

**The United Benefice of
Carlton in Lindrick
with
Langold and Oldcotes**

**St. John the Evangelist
St. Luke's & St. Mark's**

**Annual Parochial
Church Meeting**



2024

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**UNITED BENEFICE
of
St John the Evangelist, Carlton in Lindrick
with Langold and Oldcotes
2024**

**Agenda: Annual Vestry Meeting, Sunday 12th May 2024
11.30 a.m. in the Parish Centre**

(Open to all Parishioners and Electoral Roll Members)

1. Minutes:
2. Election of Church Wardens:

1. Annual Vestry Meeting May 29th 2023 - Minutes

The Rector opened the meeting with a prayer.

Chair, the Revd. Mark Orr

Attendees: 28

Apologies from A, & J. & V.Harrison; P. Wilson; R. Roberts, D. Smith

1. Minutes of the Annual vestry meeting of 2022 were circulated and accepted.
2. The Rector welcomed everyone and explained the roles and responsibilities of the churchwardens which ensure that we are able to carry out the requirements of church functions. The Rector asked for anyone to come forward who would like to shadow and learn more about the roles with a view to future involvement. He thanked Pat Shepherd and Richard Smith for their continued work as wardens and also those who work to provide their support for the running of all three churches across the Benefice .
3. The Wardens Pat Shepherd and Richard Smith were elected to continue in post as were the Deputy Wardens. This was supported unanimously.
4. Richard Smith thanked Trevor Smith for all his support as deputy during the year.

There will be a designated Sunday when Wardens will be commissioned. A date is to be advised.

Vestry Meeting closed.2.

2. Any necessary election

Agenda: Annual Parochial Church Meeting 2024

1. Apologies:
2. Minutes of APCM 2023:
3. Matters Arising:
4. Reports for APCM:
5. Finance and Presentation of Accounts:
6. Rector's Report
7. Election of PCC members where applicable
8. Appointment of Sidespeople
9. Appointment of Independent Examiner
10. Any Other Business

Annual Parochial Church Council Meeting 12th MAY 2024

1. Apologies received for the meeting of 12th May 2024

2. Minutes of the Annual United Benefice Meeting May 29th 2023.

Chair: Revd. Mark Orr

Attendees 28

The Rector welcomed 19 Parishioners from across the Benefice.

1. **Apologies:** were given by A, & J. & V. Harrison; P. Wilson; R. Roberts, D. Smith
2. **Minutes:** as circulated were accepted as a true record unanimously
3. **Matters arising:** there were no matters from the Minutes.
4. Reports

The Report on the Electoral Roll was accepted by all.

The Secretary's Report was accepted
The Safeguarding Report was accepted
The Fabric Report was accepted
The Parish Centre Report was accepted
The Deanery Synod Report was accepted
The Events Committee Report was accepted.
The CYP Report was accepted
St Luke's and St. Mark's reports were accepted.

5. Finance and Presentation of Accounts

St. John's

AF commented on the report as presented to the meeting. He explained how the papers provided gave an overall picture of the events of the year. For the first time in decades we have not paid the full Parish Share. The Rector spoke about the Parish Share and how we had a legal responsibility to pay that Share. However, we also have the responsibility to meet the day to day running costs of St. John's. He highlighted the areas of expenditure within the Diocese that are covered by the Parish Share which enables the training, employment and support of clergy and other support activities serving the Diocese.

St. Luke's & St. Mark's

MS had prepared reports for both St Luke's and St Mark's Churches stressing the impact of restricted available income and the challenge that presents in meeting running costs and making a full contribution to the Parish Share.

All Financial reports were accepted.

6. Rector's Report

The last APCM took place on 29th May 2022, after the lockdown restrictions were lifted in February 2022. Therefore, this APCM and this report covers the year of 2022 and how our benefice has managed the new 'normal' post 'Lockdown'.

The Rector would like to thank the wardens, the PCC, the members of the various committees, the many volunteers, and the congregation for their support and perseverance over the last year.

Our benefice has had to adapt our church service patterns to accommodate the situation of St Luke's and St Mark's churches. This situation may change and adapt over time as we try to address the circumstances of both churches. St Luke's now has a service at 4pm on the first Sunday of the month and the plan for St Mark's has a service on the 5th Sunday of a month and occasional services for festivals. Daily Morning Prayer has continued, and several bible studies have been conducted over the reporting period. The St John's service pattern seems to be appropriate for now. The Sunday services have been ably supported by Emma Fullelove in St John's and Eric James in St Luke's and St Mark's playing the piano.

Occasional Offices, weddings, baptisms, and funerals over this reporting period have continued as usual. There was an increase in wedding due to a backlog as a result of lockdown and similarly for baptisms. Funerals seem to be continuing at the normal frequency for the Benefice at around 30-40 over the year. I would like to thank Jeanette Hercun and Pat Shepherd for all their support and hard work in helping with the Occasional Offices.

Engagement with the local schools continues and has increased in all three schools over the later part of 2022 and looks positive for 2023. The Rector will continue to work to maintain good working relationships with the local schools.

Over the last year the Benefice has made steady progress in several areas, however, it has and is facing difficulties in others. The financial difficulties of the benefice are as always a concern particularly concerning our Parish Share, this will need to be addressed in the future.

In conclusion, the benefice has managed to come through 2022 with some success and some areas of concern. This situation is unlikely to change over the next year. However, God is likely to present new opportunities for us to move forward. As a Benefice we need to pray for God's support and the discernment of his will for our future.

Rev Mark Orr

Rector.

7. Election of PCC Members

The members of current PCC will remain in post and elections will, in future, take place in line with the Deanery Synod Cycle.

PCC Members 2023

<i>Pat Shepherd</i>	<i>Church Warden</i>
<i>Richard Smith</i>	<i>Church Warden</i>
<i>Rita Roberts</i>	<i>Deputy Warden</i>
<i>Andrew Fullelove</i>	<i>Deputy Warden</i>
<i>Pauline Moore</i>	<i>Deputy Warden</i>
<i>Trevor Smith</i>	<i>Deputy Warden</i>
<i>Emma Fullelove</i>	<i>Deanery Synod Rep.</i>
<i>Geoffrey Lewis</i>	<i>Deanery Synod Rep.</i>
<i>Jeanette Hercon</i>	<i>Reader</i>
<i>Christine Lewis</i>	<i>Secretary & Lead Recruiter PSO</i>
<i>Liz Smith</i>	<i>Penny Wilson</i>

8. Appointment of Sidespersons

Sidespersons have not been required during the year because of pandemic restrictions. There is a need to confirm the willingness of these and any new people to resume this responsibility.

8.15 am

B.Lord

Sidespersons at Baptisms are Pauline Moore and Pat Shepherd

10.00 am

J. Bartlett

C.Bower

Intercessors

A. & A. Bulmer

N. Goodacre

Please note that the listings in italics are awaiting 2023 amendment and arrangement

A. J. & V. Harrison

C. & G. Lewis

E. & R. Smith

T. Smith

Independent Examiner

Independent Examiner : D.Ingram to continue for St.John's.

Independent Examiner : Alan Hirst to continue for St.Marks and St.Lukes.

The Independent Examiners were both unanimously accepted.

The meeting closed with the Grace.

3. Matters arising from these minutes

4. Reports presented for the APCM

Report of the Electoral Roll Officer to the APCM May 2024

As at April 2023 the Electoral Roll was made up of 126 names - 99 residents and 27 non-residents. Sadly, during the year 3 residents passed away.

No new applications have been received.

In total there are now 123 names on the Electoral Roll. Of these 96 persons are resident in the parish and 27 persons are non-resident. This equates to 78.05 per cent of the roll being made up of residents, 21.95 per cent non-residents.

A copy of the roll can be found on the porch notice board in Church.

Pat Shepherd

Electoral Roll Officer

May 2024

Secretary's Report to APCM 2024.

Throughout the year 2023/24 I have undertaken to produce the minutes and reports for the regular cycle of PCC meetings and to liaise with the Wardens at St.John's and Maureen Smith for both St.Luke's and St.Mark's to ensure accurate records of the business of these meetings are kept and that they are submitted to the Diocese as required.

All meetings have been chaired by the Rector.

Minutes are circulated digitally and by hand where necessary. Pat Shepherd undertakes the circulation of minutes prior to the upcoming meetings along with the Agenda of that meeting.

There have been 6 regular, 1 Extraordinary meeting and 1 additional meeting held to consider recent guidance from the House of Bishops.

CAL/5/23.

Safeguarding Report to APCM 2023

We continue to follow the requirements set out by the Church of England to ensure that we acknowledge and uphold the standards required for effective Safeguarding for both Adults and Children across the Benefice.

We and all other national and local organisations are required to undertake training to ensure the safety and well-being of those taking part in worship and activities as well as securing DBS clearance.

I contact regular Hirers of the Parish Centre to discuss the safeguarding arrangements in place for the meetings which they hold and ask to see their policies.

The majority of training now is to be undertaken on-line directly from the Church of England website with the exception of Leadership and Domestic Abuse Awareness. These areas are covered by the Diocesan team and are mostly held on Zoom with some limited face to face sessions for Domestic Abuse and for Leadership.

Domestic Abuse training was held face to face for the Deanery in our Parish Centre in November 2023. 9 members from the Benefice took part. Guidance has been updated, and, although training is now no longer mandatory for all PCC members it is considered good practice that they should take part. John Moore offered his support for this area and has undertaken required training and checks.

There is an awareness that on-line training does not suit everyone but I will continue to support individuals as and when required.

The Benefice Safeguarding policy was updated and posted in Church in May 2023 and will be annually renewed. Contact details for services and publicity on subjects relating to Safeguarding are available

Training Sessions are organised on a quarterly basis and I alert those who need update training. Clergy and Laity are also part of the process. There is also a cycle of briefing meetings for PSO's and Lead Recruiters when updates and reports from the Diocesan team are shared with representatives from all the Parishes and Benefices.

A whole day event was held in July 2023 for PSO's from the whole Diocese which provided opportunity to consider issues and demands that are currently challenging Safeguarding teams. Two keynote speakers gave presentations on Mental Health and Support for Survivors as well as other developments that are taking place such as Voice of the Child following the Past case review.

A new on line system of recording is also coming into place which will enable tracking and recording of training, policy and practice.

Safeguarding Sunday was held in November in our Benefice and there will be another face to face event for PSO's in July.

Finally my Thanks for support and the positive attitude of our church community to Safeguarding.

Christine Lewis Parish Safeguarding Officer.

Fabric report for APCM May 2024.

We are continuing to carry out the regular maintenance work on the Church as and when necessary.

Risk Assessments/Health & Safety/Electrical issues: these are regularly checked and brought up to date as required.

There are major problems with the Becket Chapel roof. Water has been getting in through the old lead flashing which has caused significant cracking and weakening of the ceiling. The roof joists are not up to modern building standards and the Chapel will have to be reroofed as soon as possible. In the meantime the Chapel cannot be used because of the potentially unsafe roof.

Work has been carried out on the lightning conductor to bring it up to the modern standards as required by our insurers.

Repairs have been carried out to the stonework round a high window on the south side of the nave to try to prevent or reduce further erosion and crumbling. Part of the north aisle has been repainted where necessary to remove and replace flaking paintwork and water damage staining.

As previously reported the Churchyard is full, as is the Parish Council Burial Ground adjacent to the Churchyard. There is still the occasional burial or interment of ashes in these areas where there is space in an existing family grave or plot.

We are working with the Parish Council to complete the final legal closures of both these burial areas.

The Parish Council continues to be responsible for the general, regular maintenance of the Churchyard which it keeps to a satisfactory standard.

We have undertaken extensive repairs to the Churchyard paths this year at a cost of over £4000. It is hoped that we will be able to obtain grants towards this cost and towards other Church expenditure.

The trees have been professionally inspected as part of the regular safety checks and the necessary remedial work will be carried out as soon as possible.

New burials etc. continue to be in the new cemetery on Hundred Acre Lane.

Regularly work on maintaining and improving the Parish Centre is ongoing. There is rising damp in some areas which will need addressing. The toilet areas, particularly the ladies toilets, need a major refurbishment.

Carl Andrews as architect will be carrying out the overdue Quinquennial Survey in May.

Richard Smith (Churchwarden) April 2024

Parish Centre Report for APCM May 2024.

The use of the Parish Centre this year has been similar to that of last year with four main categories of user. The church has the lion's share with 80% of the use if the vacant sessions are included the remaining 20% is first taken up by regular users: 'The Little Drama Group', Slimmers' World', the Women's Institute and Probus with an additional group known as 'Lifeline' (for those with memory loss or needing companionship) joining us in February 2024; and the remaining portion of this time is then occupied by flower arranging classes and the celebrations and events booked by families as in previous years. The charges have remained the same throughout the year and are broadly in line with similar accommodation we believe although comparisons are notoriously difficult because of the differences in buildings and sessions offered.

The cost of Utilities has risen considerably over the year and we have changed supplier to use that recommended and negotiated by the Parish Buying Agency, the change was necessitated by the previous supplier discontinuing their gas supply business. The church and Parish Centre now use the same supplier, Total Energies. The supply of utilities and the insurance account for the vast majority of our spending and have tipped us into deficit this year as income from grants and gifts have become less and letting have fallen back as families economise. We have also extended the music licence to cover incidental music and some limited performance.

There have been no major repairs or replacements this year although maintenance and attention to the heating, lighting and cleaning have continued as necessary. In the coming year we will have to spend money to deal with the damp that has penetrated further and with more visible damage during the winter and the exterior paintwork is now in need of urgent attention too.

Thanks go once again to those from church who contribute to the care of the hall, to Sheri and Glyn Coxhill who clean for us and to Ann and Alan Bulmer for their diligent attention to the accounts.

Geoff. Lewis, Parish Centre.

Deanery Synod Report to APCM 2024

The Deanery meetings follow a similar pattern on each occasion. An act of worship and greeting is followed by reports of news from the parishes, a topic of current interest, introduced frequently by a visiting speaker, and business particular to this Deanery, Diocese or General Synod.

During the meetings this year there has been continuing concern and prayer for those parishes in the Deanery that are without an incumbent. There is an acknowledgement that few new clergy are looking for posts in rural areas and overall it is reported that few clergy

are moving between parishes. Vacancies also occurred at the Deanery Synod where both Chair and Treasurer were needed.

Work has been carried out on the Parish Share during the year to try and find some means of making it fairer to all churches and generally more affordable. Each parish has been asked to strive to pay this cost which enables the employment and deployment of clergy, however, as with our benefice, it is constantly seen as a demand hard to attain as congregations reduce in size. The Diocese has released money to help make the changes possible for this year but cannot undertake to do so in future years.

Among the topics of interest that were covered during the year presentations were given on the move towards “eco” churches where care was taken to try and reduce energy use and waste. A programme by *A Rocha* has been adopted by many churches which encourages measurement and monitoring of the churches ‘energy footprint’ and provides an award based on attention to environmental issues. We also heard an appeal from the ‘100 Homes’ organisation which is providing fostering places among Christian families and is currently extending work beyond Nottingham. We also heard from the author of ‘The Sound of Musings’ a faith based book and programme that uses music from the ‘Sound of Music’ to accompany songs and a narrative to engage people with the Gospel, some churches have set up events to make use of it. The presentation from Christian Aid was particularly appropriate and current as we heard about their involvement in many of the theatres of distress and war during recent months and reminded that Christian Aid Week is still alive and well using modern methods of collecting.

From the Diocese and the Deanery members information coming from the House of Bishops and Clergy about the progress of discussion following the introduction of Living in Love and Faith was disseminated, attention drawn to Bishop Paul’s letter and the appointment of the Bishop of Martin Bishop of Leicester to the Co-leadership of the working group and the Paper ‘Living in Love, Faith, and Reconciliation from the General Synod.

The representatives were also reminded of the *Southwell Vision Refresh* where each Parish was asked to: 1) reflect on progress and learning, 2) consider opportunities and needs and 3) discern their priorities in Growing Disciples, reaching wider, connecting younger, and nurturing deeper roots of faith for life and ministry together. This is reflected in the work we as a benefice have been undertaking with the Revd. Mark over recent months.

Thanks were also given from the Deanery and Diocese for the work done towards setting up and maintaining the ‘dashboard’ for safeguarding and moving forward towards the new Hub as a means of managing information.

Geoff. Lewis and Emma Fullelove

Events Committee Report for APCM 2024.

Since the beginning of May 2023 we have held 3 Church Fayres / Car Boot Sales which are our main fund raising events. These raised over £3,000 which was very pleasing. Car Boot numbers have varied depending on the weather and if there were any other Boot Sales in the area. General attendance has been good and visitors have been very enthusiastic and generous.

We have also held 3 social events which are not intended to be money raising but which do often make a profit. These included the lunch on Sunday May 7th to mark the coronation of Charles III. The meal consisted of various savoury dishes, several salads and new potatoes. The donations of puddings were outstanding. The tables and hall were appropriately decorated and there was a quiz and music. We raised a toast to our new King during the proceedings.

On Sunday 8th October we held the Harvest Bring and Share Lunch. James Williamson started the proceedings with a selection of popular songs. The audience joined in too at times. Emma Fullelove kindly played the piano and Maurice Needham provided a quiz. Everyone was very generous with food to share and with the raffle which raised £66. This was a most enjoyable occasion.

A Ploughman's Lunch was held on Sunday, February 4th 2024. This followed the usual pattern in term of refreshments and table quizzes. We had not asked for donations of puddings but several guests came along with delicious treats. Once again there was a really lovely atmosphere throughout and people did not seem to want to go home.

Once again our Methodist friends have joined us at several of these events.

Victoria Harrison now joins us at Event Committee meetings when appropriate so she has the information needed to help out with advertising on Social Media etc.

Many thanks to members of the Events Committee for their commitment and hard work again this year. Also to Chris and Geoff Lewis who, because of their oversight of the Parish Centre, always join in and help us. We do appreciate this.

Elizabeth Smith (Secretary)

1st. Carlton-in-Lindrick Scout Group

Group Scout Leader: Richard S. Smith.

Charity Registration Number: 522434.

ANNUAL REPORT FOR APCM MAY 2024.

This has been a tremendously successful year with a King's Scout Award, three members of the group attending the World Scout Jamboree. The Jamboree in South Korea did not turn out as expected for a number of reasons but our members had a super time doing a whole range of hastily organised activities. Luke Annals has now been presented with his King's Scout Award and has attended the Annual King's Scout Service and Parade in Windsor.

Numbers of young people in the group continue to increase and we are at maximum capacity in some sections. There are waiting lists of children wanting to join these sections, particularly those for younger children.

Our Squirrels celebrated their 'First Birthday' in November 2023. They continue to be most enthusiastic largely due to the excellent programmes arranged by their leaders. We have been able to pay for the refurbishment of part of the Parish Centre courtyard. This will enable more of our activities to be outdoors whenever the weather and other constraints allow

Inflation means that our costs have increased at a faster rate than usual. It now costs over £15000 each year to run our scout group. Every penny of this has to be raised locally through subscriptions, fundraising and any other available source. We are very appreciative of support for our fund raising and other activities.

We are very fortunate in having many excellent leaders and helpers but we always welcome extra help in all sections. The current leaders are all thanked for their hard work and the many hours they have put in during the year. We are very pleased that many of them continue to be involved with the Group after many, many years of valuable service. The Group is also grateful for the continued support from its Group Committee members. Finally the Group would like to thank everyone, including parents and friends of the Group, who has supported us during the year. Our thanks must also be extended to our Church, local authorities, charitable trusts and other organisations which continue to support us extremely generously financially.

We look forward to this support continuing in the forthcoming year.

A copy of the annual balance sheet is available on request.

Richard Smith

(Group Scout Leader)

May 2024

5. Finance and Presentation of Accounts

Treasurer's Comments

St. Mark's Church

St.Marks Church Financial Report to APCM 2024.

The church is open for 5th Sundays in the month, an average of 4 or 5 times per year. We rely on the support of the congregation from St.John's at those services.

Financially the support from a few monthly Gift Aided standing orders and the tax reclaimed from them. The Parish Share was paid for 2023.

Our thanks go to all who continue to support our church financially and the people from St.John's who continue to attend our services.

Maureen Smith Hon.Treasurer.

St. Luke's Church

We have continued with our monthly Service of the Word and have had a diverse mixture of congregation varying from having 9 attendees to only the three of Mark, Eric and myself. However, the numbers have recently improved with 2 new members and 2 recently returning members now attending on a regular basis. We live in hope and prayers that things will continue to grow.

Later this year we are planning a Harvest Festival the request of the local allotment society. They are also planning an exhibition of St.Luke's to begin the celebrations to mark the 100th anniversary of the building of Langold village. We are grateful to our rector Mark for all the effort that he puts into supporting us here in Langold and would like to take this opportunity to thank him, Eric and Jeanette for the encouragement that they give us.

Carol Bower 4/24.

St.Luke's Church Financial Report APCM 2024

Again we are having to transfer money from the CBF account held at Southwell to pay essential bills. We paid 50% of the Parish Share for 2023. The main expense other than that was the Roof repair.

I would like to ask you to accept the accounts for both St.Mark's and St.Lukes and to agree to appoint Alan Hirst as financial Examiner for 2024.

Maureen Smith Hon.Treasurer.

ST LUKE'S CHURCH LANGOLD

INCOME	£	EXPENDITUR	£
COLLECTION	420.93 ✓	EXPENSES	3737.17 ✓
PCC FEES	576.00 ✓	UTILITIES	1793.12 ✓
TRAVEL	80.00 ✓	PARISH SHARE	2058.00 ✓
TAX REFUND	286.38 ✓		
INTEREST	630.29 ✓		
GIFT AID	600.00 ✓		
	-----		-----
	2593.60 ✓		7588.29 ✓
DEFICIT	4994.69 ✓		

	7588.29		

2022	£	2023	£
CBF	19503.58 ✓	CBF	20128.66 ✓
CBF	162.61 ✓	CBF	167.82 ✓
C/A	7394.15 ✓	C/A	1769.17 ✓
	-----		-----
	27060.34 ✓		22065.65 ✓
DEFICIT	4994.69 ✓		

	22065.65 ✓		

HON. TREASURER

Michael B. K.

I have examined the books and vouchers of St Luke's Church Langold and in my opinion the foregoing accounts are correct and the statements of the transactions that have taken place during the year ending 31st December 2023

HON. AUDITOR

[Signature]

ST MARK'S CHURCH OLDCOTES ACCOUNTS 2023

INCOME	£	EXPENDITURE	£
COLLECTION	717.00 ✓	INSURANCE	761.69 ✓
GIFT AID	1280.00 ✓	UTILITIES	358.33 ✓
DONATIONS	120.00 ✓	EXPENSES	125.96 ✓
TAX REFUND	410.87 ✓		-----
	-----		1245.98 ✓
	2527.87 ✓	SURPLUS	1281.89 ✓

			2527.87 ✓
BFWD	1809.59 ✓	31/12/23 BALANCE	3091.48 ✓
SURPLUS	1281.89 ✓		

	3091.48 ✓		

HON TREASURER

Maureen B. M. L.

I have examined the books and vouchers of St Mark's Church Oldcotes and in my opinion the foregoing accounts are correct and the statements of the transactions that have taken place during the year ending 31st December 2023

Alan H. H.

HON AUDITOR

St John's Financial Report is Appended

6. Rector's Report for APCM 12th May 2024

The last APCM took place on 21st May 2022, and this report will cover the period from May 2023 to the date stated above.

The Rector would like to thank the wardens, the PCC, the members of the various committees, the many volunteers, and the congregation for their support and perseverance over the last year.

Current Situation

Our benefice changed the patterns of services for St Luke's and St Mark's for 2023 with St Luke's having a service on the 1st Sunday of the month at 4pm and St Mark's having a service on the 5th Sunday of a month at 10am. St John's had regular services every Sunday at 8:15am, BCP Holy Communion, and 10am Common Worship HC. The St John's 10am services have managed to maintain their attendance numbers, however the 8:15am services attendance has reduced by around 50%. This is likely due to the age profile of the usual 'BCP' congregation and the general decline of interest in BCP services.

St Luke's service attendance has been unpredictable over this period with the attendance fluctuating between 3 and 12 people. The services held St Mark's during 2023, these were well attended, however, this was mostly due to attendance from the usual St John's congregation.

The Sunday services have been ably supported by Emma Fullelove in St John's and Eric James in St Luke's and St Mark's playing the piano.

The Rector, wardens and PCC are aware of a combination of factors that have contributed to the steady decline in the regular service attendance of our churches over the past few years and will continue their work to find solutions.

Daily Morning Prayer has continued, and several bible studies have been conducted over the reporting period. The attendance and engagement with the Bible Study sessions has been generally good.

Occasional Offices, weddings, baptisms, and funerals over this reporting period have continued as usual. There was an increase in wedding due to a backlog caused by lockdown and similarly for baptisms in 2022. In 2023 there was only one wedding over the reporting period. However, the forecast for 2024 has returned to around six, which is about the average. Funerals seem to be continuing at the normal frequency for the Benefice at around 20-30 over the year. I would like to thank Jeanette Hercun and Pat Shepherd for all their support and hard work in helping with the Occasional Offices and I am grateful for the support of our vergers Jenny and Pauline.

The Benefice started a 'Parish Vision' programme in collaboration with the Methodist Church, to discern God's preferred future for our community and to formulate a plan for that future. During the last meeting, the group decided on the new mission statement, 'To share the good news of Jesus Christ with our whole community'.

The 'Parish Vision' project has progressed steadily and is starting to show fruit as we have somewhat unexpectedly developed a good relationship with the United Kingdom Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) working out of the Cleveland Close Community Centre. This has led to a Christmas Carol event and an Easter Craft event which were both well attended and helped to share the good news of Jesus Christ in the local community. Our Benefice, in partnership with the local community, participated in 'Operation Christmas Child' shoebox appeal collecting over 70 shoe boxes. The Rector would like to thank Louise Brereton for co-ordinating that appeal.

The engagement with the three local schools has continued with very positive results. St John's has hosted Christmas and Easter experiences for the two local schools. In addition, Ramsden School had a celebration to start the new school year in September and celebrated Harvest and Christmas in St John's. The Rector has broadened the scope of the work with the schools which has helped to grow the relationships with the staff and the pupils further.

Over the last year, the Benefice has made steady progress in several areas; however, it is facing difficulties in others. The financial difficulties of the benefice are, as always, a concern. None of the Churches were able to pay the full Parish Share requirement in 2023, with St Mark's barely able to pay its normal running costs. The Rector will work with the PCC and the congregations and the community to overcome these challenges and to plan for a stewardship/giving programme in 2024.

The Rector would also like to thank the Events Committee for their ongoing efforts to provide the congregation and community of Carlton-in-Lindrick with regular entertainment throughout the year. Car boot sales, Ploughman's Lunches, Harvest Lunch are only a few to mention. The highlight last year was the afternoon tea which was held in honour of the Coronation of King Charles and Queen Camilla.

In conclusion, the Benefice has managed to come through 2023 with making good progress in some areas and facing challenges in others. I am confident that God is likely to present new opportunities for us to move forward. As a Benefice we need to pray for God's support and the discernment of his will for our future.

The Rector would like to thank all the congregation, the PCC, volunteers and all who support our churches in many ways for their help and hard work over the past year.

Rev Mark Orr
Rector.

- 7. Election of PCC members where applicable**
- 8. Appointment of Sidespeople**
- 9. Appointment of Independent Examiner**
- 10. Any Other Business**