOWMENT ASSETS	0.00	0.00

OTHER ASSETS

8.9 (approx) acres of Arable Land

at Sawrey Hill (formerly known as Saucy Hill) - current value approx £90,000

Rental from this asset paid direct to St Edmund's PCC A/C
from Fisher German's Client A/C re: Markeaton Estate.

Current Rental Income = £700.00 pa

St. Edmund's Allestree Churchwarden's Land Charity

Registered Charity No 219394

Accounts for the year ended 31st Dec 2023

The accounts of the Churchwarden's Land Charity have been prepared in a similar manner to previous years, although they are somewhat limited as the Trustees decided to close the Nat West Bank Accounts and transfer all the cash assets and investment assets to the PCC last year (see last year's accounts). The latter were intended to be the final accounts for the charity, but events have conspired to delay the merging of the Land Charity into the PCC (itself a registered charity):

The future of the Land Charity is still under discussion between the PCC and our legal advisor, the Registrar of the Diocese of Derby.

The accounts, such as they are, are merely a statement of where the process is, the rental income from the Sawrey Hill field has now been paid directly to the PCC for both 2022 and 2023.

Prepared by: Richard Flatman

Richard Flatman 25/1/24

Approved by: Paul Smith (Trustee and Churchwarden)

Paul Smith 26/1/24

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING

23rd April 2023

1. Apologies

As recorded in previous minutes.

2. Minutes of 2022 APCM

The minutes were accepted as a true record.

3. Presentation of the Electoral Roll

The roll has 124 names in total, 72 being resident in the parish and 52 not resident in the parish.

We remembered with love and affection Enid Clarke who has passed away during the year.

Rachael thanked Mathew and Alex Cooper for sorting the electoral roll.

4. Election of Laity representatives

The 7 members of the PCC who are due to retire at this APCM are Geoff Bailey, Paula Birchell, David Halliwell, Julie Hutchinson, Christopher Jack, Elizabeth Jack and Louise Whittaker. Paula Birchall is not standing again due to ill health. Julie Hutchinson is not standing again as she has moved north to Cumbria. The position of PCC Secretary is therefore vacant. Julie gave a brief outline of what the role involved. There were no volunteers for this role. Geoff Bailey, David Halliwell, Christopher Jack, Elizabeth Jack and Louise Whittaker were happy to stand again and were nominated and seconded accordingly. There are now 3 vacancies on the PCC. Rachael encouraged people to consider standing on the PCC and reinforced how important it is to have a cross section of people on the PCC.

The Deanery Synod representatives, Mark Halliwell, David Redfern and Richard Wood need re-electing and all wished to stand again. They were nominated and seconded accordingly.

Nominations were elected to the PCC and Deanery Synod unanimously.

PCC MEMBERSHIP FOR 2023-2024 will be -

Incumbent Vacancy – Rev Peter Barham is retiring due to ill health.

Church Wardens Paul Smith

VACANCY

Parish Safeguarding Officers Louise Whittaker

Madeleine Fullerton

Treasurer Chris Jack

Secretary VACANCY

Readers Deborah Simpson

ELECTED MEMBERS OF THE PCC

Michèle Aspinall

Geoff Bailey

Matthew Cooper

Richard Flatman

Madeleine Fullerton

David Halliwell

Chris Jack

Elizabeth Jack

Louise Whittaker

DEANERY SYNOD REPRESENTATIVES – EX OFFICIO PCC MEMBERS

Mark Halliwell

David Redfern

Richard Wood

Retiring members at APCM 2024

Matthew Cooper, Richard Flatman.

Retiring members at APCM 2025

Michèle Aspinall, Madeleine Fullerton.

Retiring members at APCM 2026

Geoff Bailey, David Halliwell, Christopher Jack, Elizabeth Jack, Louise Whittaker.

5. Annual Report of the PCC

The report is contained within the 2023 APCM booklet.

Rachael thanked Julie for her work as PCC Secretary. The parishioners showed appreciation with applause.

6. Financial Report

The full report is contained within the 2023 APCM booklet.

In summary, Chris Jack reported that the surplus for the year is £11,825, however, this includes the transfer of Land Charities into the PCC accounts and is, in real terms, a £10,000 loss.

Chris thanked Geoff and Richard for all their work and research into the land associated with the Land Charities. The land is now being registered as being in ownership of the PCC.

Costs have increased, mainly due to fuel costs more than doubling. Donations have decreased by £5,000.

Hall lettings have now recovered after COVID and a small profit is being made which is being invested in the building. Insulation has been increased significantly. Chris thanked Geoff and Richard for doing this.

Despite the PCC having considerable savings, the position of increasing outgoings and decreasing incomings could lead to disaster in the future and Chris is keen to start an increased giving campaign.

Chris thanked members of the Finance Committee and Peter Hilton, for support through the year.

Steve Burton asked about the £3,500 donation to St Nicholas to support their work with young people and why St Edmunds hasn't seen any young people. Chris felt it was important to encourage young people within the wider community and Michèle felt there were positive signs for the future. Rachael, in her role, reported about the many things that were happening and how working with young people can make slow progress as trust needs to be gained. A Christian Union group has been set up at Woodlands. Rachael felt that services have to be welcoming to young people and have to be what they want to come to so changes to our services may be needed if we want to see more young people attending.

Chris Willis felt the cost paid to the registrar for registering the land was very high. Chris explained that it was the cost of the solicitor assigned by the Diocese.

Rachael thanked Chris for all his hard work.

7. Appointment of Auditor/Independent Financial Examiner

Peter Hilton has volunteered to be an independent financial examiner again next year. Proposed by Chris Jack. Seconded by Paul Smith. Majority for.

8. Presentation of Committee Reports

Committee reports are printed in full in the APCM booklet. Extra comments are recorded below.

Children's Work – Rachael and Alex are putting something together for small children to make services more child friendly. Volunteers needed.

Baby and Toddler – Rachael did a service prior to Easter which was lovely.

Flower Group – Rachael thanked Michèle and her team for the stunning displays that they create. Michèle explained that there were many volunteers in the Flower Group, not all members of church and she thanked them for generous donations.

Bookworms – Cyra is now running this and there are some spaces. Julie will be greatly missed.

Events Committee – This is back up and running with Michèle and Elizabeth organising various things. More volunteers are needed.

Food Bank – Paul feels this is most worthwhile and benefits the whole city. As Julie and Dave have moved away, more volunteers are needed to take the food collection to the Hope Centre in Derby. Thank you to everyone who supports this.

Luncheon Club – Rachael thanked Anne Madge and her team.

Handbell Group – more people are welcome to attend.

Ground force – Steve Burton reported that there was a core of about 8 people regularly helping, 4 from within the church community and 4 from the local community. Rachael thanked Steve and his team and confirmed that the church grounds always look neat.

Safeguarding – Louise explained that safeguarding is becoming an increasing part of church life. All training is up to date. Louise reiterated that the most important thing to remember is that if anyone has any concerns about anyone around them then please speak to Louise or Madeleine. Michèle proposed a round of applause in appreciation of all the work that Louise and Madeleine do.

9. Churchwardens' Report

The report was printed in full in the APCM booklet.

Paul recounted how his phone hasn't stopped ringing since he took over the role of Church Warden and he has had to deal with all sorts of issues. He is so grateful to everyone who has helped him in dealing with all these issues. He has felt very supported and this is why he is happy to continue as Church Warden. Paul was pleased that the Archdeacon's inspection stated that St Edmund's is a small church but is very well kept and the churchyard too. He confirmed that he had carried out the annual churchwarden inspection and inventory check and that neither had revealed matters of concern.

Rachael thanked Paul for all his hard work.

The parishioners showed thanks to Paul with applause.

10. Vicar's Report

The Vicar's report was printed in full in the APCM booklet.

Rachael reported that Peter and Julie's last service will take place at St Edmund's on Sunday 30th April. It will be very hard for all and Rachael is hoping for a service of joy as well as poignancy. We will all continue to pray for Peter and Julie.

A big thankyou was given to all the clergy and readers who have stepped in and supported the church. All services have run with very little disruption.

Rachael is really enjoying working at St Edmunds and is looking forward to taking evensong soon. She is pleased that St Edmund's is maintaining its congregation through this very difficult time and that we are supporting each other.

11. Opportunity for questions

There were no questions.

Sarah Watson, Area Dean, congratulated everyone for the big turn out for an APCM. She thanked everyone for all they do for St Edmund's and she is holding the whole community in prayers. She feels there is huge potential going forward from the foundations that Peter and Julie have laid and there is hope. There was a round of applause.

The meeting closed with prayer.

Presentation of the Electoral Roll

PCC Report for May 2023 to April 2024 – Paul Smith (Church warden & Acting Lay Chair)

The Parochial Church Council (PCC) is responsible for co-operating with the incumbent to promote the whole mission of the church: pastoral, evangelical, social and ecumenical.

Members are Trustees of the church's affairs, buildings and resources. Some are ex officio (clergy, readers, wardens and deanery synod reps), the rest are elected by the Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM) in accordance with the Church Representation Rules. The PCC can also co-opt up to two members.

PCC MEMBERSHIP FOR 2023-2024 was:

Incumbent Vacancy – Rev Peter Barham retired in May 2023 due to ill health.

Churchwardens Paul Smith

VACANCY

Parish Safeguarding Officers Louise Whittaker

Madeleine Fullerton

Treasurer Chris Jack

Secretary Thelma Thompson

Readers Deborah Simpson

ELECTED MEMBERS OF THE PCC

Michèle Aspinall

Geoff Bailey

Matthew Cooper

Richard Flatman

Madeleine Fullerton

David Halliwell

Chris Jack

Elizabeth Jack

Louise Whittaker

DEANERY SYNOD REPRESENTATIVES

Mark Halliwell

David Redfern

Richard Wood

Changes in the course of the year were that Julie Barham left when Revd Peter retired. Deborah Simpson has not attended any meetings, no longer worships at St Edmund's, and has just recently announced she is retiring after many years of active reader ministry. Michèle Aspinall and Madeleine Fullerton stood down from the PCC in the course of the year for personal reasons, but both have continued to make special contributions to the life of the church. In the last 12 months, meetings have been chaired either by me as Warden or by the Revd Rachael Brooks.

Retiring members at APCM 2024:

Matthew Cooper, Richard Flatman.

Retiring members at APCM 2025:

None

Retiring members at APCM 2026:

Geoff Bailey, David Halliwell, Christopher Jack, Elizabeth Jack, Louise Whittaker.

PCC meetings take place every other month, preceded by meetings of the Standing Committee (SC). The SC sets the agenda for the main PCC meeting and also makes decisions on its behalf where necessary (e.g. issues too urgent to wait for the next meeting). The PCC has a number of sub-committees, notably finance, fabric, events and worship.

All meetings open and close with prayer and are minuted. A typical agenda is:

Apologies for absence

Minutes of the last meeting and matters arising (where not otherwise covered by the agenda)

Safeguarding

Treasurer's report including year-to-date financial position

Warden's report, including worship/church life, fabric and hall

Looking back/looking forward

Deanery synod and Allestree Churches Together (ACT)

Any other business

Date of next meeting

Issues the PCC has focused on this year include:

- Maintaining worship and the wider life of the church during Revd Peter's sick leave and the subsequent Vacancy.
- Working with our three sister parishes to recruit Revd Sarah and Revd Rachael to their new roles, and to support them in their ministry.
- Maintaining the fabric of the church, as well as the churchyard and the hall, to the best possible standard.
- Pursuing projects to save energy and reduce energy costs, notably the installation of improved insulation in the hall.
- Organising special services and other events to raise the profile of the church and welcome new members.
- Ensuring the church operates on a sound financial footing, and bringing all assets under the Treasurer's overview.
- Keeping safeguarding policies up-to-date, and making sure people are properly trained (and, where required, DBS-checked) and that information (e.g. on reporting a concern) is readily available.
- Ensuring that our employees have up-to-date terms and conditions, and are properly remunerated.

My thanks to all current and past members, without whose help the warden's role would not be possible. In closing, I give special thanks for the life of former PCC member Ken Eunson. He was a great support to me and many others and we send our very best wishes to Jacquie, Claire and the family.

Accounts for 2023 and Treasurers Report for 2024 APCM – Chris Jack (Treasurer)

Summary

The Receipts and Payments summary and Statement of Assets and Liabilities are attached to this report. The former shows a surplus for the year of £7,008.

Receipts and Payments

Planned Giving:

Despite our appeal last year, the amount we received from regular giving to the church fell by over £4,000. In times when the cost of living is rising and St Edmund's financial position is healthy, this is understandable. But as an indicator of number of donors it is worrying.

Legacies

We received £34,395 in legacies in the year, which exceeded the total from all living donors. We should all consider a donation when reviewing our wills. It is a sad way for us to generate income, but an important one.

Church Hall

Income from Hall lettings was £25,424, following an increase in rental charges and more bookings. Running and maintenance costs came to about £23,000, including work to improve roof insulation which was largely funded by a legacy from Enid Clark.

We continue to investigate more environmentally friendly ways of heating the hall.

Other Income

This includes a variety of sources including recharging of office expenses and Caroline's salary to St Matthews, sale of memorial plaques and refunds from the diocese of payments to visiting priests during the vacancy.

Parish Share

We paid our Parish Share in full, which is by far the largest expense we have. Many parishes do not achieve this. For 2024 the amount we are asked to give has gone down by over £10,000 which will certainly aid our finances.

Employment Costs

These have risen substantially as we reflect the government's National Living Wage requirements and a further increase in Caroline's hourly rate and overtime. We recognise the importance of the work Caroline does for both parishes and the extra work she has had to take on during the vacancy. We have further recognised this by bonuses which were agreed by the PCC and paid in 2023 and 2024.

The new arrangement of four linked parishes has highlighted significant differences between the hourly rate paid to Caroline and that paid to Emma, the administrator at St Nicholas. We have therefore taken steps in the last few weeks to bring them more into line.

Energy Costs

As I explained last year the cost of fuel for both the hall and, more significantly. the church is a major expense. In the winter we pay over £1,300 per month to heat the church. Our current contract expires in the middle of this year and I hope we can find a better rate, whilst I hope also changing to a 'green' supplier.

Assets

Our deposit accounts and investment funds continue to make acceptable returns.

In last year's accounts I failed to make clear that the investment account from the Churchwarden's Land Charity should be regarded as an Endowment - i.e. whilst we may use the return on this investment for the upkeep of the church, the capital may not be spent. This has been rectified and highlighted in this year's accounts.

Sawrey Hill Field

Documentation to register the field, which is currently still owner by the Churchwarden's Land Charity, had been submitted to the Land Registry. We are told this could take up to 2 years to complete, although we note that the Registry maps do now show the area as registered. We are still in some discussion with the diocesan registrar on the future legal ownership of the land.

Donations to Charity

Childrens Society £ 210

Christian Aid £ 474

Hardy Group £ 650

Malawi Students £ 905

Barnardos £ 650

Padley Group £ 650

RNI Deaf £ 650

Syrian Earthquake £ 350

TOTAL £ 4,539

Looking Forward

The overall financial position of the church remains very healthy and we are more than able to meet our current obligations including making significant donations to charity, thanks to our reserves. We are in a very fortunate position compared with some other churches. The reduction in parish share and potential fuel bill reductions will be offset by increased wage costs. The steady decrease in planned giving remains a concern.

I would like to record my thanks to members of the Finance Committee, who do a lot of the work of administering our finances. Without their help the Treasurer's job would be almost impossible. I would also like to acknowledge the help of our examiner Peter Hilton, who not only checks the numbers but also provides expert advice when needed throughout the year, without any charge.

St Edmund's, Allestree 2023 Accounts

RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS ACCOUNT

		Unrestricted	Designated	Restricted	Totals 2023	Totals 2022
		£	£	£		£
RECEIPTS						
	Notes					
1 & 2	Planned Giving	34,082			34,082	38,463
3	Collections at services	5,159			5,159	5,187
4	Other voluntary giving and donations	6,286		211	6,497	4,661
6	Tax recovered	8,494			8,494	10,158
	Total from donors	54,021	0	211	54,232	58,470
7	Legacies	24,303		10,092	34,395	9,000
8	Grants	0				900
9	Fund raising	0		582	582	632
10	Bank Interest	5,683		4,158	9,841	3,966
11	Service Fees	6,152			6,152	6,953
12	Trading Income: Hall	25,424			25,424	20,472
12	Trading Income: Magazine and book sales	1,691			1,691	1,568
13	Other income	17,156			17,156	39,563
13c	Agency income	6,713			6,713	10,748
	Total Other Income	87,122	0	14,832	101,954	93,801
TOTAL RECEIPTS		141,143	0	15,043	156,186	152,271
PAYMENTS						
17	Fund raising					350
18	Outward giving	1,039	3,500		4,539	6,845
19	Common Fund - Parish	54,527			54,527	54,527
20	Salaries and Honoraria	25,296		949	26,245	19,718
21	Clergy expenses	4,968			4,968	4,043
22	Mission giving	-			-	3,500
23	Church Running Expenditure	11,939		1,954	13,893	14,150
24	Church utilities	10,524			10,524	4,563
25	Cost of Trading	22,804	4,493		27,297	18,422
26	Governance	361			361	389
99	Other costs	1,545			1,545	3,519
	Agency Payments	5,279			5,279	10,421
TOTAL PAYMENTS		138,282	7,993	2,903	149,178	140,446
Excess of Receipts over Payments		2,861	-7,993	12,140	7,008	11,825
OPENING CASH BALANCES		130,543	498	100,013	231,054	219,229
TRANSFER BETWEEN FUNDS		-7,500	7,500			
CLOSING CASH BALANCES		125,904	5	112,153	238,062	231,054

STATEMENT OF ASSETS AND LIABILITIES

		Unrestricted £	Designated £	Restricted £	Totals 2023	Totals 2022 £
CASH FUNDS						
	Cash and cheques on hand	1,233			1,233	0
	CAF current	7,909	5		7,914	9,696
	CAF deposit	25,013		112,153	137,166	132,459
	CCLA deposit	91,749			91,749	88,900
	TOTAL	125,904	5	112,153	238,062	231,054
INVESTMENT FUNDS VALUATION						
	CCLA CBF account				246,790	219,241
	CCLA CBF account (Endowment from Churchwarden's Land charity)	1			169,370	154,803
CHURCH HALL		2			114,000	114,000
CREDITORS	Agency				1,434	327

Notes to Accounts

- 1 Previously classed as a restricted fund, the capital transferred from the Churchwarden's Land charity should be classed as an Endowment in line with the historical documentation available. The change in value of this investment, held by CCLA CBF, is retained in the endowment and cash payments from it placed in a Restricted fund for use as described in that documentation, i.e. the maintenance of the fabric of the church.
- 2 The church hall is valued at £114,000, but is insured for £1 million. The land on which the hall stands was donated to the church by the Offilers Brewery, with the condition that it is used for ecclesiastical purposes. This clearly limits the open market value of the land and hence the hall.

ST EDMUND'S CHURCH ALLESTREE PCC

**INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE PCC OF
ST EDMUND'S CHURCH ALLESTREE**

I report on the accounts of the PCC for the year ended 31st December 2023, which comprise the Receipts and Payments Account and Statement of Assets and Liabilities.

This report is made solely to the trustees in accordance with Section 145 of the Charities Act 2011 and the Church Accounting Regulations 2016. My work has been undertaken so that I might state to the members of the PCC those matters I am required to state to them in an Independent Examiner's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, I do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charity and the charity trustees for my examination work.

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

The Charity's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. They consider that an audit is not required for this year (under Section 144 of the Charities Act 2011 (the Act)) and that an independent examination is needed. It is my responsibility to examine the accounts (under Section 145 of the Act, to follow procedures laid down in the General Directions given by the Charity Commissioners (under Section 145 of the Act and Church Guidance, 2016 edition and to state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

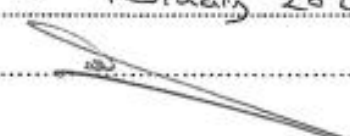
Basis of independent examiner's report

My examination was carried out in accordance with the General Directions given by the Charity Commissioners. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the Charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from you as trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently I do not express an audit opinion on the view given by the accounts.

Independent examiner's statement

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

- 1 which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements
 - to keep accounting records in accordance with Section 130 of the Act; and
 - to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the Acthave not been met; or
- 2 to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Name P B Hilton FCA
Address 5 Wharfedale Close, Allestree, Derby
Date 23rd February 2023
Signed 

PCC Committee and other Group/Activity Reports

Children's Work – Cyra Buxton

Following last year's AGM, Rachael had a small meeting with a few of us to discuss children's church. Alex then led an informal meeting over coffee, after church on 16th July. We had a good discussion about ways St Edmund's could become more welcoming to children and their families. Our initial plan was to make story sacks for young children to borrow and enjoy when they come to Sunday services, baptisms, weddings etc. We also discussed the need to sort out the existing toys and books and to make the tower area into a more appealing space.

A big thank you for all the enthusiasm and hard work from so many people involved in knitting, sewing, washing toys, sorting out broken and noisy toys, searching for items for story sacks etc. It has been a real team effort, including the WI, who made some lovely bags for us. More story sacks are being completed but do have a look at the ones we have so far.

It has been lovely to see a few children using the tower area and story sacks during services and I also met a grandma recently who regularly pops in to read books to her grandson.

There is a lot more to be done, and we are very pleased that Rachael will be able to bring her experience and expertise to encouraging families to join us!

Church Magazine – Fiona Fraser & Chris Willis

Fiona Fraser (all the work), Chris Willis (proof reading and distribution), Paul Smith (proof reading).

The Parish Magazine continues to be produced throughout the year, 11 magazines being produced in the 12 month period, due to the double issue in December/January. The magazine 'year' runs from 1st July - 30th June in any one year. This was adopted at a time when subscriptions were collected in person by distributors, and weather would most likely be fine and evenings were light. This had to stop during covid restrictions, and the system of paying direct was adopted and, having been adopted, this system has remained in place.

The cost of the magazine is still £1 per copy, but for those who have the magazine delivered and pay in advance the cost is £10 per annum. There is a strong case for an increase in the cost of the magazine, because the printers have kept the price of printing down for some years and this likely to change.

On average 200 magazines are printed by John E Wright in Derby. Of these 12 are posted, 122 are delivered by hand by a team of 14 devoted helpers, 20 are placed for sale in the Newsagent at Blenheim Parade and 5 in the Pharmacy there. 2 free copies go to the Library at Park Farm Centre.

The lions share of the work in producing the magazine is done by Fiona – to whom much grateful thanks is due.

Church Hall Report – Caroline Audley

St Edmund's Preschool continue to use the hall Monday-Friday during term time and School's Out hire the hall during most holidays. We also welcome Ballet on a Monday (term time) as well as a new group who have moved from St Nick's – The Tuneless Choir. Studio 86 (a dance class, term time) and Derventio choir hire the hall on a Tuesday. Brownies and Guides are in on a Wednesday (term time). Thursday's and Friday's tend to be free as we no longer have Studio 86 on a Thursday. Ann Miller's choirs hire the hall

fairly regularly but this tends to be at the weekend when we also have parties. We are grateful to them all for this invaluable income.

National Grid have very recently been doing work in the sub-station at the back of the hall and have said they'll resurface the fake grass area at the top as well as replace the sleepers.

Thank you as always to Tony for helping with various aspects of the hall from moving all of the chairs, cleaning the windows and dusting the high corners to sweeping the outside play area for the pre-school. We are very grateful.

Baby & Toddler Group – Caroline Audley

The group which meets on a Thursday during term time from 10-11.30am seems to be very popular. I don't ask people to book as this can be stressful for new parents and plans also change so some weeks are lighter than others but some weeks are very busy. I welcome childminders who tend to bring multiple children. I don't think it's right to exclude them like some groups do.

The group offers fruit and biscuits, squash, tea and coffee. This is kindly donated from Morrison's in Belper and their Community Champion Lucy.

Thank you again to Tony for helping week after week to get all of the toys in and out of the cupboard, I couldn't do it without him.

Thanks also to Michèle who has been coming to help make teas and coffees as well as wash up at the end so there isn't so much to take home.

Thanks also to Anna Oldknow, St Nick's Children's Worker who is coming more regularly to help Michèle and I.

Flower Group - Michèle Aspinall

2023 was a year in which flowers served as a backdrop for our church community and national life. In April, we were sad to bid farewell to Peter, our vicar, in very difficult circumstances. Peter gave whole-hearted support to the flower team and always shared his appreciation publicly. The church was beautifully decorated for Peter's and Julie's farewell service. They will be much missed.

In June, for the Coronation of King Charles, church and village came together to provide flower displays, memorabilia and local community information, all of which filled the church with colour. This was a wonderful opportunity to celebrate and showcase the many and varied activities of St. Edmund's and local organisations; a truly special occasion for the parish and people of Allestree to share.

In normal circumstances, the church flower group ensures that fresh flowers are always on display for services apart from Lent and Advent. A special effort is made for festivals such as Easter and Christmas. Appropriate flowers and colours are also in place for Remembrance Sunday, Whitsun etc. We always try to follow the wishes of families for funeral flowers and also provide arrangements to celebrate anniversaries or memorials.

Some of our funding comes from wedding flowers, when we make a small profit whilst still providing flowers at a more competitive price than some florists. Thanks to generous donations from individuals, the congregation's response to appeals and the skills of the group, the floral arrangements at Easter, Harvest and Christmas continue to impress. Mothering Sunday flowers are also provided from this funding.

The church flower group gladly welcomes new recruits. Many of our team are also members of Allestree Flower Group. No flower arranging skills are required as full training is offered by our expert, talented team. Volunteers to clear flowers and help with "normal" weeks are particularly welcome. We see flower

arranging as a pleasant, social and creative way of serving the church and helping to make it a welcoming and comforting place at the heart of our community.

Choir - Elizabeth Jack

We continue with our busy schedule and are pleased to continue the regular pattern of sung services - 2 morning and 2 Evensongs plus a goodly number of joint services throughout the year with St. Matthew's choir.

We sang a most memorable joint choral Evensong in celebration of the coronation of King Charles III, the highlight being Handel's Zadok the Priest. The choir then performed this piece again with 100 others at an RSCM festival at Derby Cathedral under Alex Binns' direction. We commemorated the 400th anniversary of the deaths of William Byrd and Thomas Weelkes at a July choral Evensong.

July also saw us join with St. Matthew's to say goodbye to John Gratton who has led the choir there for so many years and are delighted that he and Alison continue to sing. We were very grateful to Geoff Howell who took over the reins during the musical interregnum there and we're now enjoying working with Tim Capes.

The choir enjoyed a very sociable evening meal at the Hanging Gate at Shottle in September – the first choir dinner since pre-lockdown. We were finally able to toast the memory of Brian Bonsall, a much missed tenor, with a glass of champagne.

The Christmas season saw the choir leading the singing for Carols in the Churchyard and providing a good mix of styles at the carol service. The early weeks of 2024 were full - organising an afternoon Epiphany celebration in the church hall with words and music and we felt honoured to lead the singing of hymns at the licensing of Rachael and Sarah in Walter Evans School Hall. Rachael has since been very supportive of the choir, particularly at choral Evensongs. Congregations for these wonderful services are usually small – we would urge you to join us for a reflective end to the day on the 2nd and 4th Sundays of each month.

Sincere thanks go to David Redfern, our regular organist and Tom Corfield who plays for several choral Evensongs for us and also to other singers who join us from time to time. Huge thanks to my wonderful choir who continue to support me and sing to such a high standard.

Bookworms - Cyra Buxton, Jane Burton and Anne Madge

Bookworms has continued to meet monthly throughout the year in St Edmund's choir vestry and currently has 10 members from both St Edmund's and St Matthew's parishes.

The nature of the group has had to change slightly due to Julie Barham, the instigator and initial leader of the group, leaving the area. Having concluded the list of books suggested by Julie at the end of 2023, we have now moved on to discussing titles put forward by the individual members of the group. The current list covers a range of different genres and geographical settings, but interestingly all the books were written within the last 110 years. The specific titles are listed on the church website and in the parish magazine.

Members continue to enjoy being introduced to new authors and/or titles and the opportunity to share their life and literary experiences with fellow booklovers.

Events Committee – Elizabeth Jack

The events committee resumed its work in 2023 with myself, Michele Aspinall, Mary Pollett, Diane Bakhda and Gill Flatman planning various events, some of which have already taken place. The bring and share Harvest Supper was very well received. We decorated the tables with fruit and flowers and there was an abundance of food. We provided drinks and nibbles after Patronal Festival Evensong and at Candlemas and a joint effort by both churches saw a wonderful spread after Sarah and Rachael's licensing. Pastries were much appreciated both at the afternoon Epiphany celebration and after Sarah and Rachael's Declaration service.

More events to come!

Food Bank – Paul Smith

As in previous years, we have supported the Hope Centre (Curzon Street) with monthly donations of groceries and toiletries. These are collected on the first Sunday of the month (food bank Sunday) and are then taken to Curzon Street by one of our team of volunteers. Special thanks to Revd John Rice, Chris & Elizabeth Jack, and Chris Willis for doing this on a regular basis.

It's been well publicised that food banks have been in very great demand during the cost of living crisis and ours is no exception to this. While some may argue that food banks should not be necessary, the truth is that many individuals and families struggle to put the basic necessities on the table. By contributing, we are directly helping people in our City in the most pragmatic way possible. It is a source of satisfaction that people in our parish have continued to be most generous in their donations and we have seen little, if any, decline in support, just when this support is most needed. Whenever, we do a delivery to Curzon St, the organisers always make a point of saying a special thank you to us for all they receive from St Edmund's.

As with any other enterprise, the work is less if shared and we could really do with a couple more volunteers to help with this most valuable work. The more names we have on the rota, the less often your turn comes round! You don't need a large car and help with loading/unloading can be readily arranged. Please speak to me if you would like to join our team.

Luncheon Club – Anne Madge

We have had another successful year with a great team of volunteers to enable the club to continue to run smoothly.

A former helper, Julie Peck, who sadly died a little while ago, left us a generous and unexpected legacy for which we are very grateful. We are now in the happy position of being able to update some of our equipment and keep our prices at a manageable level of £5 for a 3-course meal as well as £5 for a place on the community bus, despite rising prices. We currently have a very healthy bank balance which includes a staff fund mostly donated by our members at Christmas of £59.50p. We have earmarked £600 to pay for 2 free meals this year, one for our birthday in May and the other for Christmas. We will shortly be purchasing new tablecloths and table centrepieces as well as some much-needed new kitchen equipment.

We were last visited by Environmental Health in November 2023 and were again awarded the top rating of 5 stars.

Thank you to all our volunteers, the staff who help on the day and the ladies on the pudding rota. You all have a very important contribution to make for this to continue to be a happy place for isolated people to meet, socialise and share a meal together.

We currently have 31 members on our books with some capacity on the bus. If you know anyone who would like to join us, please let us know.

Allestree Churches Together (ACT) – Clive Lemmon (St Matthew's) wrote this report.

Another successful Holiday at Home event was run in the summer of 2023, but it was thought best to wait until the two new Anglican priests were in post before working out what the future of ACT should be. Since the arrival of Sarah Watson and Rachael Brooks (to serve the four Anglican parishes) there have been discussions with Rashel Beya (minister at Broadway Baptist Church) and Judith Neal (Lay Pastor at S. John's Methodist Church) and there is now a plan to wind up the formal ACT organisation, but to carry on oecumenical activity across the constituent churches in other ways.

Handbell Group – Gill Flatman

It is a whole year since we welcomed our new leader, Bryan Clarke, who very soon became our new Chairman too!

Although we miss Janice Johnson and were so pleased when handbell ringers, Diana Saul and Carolyn Hardy, then stepped in to help lead us, we are more than happy that with Bryan conducting us we are able to use our full team as handbell ringers. As I noted last year, our new members are more talented musically than most of the existing members and their expertise is very welcome. On a sad note, we said farewell to Eileen Sturgess, a talented musician and a member of our group for many years. A few of us attended her funeral.

In mid December we entertained shoppers at Park Farm, while again supporting Blood Bikes. The shoppers' interest in Blood Bikes ensured they remained listening to us for longer! We will be pleased to support Blood Bikes again this year on December 7th, 2024 between 10.30 and 11.30 am and look forward to seeing you all there! We also played prior to the Nine Lessons and Carols in St Edmund's. Many of you attended our first concert under Bryan's leadership. We were delighted to be asked by Ann Miller to support her Voices Ensemble in this concert, enabling her to send £245 to Children First Derby, a local charity enhancing life opportunities for vulnerable children and their families.

As well as meeting weekly in the choir vestry we also meet socially outside practice time! Lola Davies arranges our social activities, which include Saturday Coffee Mornings at Hudson's and our annual Christmas Dinner, this year postponed until March!

Further to our support of Blood Bikes we are invited to their HQ in June to see and hear more about their work.

Richard ensures the bells are well maintained and took them to the Bell Foundry in Loughborough in summer, 2023 for their biennial inspection and minor refurbishment.

Groundforce – Steve & Jane Burton

The St Edmund's Groundforce team continues to meet once a month to maintain both the churchyard and church hall grounds. It consists of a loyal team of about 10 members from both within St Edmund's congregation and the wider community.

Over the past year due to the various storms, we have suffered damage to several trees in the churchyard which, although the council has made the trees safe, has necessitated clearing a considerable number of fallen branches from the graves. Unfortunately, despite our best efforts, this is still work in progress.

We have also had to tidy and do some replanting in the border alongside Vicar's Path where a neighbour had replaced the long boundary fence.

Due to badgers foraging for food, there has been further work trying to repair the worst of the damage they have done and gently discouraging them from further activity.

We have also removed the overhanging shrubs which were encroaching on Primrose's Book Shed and trimmed the laurel which was getting out of hand to the side of the church hall.

At the bottom of the churchyard we have created three new woodpiles as a habitat for small mammals and insects, with fallen dead wood and generally improved the area by removing some overhanging branches of the large leylandii hedge and large quantities of fallen leaves which were completely covering the graves.

Apart from this, there was the usual care of the flower beds, and a considerable amount of general leaf-gathering to enable the grass to grow and to allow the spring bulbs to thrive and be seen.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone in the Groundforce team for their willingness to turn out in all sorts of weather and their valuable contribution to the team.

Safeguarding - Louise Whittaker & Madeleine Fullerton (PSO's for St Edmund's Church, Allestree)

As the Parish Safeguarding Officers (PSOs) for Saint Edmund's Church, Madeleine Fullerton and Louise Whittaker are continuing to comply with our duties in relation to Safeguarding as set down in the House of Bishops Safeguarding policy 'Promoting a Safer Church'. We remain dedicated to fulfilling our PSO duties and have had a year of continuing to bring things up to date in readiness for the arrival of our new Minister in charge, the Rev Rachael Brooks who was licensed (along with the Rev. Sarah Watson) on Sunday 14th January and has been working alongside us since then.

We continue to ensure that relevant groups who provide services to the parish receive up to date safeguarding training and that up to date role descriptions and risk assessments for the specific groups are in place. In addition, the Safeguarding Training of all role holders within Saint Edmund's Church is currently up to date.

It is vital that we maintain as great a protection as possible for all members of our Church and the Diocese's Updating Service has been wonderful in ensuring that most DBS certificates have been easy to renew when necessary. We have one person who did not manage to join the updating service at the original time of applying for their certificate and whose re application process is ongoing. All other of St.

Edmund's role holders now have up to date DBS certification in place. We appreciate all the support we have been given to help us keep on top of all this paper work.

As we try to further protect our parish and its members at a safeguarding level, we have recently taken on board the suggestion of one of our volunteers who has completed their Leadership training pathway course. We have added a new 'Safe places' poster on to our parish notice boards providing information for victims of abuse by members of the church. We have also put a new page onto the parish website which gives useful Safeguarding information, numbers and emails for vulnerable people or people with concerns as a reference guide. The parish magazine will equally be providing contact numbers and website details for individuals to refer to in varying cases of concern. The suggestion for greater awareness of potential safeguarding issues in our Parish and the wider community and the need for help to cope with them, has led to our Church Warden Paul Smith writing the article for our March magazine 'Be smart and stay safe on your phone or PC'. This has been very well received and taken on by the Deanery. Our thanks go to Paul for his support with this important area of concern.

With regards to the Annual Safeguarding Audit (the 'Dashboard'), we continue to fulfil the requirements that are highlighted for us and we are currently up to date with all but one of the requirements. This future action concerns the individual DBS and updating service issue that we referenced above.

As part of our liaising with Church House in safeguarding matters relevant to the Dashboard, we have updated our Recruitment of ex-offenders policy in accordance with the Diocesan template that we received from Church House. This will hopefully be adopted at our next PCC meeting in May. We are also planning to adopt the Safeguarding Code of Conduct, the template of which has been forwarded to us by the Diocese and goes hand in hand with our Parish Safeguarding policy 'Promoting a Safer Church'. Subsequently, this will be given to and signed by all individuals who hold a volunteer or paid role at Saint Edmund's Church. Finally, with regards to keeping on top of safeguarding requirements, Madeleine and Louise have been asked by Rachael to re-look at the current Safeguarding policies for Saint Edmund's Church to improve and amend as necessary - for re-confirmation by the PCC in May. We will then compare them with the policies of our sister churches to ensure best practice.

Saint Edmund's has been one of ten Parishes trialling a second online Dashboard Hub, which enables PSOs to keep track of training and DBS checks and ensure that all roles are compliant with guidance. This first phase of the rollout has been discussed and having taken part in one of the feedback sessions, it appears to have been a positive experience in general. However we wait to hear back from the Diocese as to how it will be taken forward taking into account the cost and complexity of it being offered to all of the parishes in the Diocese. Louise's experience of it however was extremely positive.

Since the last Annual Safeguarding report, we have had one Safeguarding issue arise concerning the mental health of a former member of our parish. This has been addressed and we have very much valued the support we were given in this matter from Church House.

We look forward to working closely with Sarah and Rachel on our Safeguarding responsibilities in the months ahead and we will continue to report back to the PCC at each meeting.

Finally we would like to remind everyone that a copy of the Parish Safeguarding handbook 'Promoting a Safer Church' brings into one place the key safeguarding responsibilities for parishes and is designed to

support day to day safeguarding work. It is available online in its most up to date format and can be found by going to www.churchofengland.org/safeguarding for everyone to access.

Churchwardens' Report – Paul Smith

Worship and Church Life

The dominant factor here was the serious illness of our former Vicar, Revd Peter Barham. He started the year on sick leave and took early retirement on ill-health grounds in May. This triggered a Vacancy. Fortunately, we were able to maintain our normal pattern of worship. We benefited from a 3-month leadership placement which involved Revd Rachael Brooks ministering to St Edmund's and St Matthew's.

New Clergy

Then in October and following a recruitment process which required the PCC to draw up and approve a new parish profile, Bishop Libby announced Rachael's appointment as Associate Priest as part of a wider restructuring within the Deanery. This means that she and Revd Sarah Watson are now licensed across the parishes of St Edmund's, St Matthew's along with St Nicholas (Allestree) and St Paul's (Quarndon), with Rachael leading for the first two and Sarah for second two. Both have been given a strong mission brief to minister to the approximately 5,000 children and young people of our area.

The Support We've Had

Framed appreciation certificates have been issued to the principal clergy and readers whose help enabled us to run our normal pattern of worship throughout the year as well as numerous occasional offices (baptisms, weddings, funerals, interments of ashes). Special thanks also go to Barbara Coe who, along with Clive Lemmon, managed the clergy rota throughout the year. Mention must also be made of our parish administrator, Caroline Audley, who took on significant extra responsibility as a result of Revd Peter's sick leave and the subsequent Vacancy.

Cause to Celebrate

Although 2023 was in many ways a difficult year for the reasons outlined above, we have much to celebrate and be grateful for. Highlights included:

- The services to say farewell to Peter and Julie, attended by over 150, and to celebrate the coronation of HM King Charles III and Queen Camilla.
- A special choral evensong in July to mark 400 years since the death of English composer, William Byrd. This is just one of so many acts of worship supported by our choir and organists.
- The award of the Bishop's Badge to Michèle Aspinall at a special service in the Cathedral in September, recognising her long service and commitment to St Edmund's. Two other parishioners, Bryan and Margaret Clarke, received Badges at this service to honour their work.
- The book sales run by Diane Bakhda, assisted by numerous helpers.
- The monthly churchyard working parties involving our Groundforce volunteers. We regularly receive favourable comments on how neat and well-kept this area is.
- Work to make the tower area more attractive to visiting children. This has involved preparing book bags and making a large number of hand-knitted toys.
- A most-moving Remembrance Service, led by Revd John Rice and attended by our three City Councillors and HM Deputy Lord Lieutenant, as well as by our friends from the Royal British Legion.

- A wonderful series of services through Advent and Christmas, which saw record numbers attend church and also allowed significant donations to the Children's Society and to Christian Aid. Huge thanks to all involved, and especially to Revd Lee Martin who not only led two very well-attended crib services on Christmas Eve but also came back at 11.30pm to take us into Christmas Day with the traditional Midnight Mass.

Fabric

The management of the church itself, along with the churchyard and the heavily-used church hall, have created a very demanding workload.

Work Completed and Ongoing

Work has included necessary checks of fire, electrical and gas safety as well as numerous running repairs and some specialist work to refurbish our historic tower clock to keep it in good running order. Various work has also been done, and redone, to keep roofs, gutters, and downpipes clear so as to avoid potentially very expensive water damage. At the same time, we are seeking to move towards net Zero (and manage our energy costs) with ongoing projects to improve insulation, evaluate alternative heating methods and make our church lighting both more effective and more efficient.

In the hall, contractors installed much improved insulation to limit heat loss. Also, Geoff Bailey (assisted by several helpers) designed and installed a new ceiling in the storage area leading off the meeting room. This area, previously un-ceilinged and so open right up to the underside of the roof, had been identified as a significant pathway for heat to be lost from the building. This work was funded by a legacy from the estate of Enid Clarke, former warden, and choir member. A plaque has been placed in the hall to honour her and record the use to which her legacy has been put.

We also have an ongoing issue with the retaining wall to the west of the church hall car park.

In all these, I have had the outstanding support of the Fabric Committee comprising Geoff Bailey, Richard Wood, Richard Flatman and David Halliwell.

Following a suggestion made to PCC, building handbooks have been compiled for both the church and the hall. These capture essential information such as names of key holders, location of stop cocks and meters etc.

Vicarage

With the Vicarage being vacant, we also have supported the Diocese by making regular checks to ensure all is well with this building. Special thanks to Geoff Bailey and Matt Cooper who have willingly taken on this extra responsibility.

Land Charities

I am also grateful to Richard Flatman and our Treasurer, Chris Jack, for their ongoing work to wind up the Churchwarden's and Parish Clerk's Land Charities and transfer their assets to the PCC.

Parish Priest's Report – Rev'd Rachael Brooks

Report on my placement in 2023.

The purpose of curate leadership placements is to have a three-month stint in charge of a benefice that is without a vicar in order to gain experience of leading alone, but with access to their Training Incumbent for mentoring at a distance.

I came to St Edmund's on 19th February, introduced by Archdeacon Matthew. The brief he gave me was not just to get the experience I needed of leading a two-parish benefice and taking more traditional Anglican services, but to focus on supporting the parishes in re-engaging with children / schools post-covid.

During my three and a half months I was with you I did each of these things. I attended PCC meetings and led the APCM. I was supported very well by the choir in learning how to lead Choral Evensong in particular, as well as taking morning services. I took an assembly at Portway Junior School on the coronation and popped into the St Edmund's Toddler group as well as telling the Easter story to the Preschool and toddler group in the church.

Towards the end of my time with you I met with a group of you who were keen to provide a more welcoming space for children and we discussed the possibility of setting up a children's group. The latter wasn't deemed feasible, but the story bag idea I suggested was, and it was a delight to find several in the tower when I arrived back with you. If you've not seen them, do have a look, they have a story book and various props that help to tell the story, such as knitted sheep, vegetables, a green farmer and more. All created by members of the congregation and others outside church who were supportive. There has been feedback that they're appreciated by people who bring their children or grandchildren in for a storytime during the week. Not something we anticipated but great to hear!