



St Faith and St Laurence

Annual Report

and Accounts

for 2022/2023



THE PARISH CHURCH OF ST FAITH AND ST LAURENCE HARBORNE

ANNUAL REPORT 2022/2023

of the

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL

For the year ended April 2023

and

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

For the year ended 31st December 2022

Bank:

TSB plc
537 Bearwood Road
Warley
West Midlands
B66 4BQ

Independent Examiner:

Ark Aurora Ltd
Chartered Accountants and Chartered Tax Advisors
The Maltings
2 Anderson Road
Bearwood
Birmingham
B66 4AR

**Annual Meeting of Parishioners for the Election of
Churchwardens and Annual Parochial Church Meeting
Tuesday 2nd May 2023 at 7.30 pm and 7.45 pm held in the Church**

A G E N D A

1. Opening Prayers

Annual Meeting of Parishioners for the Election of Churchwardens

2. Election of Churchwardens

Annual Parochial Church Meeting

3. Apologies for absence
4. Minutes of the 2021/2022 meeting
5. Business as required by the Synodical Government Measure 1969:

The Annual Meeting shall receive from the Parochial Church Council and shall be free to discuss: -

- A report on changes in the roll since the last annual parochial church meeting;
- An annual report on the proceedings of the Parochial Church Council and the activities of the parish generally;
- The financial statements of the Parochial Church Council for the year ending 31st December 2022;
- A report upon the fabric, goods, and ornaments of the church, under section 5 of the Care of Churches and Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction Measure 1991;
- A report on the proceedings of the Edgbaston Deanery Synod;
- A report on the activities of Churches Together in Harborne.

6. Elections

- Parochial representatives of the laity to the Parochial Church Council (6 for 2022-2025 plus 4 places on Deanery Synod,
- Appointment of Independent Examiner;
- representatives to Churches Together in Harborne.

7. Any questions about parochial church matters, or discussion of any matters of parochial or general church interest, or any particular recommendation to the Council in relation to its duties.

8. Final words from the Chair

9. The Grace

Membership of the Parochial Church Council

Members of the PCC are either ex-officio or elected by the Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM) in accordance with the Church Representation Rules.

During the year the following served as members of the PCC: -

Licensed Reader	Sally Griffiths Rachel Luckman
Churchwardens	Malcolm Adey Corinne Treacy
Treasurer	Loleta Atkinson
Secretary	Gill Hubble (resigned during this period)
Deanery Synod Representatives	Ruth Jeavons (resigned during this period) Caroline Mosley and Bronwen Jones
Elected Members	Peter Gardner Alan Jones Caroline Mosley (Vice chair) Simon Palmer Helen Setchell Anita Tippin John Wadman

ST FAITH AND ST LAURENCE: TASK GROUPS 2021/2023

The PCC operates through a number of Task Groups, which meet between full meetings of the PCC. The Incumbent is an ex-officio member of all committees.

Finance & General Purposes Task Group

It meets quarterly (with extra meetings for specific projects if needed) and its remit is to oversee finance, building issues and general policies which need legally to be in place.

Children and Young People Task Group

To develop all aspects of worship for children and young people. Especially *Sunday Club, Messy Church, Stay and Play*.

Garden Task Group

The function of this group is to plan and action the various phases of the new garden and quiet areas

Mission Task Group

Supports our Mission links overseas in Lebanon and Malawi.

Thinks creatively about Mission and outreach in the parish.

Christian Aid.

Plans and encourages Lent and Advent appeals for good causes.

Promotes social action in the parish.

Communications Task Group

Socials Task Group

Organises particular events, for example the Christmas Fair. Participates in and supports events suggested by other groups. Organises special refreshments after services where needed.

Worship and Education Task Group

Matters to do with worship. Involvement in the planning of special services.

Plans courses, quiet days and Faith and Learning sessions

Giving Task Group

Allocates the amount set by the PCC for charitable giving each year. Meets once a year for this task.

Standing Committee

This is the only committee required by law. It now meets on an emergency basis to transact urgent business which cannot wait to be dealt with at a regular meeting of the PCC. The committee consists of the Vicar, Wardens, Secretary, Treasurer, with four other members of the PCC.

Safeguarding Task Group

The Safeguarding Task Group works in line with the Church of England Safeguarding principles. We follow Birmingham's commitment to promoting a safer church for everyone. Safeguarding is the action the Church takes to promote a safer culture. We are committed to the safeguarding, care, and nurture of everyone within our community.

The Parish Church Council has complied with its duty under section 5 of the Safeguarding and Clergy Discipline Measure 2016 to have due regard to House of Bishops' guidance on safeguarding children and vulnerable adults.

**Minutes of the Annual Meeting of Parishioners for the Election of
Churchwardens and Annual Parochial Church Meeting
Tuesday 17th May 2022 at 7.30 pm and 7.45 pm**

(Attached is the signed sheet of attendees)

The meetings were chaired by Caroline Mosley at the request of the Churchwardens.

I. Opening Prayers

Annual Meeting of Parishioners for the Election of Churchwardens

2. **Election of Churchwardens**

Malcolm Adey and Corinne Treacy left the room whilst the vote for Churchwardens took place.

There were two nominations for the Churchwarden positions, Malcolm Adey and Corinne Treacy. Under CofE rules (Churchwardens Measure 2021 s.3) a person is disqualified from serving as churchwarden for more than six successive periods of office, unless a meeting of parishioners passes a resolution that this section shall not apply to the parish concerned. Malcolm Adey had now served six years successive years, so was disqualified from standing again under the rules. As he had been nominated and there were no alternative candidates, a resolution was put to the meeting that the requirement under the Measure would not apply.

Special Resolution: that the requirement under the CofE rules (Churchwardens Measure 2021 s.3) that a person may not serve as churchwarden for more than six successive periods does not apply to the Parish of St Faith and St Laurence for the year 2022/2023.

Proposed: Thelma Kettle **Seconded:** Ruth Jeavons **Vote:** Unanimous

Malcolm Adey

Nominated: Alan Jones **Seconded:** Helen Hayward **Vote:** Unanimous

Corinne Treacy

Nominated: Peter Stokes **Seconded:** Anita Tippin

Vote: Carried by majority (3 Abstentions)

Malcolm Adey and Corinne Treacy were duly affirmed as wardens for the coming year.

Annual Parochial Church Meeting

3. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Gill Hubble, Peter Stokes, Margaret Thomson

Although they were both absent, Gill Hubble had asked that thanks be expressed to Peter Stokes for printing the Report.

4. Minutes of the 2020/2021 meeting

Priscilla White had approved the minutes as being accurate when Gill Hubble produced them last year. There were no points for amendment made and no comments raised.

Proposed: Helen Setchell **Seconded:** Judith Bennett **Vote:** 2 Abstentions

5. Business as required by the Synodical Government Measure 1969:

- a. Electoral Roll** – Judith Bennett, the Electoral Roll Officer, reported that there were 123 recorded on the roll, made up of 64 residents of the parish and 59 non-residents. Thanks were given to Judith.
- b. PCC Report** – This had been circulated prior to the meeting. There were no comments arising.
- c. Financial statements** – These had been circulated prior to the meeting. Loleta Atkinson, Treasurer, reported to the meeting. There was £30,500 in the current account on 17.05.2022 and the accounts had been audited.

The **Statement of the Current Account for 2021** is found on pages 2 and 3 of the accounts.

Income: 2021 saw a reduction in income from planned giving via envelopes, and from lettings. Receipts from loose plate, gift aid, donations, and weddings increased slightly towards the end of the year.

To ensure that the expenses could be met, £5,000 was transferred from the Church and Hall Repairs investment fund to the current account. £2,000 of that was previously owed by the Church and Hall account to the current account for the cost of hall repairs paid from this account.

To date, 2022 is showing increases in hall lettings and a continued increase in receipts from weddings when compared to 2021.

Payments: Common Fund for the year (£44,400) was paid in full. A reduction in Common Fund from £44,400 to £36,000 (£3,000 per month) was offered and agreed for 2022.

Church and roof repairs payments reduced significantly as completed in 2020.

Loleta highlighted that we are currently spending more than our income.

Designated/Restricted Funds can be found on page 4 and 5.

Church Hall and Repair Fund: decreased as hall and church repairs costs were paid.

Fabric Furniture and Fittings Fund: No change.

Other Restricted Funds - Women's Fellowship: – No change.

Statement of Assets and Liabilities: The first column includes the CBF Deposit Account which is a reserve account mainly to back up the Current Account.

Peter Gardner raised a question about the cost of the cleaning of the church hall as it is more than before. It was explained that this was mainly due to the way that the figures had been recorded in the ledgers. The figure actually covered both the church and the hall and also included repair costs. Another point was that previously, the cleaners' wages had been recorded under the Honorariums in the accounts. Alison Keepax highlighted that there had been a change in contractor from 2020/2021 through a competitive tender, using best practice, and that the contract was on a different basis than previously. The Family interest has been declared every year since the appointment. It was generally agreed that there had also been a need for increased cleaning in COVID times.

A question was raised about why the "Income Tax recovered" in Receipts stands as nil for 2021. It was explained that now that the accountant had checked the books, recovery can be undertaken.

Thanks were given to all those who have helped with recording the finances, in the past and currently. In particular the counters: Brenda Stott, Hilary Shaylor, Anita Tippin and Lesley Arkell and to the church wardens, Malcolm and Corinne for their support. Thanks were also recorded to Geoff Bennett who continues to make the annual gift aid claims and for his continued support.

Thank were also given to those who give generously to the Church. Without this support it would be impossible to continue.

Ratification of Report and Accounts for 2021

Proposed: Corinne Treacy **Seconded:** Hilary Shaylor **Vote:** Unanimous

- d. Fabric, Goods and Ornaments - A report on these was circulated in the booklet prior to the meeting. There were no questions received.
- e. A report on the proceedings of the Edgbaston Deanery Synod was circulated in the booklet prior to the meeting. No questions were received. Ruth Jeavons has stood down as our representative. Caroline Mosley and Bronwen Jones agreed to stand.
- f. Churches Together in Harborne - As there was no representative from St Faith and St Laurence on this, a report was not provided.

6. Elections

a. Parochial Representatives of the Laity to the PCC

There were 6 places for 2022-2023

There were three nominations as follows: -

Name: *Simon Palmer*

Proposed: Corinne Treacy

Seconded: Rachel Luckman

Name: *Anita Tippin*

Proposed: Corinne Treacy

Seconded: Malcolm Adey

Name: *Peter Gardner*

Proposed: Malcolm Adey

Seconded: Sally Griffiths

As there were fewer candidates than places these were voted in on a single vote, which was unanimous.

Deanery Synod

There were 3 Places for 1 year - Ruth Jeavons had resigned

No nominations had been received prior to the meeting. Bronwen Jones and Caroline Mosley offered to take the role on for one year.

Proposed: Malcolm Adey **Seconded:** Corinne Treacy **Vote:** Unanimous

b. Appointment of Sidespeople

Traditionally at St Faith and St Laurence, the appointment of sidespeople is delegated to the Churchwardens. The meeting agreed to continue this.

d. Appointment of Independent Examiner

It was proposed that we continue with the current Independent Examiner, Ark Aurora Ltd

Proposed: Helen Hayward

Seconded: Geoff Bennett **Vote:** Unanimous

- e. **Representatives to Churches Together in Harborne**
There was no representative at the moment. There were no volunteers.

7. Any Questions

- I. Pauline Sitford said that there had been a problem with sending her Mission Task Group Report as Gill could not open it and therefore it was omitted from the Report. The text of the report was presented as follows: -

MISSION TASK GROUP 2021/2022 ANNUAL REPORT

Task Group Members: *Pauline Sitford (Chair) Judith Bennett (Sec.), Hilary Shaylor, Sue Glanvill, Ruth Jeavons, Peter Stokes, Priscilla White, (until Feb. 2022).*

We have done very little due to Covid and links have been difficult, with one exception.

Colin and Audrey Gibson, in Lebanon with CMS *are currently attached to the management team of A Rocha's, Mekse Nature Park. They have continued to keep us up to date with regular newsletters. Others have been found to take over the project so Audrey and Colin are now returning home. They have offered to visit us soon!*

Call in for Coffee *re-opened after Christmas and is being well supported.*

- II. Helen Hayward queried if she should continue distributing the SF&SL Parish Magazine to the cluster churches and still get St Peter's Magazine. Caroline Mosley explained that the clusters had been disbanded. All agreed that the magazines should still be sent. It was noted that some Festival services are still shared amongst our former Cluster churches.
- III. People were asked to join the Parish Giving Scheme. This delivers the Gift Aid tax refund monthly and avoids the onerous task of completing and submitting the claim forms at the end of the year.
- IV. Wendy Watts queried when the orange booklets (Order for Communion) would start to be used at 10am rather than the one-off printed sheets. There was discussion about the timing of their reintroduction at various different services. Their use at 10am was underway. Sally Griffiths reported that there were now new blue Service of the Word booklets to match the orange ones. The readers, Sally and Rachel, would continue to produce one-off service booklets for special services.
- V. Thelma Kettle queried the current reading rota of only two readings at 10am and asked to have more readings. The reintroduction of communion in two kinds was also queried by a number of people. It was agreed that these would be reintroduced slowly. Any changes and return to previous arrangements will be discussed and agreed through the PCC.

- VI. Simon Palmer reported that it was difficult to recruit new choristers, but more music was planned for this year and connections were being made with St Peter's to share Festival services, such as the forthcoming Ascension Day on 26th May 2022.
- VII. It was noted that Helen Setchell and Sue Glanvill had rearranged and updated the children's corner in church.

8. Final words

It was noted that during the vacancy period Corinne and Malcolm, as church wardens, would have lots to do. Sally Griffiths and Rachel Luckman would be taking the lead with services.

Thanks were given to everyone who offers something to the church community, especially in the vacancy period.

Malcolm Adey thanked everyone for the care and support he had received in his period of ill health.

Caroline Mosley was thanked for chairing both meetings.

Everyone was thanked for attending the meeting and taking part. They were reminded that the PCC members are representatives of the church community and are open for conversations with all members of the congregation about any queries or matters of concern.

The meeting ended with the Grace.

17th MAY 2022

(29)

Lidia Atkinson

Wendy Watts

Sat Jones

Alan Jones

David Atwell

Diana herchel

Peter Cropper

Sima Palmer

John Wadman

M. Adey

Tim Hayward

Helen Hayward

Julia Bennett

Geoff Smith

Alan Jones

Ruth Jeavons

Peter Thompson

Sally Griffiths

Alison Keppax

Brown Jones

Pauline Siford

Jeann Shaw

Thelma Kettle

Helen Letchell

* Anita Tuppin

* Hilary Shaylor

~~* Caroline Hosley~~

* Caroline Hosley

* Corinne Treacy

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL FOR 2022/2023

The church exists to promote the Christian Religion, to offer prayer, worship, and pastoral care, and to work in such a way as to offer public benefit to all who might wish to use it or its facilities, including the church hall.

The council has complied with its duty under section 5 of the Safeguarding and Clergy Discipline Measure 2016 to have due regard to House of Bishops' guidance on safeguarding children and vulnerable adults.

It is with great sadness that we report the death of our former Vicar, Priscilla White, on 28th September 2022. A very moving Thanksgiving Service was held on 2nd February 2023 at Candlemas, at which John White preached. Priscilla's last service with us had been at Candlemas 2022.

For the majority of the year, the church has been in vacancy. Corinne Treacy and Malcolm Adey, as churchwardens and along with the Area Dean Mike Sermon, were responsible for ensuring that church life continued during this time. They were responsible for making sure that worship and occasional services such as baptisms, weddings, and funerals, were maintained through guest clergy and the support of Sally and Rachel, our Readers. Many thanks to them both and to Sally and Rachel for all their hard work during this time and going forward.

We were pleased to welcome Revd David Parker who was licensed as Interim Priest in Charge on 27th March 2023 for a period of three years. David, then Assistant Priest at St Mary's, Selly Oak, initially joined St Faith and St Laurence in July 2022 on a part-time basis to provide some continuity of priestly ministry and leadership. David was an enormous help and support during this period and the PCC happily accepted the proposal of Archdeacon Jenny Tomlinson and Area Dean Mike Sermon that he be appointed to the interim priest role. We look forward to continuing our journey of faith with David.

The PCC met 12 times on 7th June 21st June (Extraordinary Meeting), 9th July (TCAP planning), 26th July (TCAP follow up), 13th September 25th September (Extraordinary Meeting), 11th October, 15th November, 10th January 2023, 14th February, 14th March and 16th April (Extraordinary Meeting).

At the first meeting of the PCC, the required election of officers was held. Caroline Mosley was elected as lay Vice-Chair, Loleta Atkinson re-elected as Treasurer and Gill Hubble reconfirmed as Secretary. The role of Chair remained vacant as it can only be held by an incumbent. The Church Wardens and the elected officers formed the Standing Committee. Gill Hubble retired as PCC Secretary in September after 10 years. Our thanks were and are extended to Gill for all her hard work in this role, in which she excelled.

Ruth Jeavons retired from all her Safeguarding roles in September. Many thanks to her for leading the Safeguarding team and all her invaluable work in this area. Sally Griffiths is the interim named safeguarding contact and Corinne Treacy is the parish identifier and responsible for updating the safeguarding Dashboard, also on an interim basis.

There has been a slow but ongoing move back to pre-Covid “operations.” In May, prayer ministry was reintroduced at the 10am service along with named intercessions. Communion in Both Kinds was reintroduced with the wine from the Common Cup from the 3rd July. Wednesday morning Communion was reintroduced in September as David joined the ministry team. The All Souls service for the commemoration of all who had died was held again in November. From February 2023, a Communion service was reintroduced at 6.30pm on the 4th Sunday of each month. An additional 8am service on each fifth Sunday was also added.

The Choir resumed at the 10am service in September and was welcomed back having been much missed. Active recruitment for new members, particularly juniors, is underway. The choir has also sung with St Peter’s choir on several occasions, including Ascension Day, Candlemas, and Good Friday (Stainer’s Crucifixion). A massed choir including singers from St Peter’s and St Mary’s Selly Oak joined them for David’s Licensing service.

In person study groups were held for both Advent (Making Room) and Lent (Dust and Glory). There were both afternoon and evening sessions each time.

Sally Griffiths leads a regular worship service at Queen Mother Gardens supported housing, which is attended by residents and members of the congregation.

Messy Church, aimed at nursery and early primary age children, ran online under Helen Setchell’s able leadership throughout the lockdowns. They returned to in person sessions in May and June 2022. While enjoyed by those who attended, due to low numbers of leaders and attendees, it was decided that Messy Church would take a break. Collaborations with St Peter’s were explored and two successful sessions at St Peter’s have been held in March and April 2023. St Faith and St Laurence will be hosting in June. Many thanks to the Messy Church team of Helen, Sue Glanvill and Julia Reid for all they have done and for taking forward the link up with St Peter’s.

Stay and Play meets each Thursday morning, including the school holidays. It is attracting young families from the surrounding area.

The Socials Task Group were busy during the year. A tea party was arranged in June to celebrate the Queen’s Platinum Jubilee and there was a Harvest lunch in October. A visit to the Serbian Orthodox Church in Bournville was arranged to see the amazing al secco frescos where we also received the kind hospitality of Father Nenad and the congregation. Finally, the Christmas Fayre returned for the first time since 2019 with a fabulous array of stalls, tasty catering, and a visit from Father Christmas himself. A Coronation Barbeque is planned for June. Thanks to David Glanvill and all the members of the Task Group and other helpers.

Call in for Coffee has continued to meet on Wednesday mornings and provides a valuable point of contact with the wider community.

The church continued to open for Private Prayer on Wednesdays thanks to the Warden and volunteer stewards. The PCC has agreed that the church can again open unattended during daylight hours, Monday to Friday and Saturday morning. There are a number of arrangements to be made but this will commence on 25th April 2023.

Following the Queen's death, the church was open to the parish for private prayer every day until the funeral. A book of condolence was available. Thanks to the people who stewarded and in particular to Corinne and Royston Treacy who tolled the bell for the required hour, both on Her Majesty's death and preceding the funeral.

A key decision for the PCC during the year was on an "Oversight Area," part of the Diocese's "People and Places" strategy. Oversight areas are groupings of parishes which encourage collaboration and partnerships to develop their missional capacity, increasing the reach of the individual parishes and developing deeper relationships. They are not team ministries - each parish remains separate. A decision was required by 30th September 2022. The PCC explored a number of groupings that were forming locally. It was unanimously decided, on the recommendation of the Wardens and PCC Vice-chair, that St Faith and St Laurence should join the oversight area consisting of St Peter's Harborne, St Mary's Selly Oak, St Gabriel's Weoley Castle and St Michael and All Angels, Bartley Green. The majority of this grouping voted likewise. St Michael and All Angels, however, voted for the original makeup of this grouping, which did not include St Faith and St Laurence. The Area Dean is in ongoing conversations with them about this. In the meantime, through the Choir and Messy Church in particular, we have started to make connections with other members.

Another key area for the PCC was the Transforming Church Action Plan (TCAP), another part of the "People and Places" strategy. This is to set out a vision of the future for St Faith and St Laurence and to create strategic plans to realise this. A workshop was led by Damian Herbert from the Diocese's Parish Mission Support team in July 2022. The PCC were able to focus on what and where the church is now, where we currently engage with the community and where there are opportunities to engage now and in the future. Finally, we focused on what was St Faith and St Laurence's core identity, agreeing on six core elements. PCC members were asked for their vision of the church and its activities in 5 years' time and a follow up meeting was held with Damian. From all the work done, Damian identified the common themes which should form our priorities. These were "Children, Youth and Families," "Inclusion," "Community Engagement," "Music" and "Eco-Church and Environment." A report by the Parish Mission Support team expanding on these is still awaited. Currently, it has not been possible to take TCAP further and engage with the wider congregation and community.

With the cashflow issues at the time of the hall roof repair and then the Covid crisis, the church's formal missional giving had ceased. The PCC agreed in February 2023 to reinstate missional giving of 5% of the church's income for this financial year with a view to work towards 10% in the future. Our Harvest Festival collection was for the Quinton and Oldbury Foodbank, and the Christingle collection was, as usual, for The Children Society. A collection was also made for the DEC Turkey/Syria earthquake appeal. A Turkish coffee morning in aid of the charity RESTORE, run by Churches Together In Birmingham to support refugees and asylum seekers, was held on 22nd April 2023.

There have been a variety of problems with the heating over the winter months. The main boiler was not firing up properly and a problem with the burner was identified. Following a service by the manufacturer, this has now been resolved. A new burner will be required in the next few years but this will be a relatively cheap job compared to replacing the whole boiler. Following a gas leak in February, the heaters in the Choir Vestry and Lady Chapel were sealed off. While the Choir Vestry one was repaired, the one in the Lady Chapel was condemned and will need to be replaced. Investigations on replacements are underway.

The church wardens, Corinne Treacy and Malcolm Adey are responsible for all the contents of the church, including any movable furniture, books, vestments, plate, and ornaments.

Our cleaning contract is held by RT Cleaning & Maintenance (Royston and Corinne Treacy). They do a wonderful job of keeping the church and hall clean and in good order. The contract does mean that one of our PCC members has an interest in the firm. Corinne was not involved in the appointment process which was held by competitive tender in 2021.

This has been a period of upheaval and change, with moments of great sadness. We are now entering a new stage of our witness of faith in this place. Thank you to everyone for supporting the wardens, PCC and ministry team, for volunteering for jobs, supporting events, and holding each other in prayer and care. Let us move forward together.

Parochial Church Council

TREASURER'S REPORT

The **Statement of the Current Account for 2022** is on pages 2 and 3.

Income: In 2022 we saw a slight increase in receipts from planned giving, a significant increase in lettings and wedding receipts. Receipts from fund raising, lunches, coffee mornings and coffee also recorded increases.

Payments: The Common Fund for the year, £36,000 was paid in full. The PCC has agreed to pay the same amount, £36,000, in 2023.

Significant increases to the cost of heat and light. This was helped by a £2,729 one off grant from the diocese.

We collected and paid to support - Ukraine £455 and the Trussell Trust (Food Bank) £315.48

Overall, for the year we had an excess of receipts over payments of £6,500.

Note however, that we reduced the contribution due to the diocese from a previous £44,400 to £36,000pa. And that we paid no BDBF fees to the diocese during the interregnum, but we owe £1962 which will have to be paid in the current year.

Delegated/Restricted Funds on page 4 and 5.

- Church Hall and Repair Fund: No change, except interest received.
- Fabric Furniture and Fittings Fund: No change.
- Other Restricted Funds: Women's Fellowship – No change.

Statement of Assets and Liabilities on page 6.

The first column includes CBOF Deposit Account which is a reserve account mainly to back up the Current Account.

The second column records the Church Hall & Repair Fund Account, a designated fund.

Thank You

Thanks to all those who have helped with recording the finances, in the past and currently. In particular, to Jackie Taylor, role now undertaken by Corinne Treacy and Alan Jones, and the counters: Brenda, Hilary, Anita, Lesley, Peter, and Malcolm. To Judith for managing the hall hire. Also, to the church wardens Malcolm and Corinne for their support.

Thanks to Geoff who continues to make the annual grant claims and for his continued support.

Thank you also to those who give generously to the Church.

Parish Giving Scheme

One last plea, **please join the Parish Giving Scheme**. This delivers the Gift Aid, (tax refund) much earlier, monthly, and it avoids the onerous task of completing and submitting the claim forms at the end of the year.

Loleta Atkinson Treasurer

CHURCHWARDENS' REPORT TO APCM 2022/2023

The Churchwardens are Bishops' officers, chosen by the parish and admitted to their office by the Bishop or Archdeacon. Once admitted they have formal and legal responsibilities to fulfil.

We had a busy and at times difficult church year that ended in a very positive note with the Licensing of Revd David Parker as St Faith and St Laurence (SF&SL) Priest-in-Charge on 27th March 2023 for a period of three years.

Since March 2022, SF&SL was in vacancy. The Vicarage utility bills and grounds had to be maintained by the Parish Church Council (PCC) whilst the Diocese took care of the necessary repairs before renting it. Thankfully, this period was only for a few months. On 8th September 2022 Queen Elizabeth II died. SF&SL former Vicar, Revd Canon Priscilla White died on 28th September. The Rt. Revd David Urquhart stepped down as Bishop of Birmingham on 18th October 2022 and SF&SL was represented at his farewell services at St James Church Round green on September 7th and at the Cathedral Church of St Philip on 18th October.

The Churchwardens' visitation held on 28th November and attended by Revd Mike Sermon (Area Dean of Warley and Edgbaston) went well.

Fabric and Building

The fabric of the Church and the Hall buildings remains in a good condition and are maintained to an acceptable standard. The state of the buildings is monitored on a regular basis and any maintenance and/or repairs needed are agreed through PCC.

All maintenance services throughout 2022/23 were carried out in accordance with the regulations i.e. bells, boilers, fire extinguishers, intruder alarms, organ, Portable Appliance Testing (PAT) and sound system.

- **The Church**

No major works were needed this previous year. We were delighted to welcome back Woodhouse Primary Academy for their year 3 visits on 15th and 17th September and for their Christmas concert on 6th December. The church also hosted Bright Horizons Nursery for their Nativity on December 12th and Quinton Co-operative Funeralcare for their Christmas Memorial Service on 14th December. SF&SL was hired to several choirs and / or instrumental workshops and concerts.

- **The Hall**

Only a few minor repairs i.e. carpentry, electrical, plumbing, and general maintenance were needed this previous year. The hot water boiler dispenser stopped working. However, thank you to generous donors we have not only a new hot water boiler dispenser but also a kettle and a toaster. The hall and the committee room are hired regularly by regular and occasional users. Due to the increased hiring cost the hall lost some regular hirers in June 2022.

- **Heating**

We have had few problems with our church boiler but after the burner had a service and a clean carried out by the manufacturer company of the burner it seems to be working fine. However, we were informed that the burner life expectancy was of about 25 years and that the burner has nearly reached that age and therefore would have soon to be replaced. Whilst waiting for the commercial technician to attend the church boiler we had about 10 portable electric heaters kindly lent by St Mary's Selly Oak. Thank you St Mary's to enable us to be warm. Much appreciated. We also had problems with the gas heaters. The heater in the Lady Chapel in the Autumn 2022 broke down. Waiting for a part, the Lady Chapel was cold for the congregants attending the 11am Wednesday Holy Communion. Finally, it was repaired. However, a few months later it was condemned. The heater in the Choir vestry had a gas leak which was mended and after a service is now up and running.

- **Sound System**

A second-hand mixer had to be bought in June 2022.

Goods and Ornaments

The churchwardens are responsible for all the contents of the church, including any movable furniture, books, vestments, plate, and ornaments. The Terrier and Inventory of property owned by the church has been checked in March 2023 and it is confirmed that all items recorded are accounted for and in reasonable condition. Our beautiful little silver chalice with six petals foot had to be brought for repairs as the cup came away from the base. Rudell the jewellers in Harborne have kindly repaired it free of charge – although the work is not guaranteed.

Grounds

After a couple of theft incidents in the carpark, two solar security lights and a disclaimer sign were supplied and installed as a donation. A letterbox was also installed to receive SF&SL post. We are grateful to the gardening team, lawn and hedge cutters and Ecochurch working party / littler picking volunteers for keeping the community garden, the front grounds and the church surroundings tidy and well maintained.

Services

Throughout this year, and despite challenges such as the temperamental boiler and heaters, the vacancy etc. regular and special services were held.

On 3rd July 2022, the communion of both kinds (bread and wine) was re-introduced. The Holy Communion on Wednesday at 11am in the Lady Chapel re-started on 7th September. From February 26th a Eucharist on the 4th Sunday of the month and 8am Holy Communion on the 5th Sunday of the month were added to the existing services.

SF&SL held a Thanksgiving service for Priscilla on February 2nd for Candlemas.

We were very pleased with the announcement of David coming to help us and giving us his support from September 2022 and we were delighted when the decision was made to License him as SF&SL Priest-in-Charge for a period of three year. So, we welcomed Revd David Parker during his licensing by Rt Revd Anne Hollinghurst on 27th March 2023.

Appreciation

Malcolm and I would like to record our grateful thanks and appreciation to:

- The Deputy Wardens, David and Sue Glanvill, for their continuous assistance and support given.
- The sides-persons / stewards, who are the first point of welcome to the church. • Peter Stokes for compiling and / or printing Parish magazines, pew sheets, orders of service etc.
- Simon Palmer (Choirmaster and Organist), the organists, singers, choristers and bell ringers who produce some lovely music.
- The cleaners, the flower arrangers who ensure that the church looks beautiful.
- Sally Griffiths and Rachel Luckman, our Lay Readers, for their contribution at church and online.
- David Parker, our Priest-in-Charge, for all his hard work and for ensuring that our spiritual life continues to develop and grow.
- All our volunteers at St Faith and St Laurence for their continued willingness to give their time to carry out tasks, duties and offer each other encouragement and support. • A special thank you to Gill Hubble (former PCC secretary), Ruth Jeavons (former Safeguarding Officer and CYP Co-ordinator) and Bronwen Jones (Deanery Synod and PCC Member) who stepped down from their respective role(s). Their commitment and hard work were deeply appreciated.

**Malcolm Adey & Corinne Treacy
(Churchwardens)**

WARLEY & EDGBASTON DEANERY SYNOD 2022/2023

The Deanery Synod met three times on 8th June 13th October 2022, and 7th February 2023. St Faith & St Laurence's representatives were Caroline Mosley and Bronwen Jones. The Area Dean is Mike Sermon.

The meeting on 8th June was held at St Augustine's, Edgbaston. A presentation was given on what the Diocese is doing as part of its environmental agenda to meet the CofE 'net zero' target by 2030. A Net Zero Environment Group has been established to oversee this work. Each Deanery has a Deanery Environmental Contact (Julia Howl's, St Peter's Harborne) and each parish is encouraged to appoint a Parish Environmental Contact (Corinne Treacy is St Faith and St Laurence's). Parishes will be required to provide details of their energy use to the Diocese each year to help monitor carbon footprints and the progress to net zero. There was discussion on what other churches have been doing and the issues being faced.

Revd. Canon Bamidele Sotonwa (St Boniface, Quinton) presented the key findings of the Archbishops' Anti-Racism Taskforce report "From Lament to Action," published in April 2021, which sets out specific actions to challenge racial injustice and bring about culture change within the church. It aims to create a more inclusive, open and accepting church with proposals that can be taken into churches to change their culture.

Mike Sermon gave an update on the progress on oversight areas, part of the People and Places programme. The deadline for PCCs to decide on their areas was 30 September 2022. Questions and concerns were raised.

The 13th of October meeting was held at Holy Trinity, Smethwick. The Deanery's lay members of Diocesan Synod reported on the latest meeting, followed by a report of the Diocesan Board of Finance's AGM. There was a significant decrease in income, Common Fund returns had declined and finances were not back to pre-pandemic levels. Stipendiary clergy numbers would remain the same, although the costs are not being covered by the Common Fund and the £94k shortfall was being made up from property income.

Progress on the Deanery's oversight areas were discussed focusing on key concerns, opportunities and next steps. Fifteen PCCs had passed oversight area resolutions and more were in progress.

Archdeacon Jenny Tomlinson spoke about current issues, including oversight areas and oversight ministry. She outlined the arrangements to manage the Diocese following Bishop David retirement. Bishop Anne becomes acting Bishop of Birmingham in the vacancy. The appointment process for the next Bishop is likely to take around a year. The Vacancy in See Committee will work with national bodies on the selection process.

David Gould, Vicar of Holy Trinity, Smethwick gave a presentation on "Being realistic about money and our response to poverty." He outlined what Holy Trinity had done when launching its much-delayed stewardship campaign as the cost-of-living crisis struck. He stressed the need for the church to be seen to be managing its bills and making cost saving as the congregation was. Conversations with the congregation

needed to be open, honest, and transparent and acknowledging that small increases in giving (ie one or two pounds) were acceptable and that, where some may face personal financial difficulties, giving may need to be reduced.

The meeting on 7th February was held via Zoom. The main presentation was on “Growing Disciples and Developing Leaders” given by Guy Donegan-Cross, the Diocese’s Director of Learning for Discipleship and Mission. He said that making and growing disciples was the central task of the church, from which growth and mission would flow. He outlined the various resources and courses that the Diocese has developed for churches and individuals to help in growing discipleship. These include the Way of Discipleship programme (which is available as both an online course for individuals and groups and as a regular course over Zoom), the Way of Servant-Leadership course, the Everyday Faith programme which enables and encourages people to take their faith into their everyday life, and the Intentional Discipleship groups which meet regular online to support people in their growth as disciples. Details of all these resources are available on the Diocese’s website under “Everyday Faith.”

Updates were also given on progress with the environmental strategy and the oversight areas and ministry.

The new Deanery Synod, which is elected every three years, will run from September 2023.

Caroline Mosley

CHURCHES TOGETHER IN HARBORNE (CTH)

No representative from SF&SL Church.

REPORTS FROM TASK GROUPS AND CHURCH ORGANISATIONS

FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES TASK GROUP REPORT

Membership: Loleta Atkinson (Treasurer), Malcolm Adey (Chair and Churchwarden), David Arkell (Vice- Chair), Tim Hayward, Alan Jones, and Corinne Treacy (Churchwarden/Secretary)

The Finance and General Purposes (F&GP) Task Group met three times in the previous year: 26th April 31st May, and 5th July 2022.

Finance

See Treasurer's report

Hall Booking

The hall and the committee room are hired regularly by regular and occasional users. Due to the increased hiring cost the hall and the committee room lost some regular hirers in June 2022. Only a few minor repairs i.e. carpentry, electrical, plumbing, and general maintenance were needed this previous year. Thank you to Judith Bennett (SF&SL booking Coordinator) for all her hard work and commitment.

Roof

The final invoice had not been received.

Maintenance

All maintenance and services were done in 2022/23 (bells, boilers, fire extinguishers, intruder alarms, organ, photocopier, Portable Appliance Testing (PAT) and sound system) From March 2022, the utility bills for the Vicarage had to be switched to the church together with the maintenance of the grounds until rented. Thank you to Royston Treacy for volunteering and looking after the grounds of the Vicarage.

We had problems with our church commercial boiler and the burner had to be serviced and deep cleaned. Thank you to St Mary's Selly Oak to enable us to stay warm by lending us some portable heaters whilst waiting for the visit of the engineer from the manufacturer. We also had problems with the gas heaters: in the Lady Chapel which is now condemned and in the Choir vestry which has been repaired. A second-hand mixer had to be bought in June 2022 for the sound system.

Quinquennial 2017

The work required within the Quinquennial 2017 had been completed. The new quinquennial is now overdue and would be booked shortly.

Thank you to all the people who use their skills, time, and expertise to keep St Faith and St Laurence church and hall buildings running and in good state of repair.

Malcolm Adey & Corinne Treacy (Churchwardens)

ECO CHURCH REPORT TO APCM 2023

Membership: Laurie Deimel, Bronwen Jones, Corinne Treacy and Royston Treacy

The Church of England General Synod has recognised the climate emergency and called on all parts of the Church to become net zero carbon by 2030. St Faith and St Laurence (SF&SL) Eco Church Team was created in 2019.

The collective approach to net zero is underpinned by six principles: Well maintained, buy renewable, waste less, electric not gas/oil, generate more and offset the rest.

Eco Church, provided by A Rocha UK are members of The Climate Coalition, and are encouraging as many Christians and churches as possible to take part. This shows others that we serve a God of Creation and adds our efforts to those of others for the greatest combined impact.

SF&SL is the proud owner of the Eco Church bronze award and we are a few marks away from the Silver Eco Church Award.

New roles were created, Julia Howl from St Peter's is the Deanery Environment Champion (DEC) and I am SF&SL Parish Environment Contact (PEC). We had so far 4 PECs' meetings with other Parishes in Warley and Edgbaston Deanery: 26th June via Zoom, 18th August and 26th October hosted by SF&SL and 23rd January hosted by St Peter's. The aim of our meeting is to care for the environment. We help each other on how to register for Eco Church; how to engage the congregation, politicians, and neighbours on our journey to net zero; how to work together by sharing ideas and knowledge; how to connect with the Diocese.

On Saturday 7th May, we held our first litter picking / working party and to celebrate the start of the Great Big Green Week we held another one on 24th September. We were not numerous, but a very good and efficient team. Thank you to all who helped on these dates.

Thank you to Bronwen Jones who has stepped down from her role within the Eco Church Team.

We are trying to include an environment article in our monthly parish magazine and tips in our weekly email. So, if you have any ideas please email them at ssfaithlaurence@gmail.com or speak to us.

If you wish to be part of the Eco Church Team please let us know.

Corinne Treacy (Parish Environment Contact)

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE TASK GROUP (CYP)

Ruth Jeavons has resigned from her role as Chairman but Helen Setchell has produced a report regarding Children's Ministry.

Children's Ministry

St Faith and St Laurence Children's Ministry launched face to face Messy Church again in the Spring of 2022 after 2 years of Messy Zoom (which was undertaken once a month from May 2020 to March 2022).

After initial interest post promotion via local schools and three Messy Church sessions the attendance at the monthly Messy Church Sessions was very low. So, the team made the difficult decision to take a sabbatical from outreach work.

Following discussion at PCC of potential inter parish work the Children's Ministry team made links with the Junior Church at St Peter's Parish Church, Harborne.

After a successful sharing meeting between St Faith and St Laurence and St Peter's in February 2023 several exciting opportunities opened up.

As a member of the Children's Ministry Team I have attended two events at St Peter's; a pre Lent family bash and a Messy Play event that did have one of our families attend with two children. We have been warmly welcomed by St Peter's Church and I think there could be exciting times ahead.

There is a Good Friday Workshop for children on Good Friday at St Peter's Church Hall from 10-11.30am which is £2 a child, £3 a family. I have advertised this event alongside the other two on fliers etc. I will not be able to attend this event but anyone else will be warmly welcomed.

When Sue Glanvill and I met with Junior Church Representatives we did open up St Faith and St Laurence's Coronation Celebration Barbecue Event on Saturday 13th May 2023.

David Glanvill is aware and a note has been made in the Social Committee minutes that have been circulated prior to tonight's meeting. Sue G, Julia Reid and I are planning Children's Activities (just like Messy Church) with some baking, crafting and fun things. Promoting this event will need to take place after Easter so I plan to create a flier to post, hand out, share with St Peter's as appropriate.

St Peter's have also invited St Faith and St Laurence to a Family Day on Saturday 24th June 2023 and an Open Church Event in July 2023. Details etc will follow.

The exciting news is that there has therefore been a monthly activity available to families and children since February 2023 running up to July 2023 (six months' worth) which is a blessing.

I am hoping that momentum for Children's Ministry can start to build at St Faith and St Laurence and perhaps our community could plan something for September / October 2023 (Harvest) that we can offer St Peter's as well as a possible Christmas Fayre.

In this way, joint events that both parishes can share will enable the continuation of children being welcomed into our church communities and provide opportunities for us all to grow in love, deepen our faith and work for God.

Helen Setchell

COMMUNICATIONS TASK GROUP

The Communications Task Group is chaired by Caroline Mosley. Other members of the group are Rachel Luckman and Peter Stokes. No meetings of the Task Group were held in 2022.

Following Priscilla's retirement, the responsibilities for the various communication activities were passed to members of the team.

Caroline Mosley is responsible for website maintenance, Facebook, Twitter, ChurchSuite.

The monthly parish magazine is compiled and edited by Peter Stoke. Rachel Luckman acts as sub-editor. This is available in both print and digital versions (via the website). Due to increasing printing costs, a small donation is requested for print copies. Copies of the magazine are also distributed to a number of housebound parishioners for free.

The weekly Pew sheets are compiled by Peter Stokes.

The ChurchSuite database is used to maintain the church's contacts list. It is used for the regular weekly emails which are now compiled and distributed by Caroline Mosley. Revd David Parker will be taking over responsibility for the emails in Spring 2023.

New members are urgently sought for the TG. If you have any interest in helping with our work, please do get in touch.

Caroline Mosley

MISSION TASK GROUP ANNUAL REPORT

Task Group Members: Pauline Sitford (Chair) Judith Bennett (Sec.), Hilary Shaylor, Sue Glanvill, Peter Stokes.

Links are now being gradually re-established (post covid) with USPG and CMS.

We are attempting to re-establish the link with Liwonde in Upper Shire, Malawi.

Colin and Audrey Gibson, (our CMS Mission Partners in Lebanon) visited us for a final visit last June. After the service they gave us a presentation of the ongoing work at Mekse Nature Park, Beirut.. Others have now been found to take over the project so Audrey and Colin have finally returned home. After lunch in the Committee Room we said our final goodbyes as they returned home to Somerset.

Appeals In this current financial climate we have had no big appeals, other than to continue our support of **The Food Bank.**

At Christmas we supported **Birmingham City Mission's Appeal for Toys for Underprivileged Children.** Thank you to Simon Palmer for delivering them.

In April we held a **Turkish Coffee Morning**, raising funds for the work of **Restore, supporting refugees and asylum seekers.** We were very well supported by our own Turkish friends (asylum seekers) and their wives, who made coffee and served cake and Turkish Delight. And they only came in to '**Call in for Coffee**' to improve their English!

Call in for Coffee re-opened after Christmas and is being well supported.

A new box for Prayer Requests has been placed by the candles in church. However, so far it has been little used as the church was only open for private prayer one afternoon a week but thanks to volunteers this is about to change.

Pauline Sitford

SAFEGUARDING REPORT TO APCM 2023

Safeguarding is the action the Church can take to promote a safer culture and is about protecting people with regards to their health, wellbeing, and human rights. Every individual who partakes in the life of the Church has a role to play in promoting a safer Church for all.

We take safeguarding seriously at St Faith and St Laurence (SF&SL) and we ensure that all people feel welcomed, respected, and safe.

The Parish Church Council (PCC) has complied with its duty to promote a safer church by implementing good safeguarding practice and having due regard to the House of Bishop's guidance.

The PCC has reviewed and ratified the Safeguarding & other Policies document on 14th March 2023. These policies are available digitally on our website at www.saintfaithandsaintlaurence.co.uk and as hardcopies displayed in the church and in the hall buildings.

Necessary Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks and trainings for SF&SL Volunteers and Trustees are ongoing and will be completed shortly.

Work has been carried out on Risk Assessments for different groups of people working in a variety of contexts. This is an ongoing action.

Thank you to Ruth Jeavons who has stepped down from her role as Parish Safeguarding Officer in June 2022, for all her hard work.

At the Parochial Church Council (PCC) meeting on 11th October 2022 Sally Griffiths was appointed as SF&SL Parish Safeguarding Officer and Corinne Treacy as Parish Identity Verifier (PIV) also updating the safeguarding dashboard and training when required. A big thank you!

Sally Griffiths, David Parker, and Corinne Treacy

SOCIALS TASK GROUP REVIEW 2022-3

This year has been less chaotic than the previous two, with us being able to plan and carry out various events.

The first of these was a "Spring Coffee Morning (originally planned as a Christmas Coffee Morning but cancelled due to the pandemic.) This was deemed very successful and the atmosphere was really joyful as everyone enjoyed their freedom from Lockdown. The morning raised £234.10 towards church funds.

The next was event on the 18th June was the "Platinum Jubilee Afternoon Tea" to celebrate Her Majesty the Queen's Jubilee. This again had a wonderful atmosphere and culminated with a Community Sing Along which proved very popular. Thanks must be extended to David Griffiths for his piano accompaniment which had everyone joining in, and to Corrine Treacy for supplying the song sheets and music at very short notice. A great deal of teamwork went into planning this event and we raised £205.24 which was divided equally between Ronald Macdonald House and the Church.

The 24th September saw us embark on a joint venture with the Friendship Group. This was a Quiz Night and Fish & Chip Supper. This proved to be a lot of fun and raised £210.70 that was again divided between Ronald MacDonald House and the Church. On October 9th we held our annual Harvest Lunch (after Morning Service). Once again this was well supported and we were joined by our now Priest in Charge Rev'd. David Parker.

On October 21st we arranged a visit to the Serbian Orthodox Church in Bournville. This was a most interesting trip with the stunning Frescos and Relics amazing everyone. We were given a most insightful talk by Father Nenad and delightful refreshments to conclude our visit. We have it in mind to invite them to visit us in the future.

On the 3rd December we held our Christmas Fayre (The first since 2019). This proved to be a great success with a wonderful atmosphere and was well supported. We invited 4 external stalls, (Stained Glass, Soaps and Candles and Slimming World) to participate and together with a variety of "home grown" favourites including, Books, Cakes, Gifts and Jewellery, Jams and Preserves, not forgetting a Tombola. Gill Hubble and her team of dedicated workers provided refreshments throughout and we raised a staggering sum of £721.11, which given the financial climate in the country, combined with the Covid pandemic was truly amazing, and has gone into the church coffers.

At our first meeting of 2023, (February 7th) we discussed events for the coming year and have plenty to look forward to, including a "Coronation Barbeque" with a Bouncy Castle, Ice Cream Van and activities for children. This will be well publicised shortly but do keep the 13th May free and come along and support us.

Once again I must thank all of the Socials Task Group for all the sterling work they do to make these events happen together with all those others who rally round in many different ways to make our social life within the church an enjoyable aspect of that life. Finally, I must also thank all of you who come to these events and support us because without you there would be no point in running them.

Thank you all.

David Glanvill

WORSHIP AND EDUCATION TASK GROUP

Members: Sally Griffiths; Rachel Luckman; Ruth Jeavons; Pauline Sitford; Caroline Mosley; Simon Palmer; John Wadman; Michael Averill; Pat Jones; Alan Jones.

The Education and Worship Task Group held one meeting during the period from April 2022 – March 2023

Receiving Communion in both kinds

Reintroduction of the common cup at the Eucharist was permitted from Thursday 14 April 2022. Reintroduction of the common cup is a decision to be made at the parish level.

Following a lengthy discussion – the Task Group agreed that **we received in two kinds, imbibing from the common cup from 3rd July 2022.** A Risk Assessment was completed

Praying for individual people in the Intercessions

We reinstated praying for people who are suffering in some way and for those who have died. Individual people are mentioned in any services and/or in the Pews Sheet. Names will be placed on the prayer list for 4 weeks. If longer is required, names will be placed on the 'Ongoing' list. If possible, people should obtain the permission of the sick person. A box for prayer requests is made available in church.

Introduction of Prayer Ministry

Prayer Ministry in the Lady Chapel during communion services began in February 2023. The new team: Sally Griffiths, Ruth Jeavons, Rachel Luckman, Vicky Miller, Pauline Sitford John Wadman and Vicky Wallis.

Autumn Occasional Services

Simon and Mark organised music (West House School Choir and instrumental music) for occasional services.

Harvest Festival [Messy Church taking part~ theme Food Poverty]

The Uniformed Organisations and the RAF Cadets were involved with the Remembrance Service.

NB: The current pattern of services would continue for the foreseeable time.

Michael Averill requested clarification about the lectionary readings.

We have followed Track One where the lectionary allows a choice. The Lectionary is circulated one month in advance so that readers are aware of their passages and the readings can be used for home study.

FROM SUMMER 2022

In June 2022, the PCC accepted the suggestion that Revd David Parker support the parish during the Vacancy, and since then coordination of worship has been undertaken by the Ministry Team of David, Sally, and Rachel. The role of the Education and Worship Task Group will be reviewed in due course.

Mid-week communion was restarted in September 2022, and a monthly evening communion was reintroduced in February 2023 (on the 4th Sunday), so that the current pattern of services is as follows:

1 st Sunday		10am Communion	6.30pm	Evensong
2 nd Sunday	8am Communion	10am Service of the Word	4pm	Zoom service
3 rd Sunday		10am Communion	6.30pm	Evensong
4 th Sunday	8am Communion	10am Service of the Word	6.30pm	Communion
5 th Sunday	8am Communion	10am Communion	6.30pm	Evensong

The uniformed organisations were involved in the 10am Remembrance Service on 13th Nov 2022 and in a Parade Service held on 12th March 2023. The 10am service on 11th Dec 2022 took the form of a Christingle and Toy Service. Baptisms took place during the 10am service on 1st May 2022 and 15th Jan 2023; afternoon baptisms occurred on 15th May, 14th and 21st August 2022.

“Special services” during 2022 included the All Souls service on 30th Oct, the Advent Carol Service on 27th Nov, the Carol Service on 18th Dec, and the Crib service on 24th Dec 2022. Christmas Communion was celebrated at Midnight Mass and at 8am and 10am on Christmas morning.

Holy Week 2023 was celebrated as below:

Palm Sunday (2 nd April)	Palm Sunday Communion	10am
	Evensong	6.30pm
Monday 3 rd April	Reflection, followed by Compline	7.30pm
Tuesday 4 th April	Reflection, followed by Compline	7.30pm
Wednesday 5 th April	Reflection, followed by Compline	7.30pm
Maundy Thurs 6 th April	Communion, followed by short Vigil	7.30pm
Good Friday 7 th April	Last hour at the Cross	2pm
	Stainer’s <i>Crucifixion</i>	7pm
Easter Sunday 9 th April	Easter morning Communion	8am and 10am

On the Thursdays during Advent 2022 discussion groups based on the York course “Making room” ran in both afternoons and evenings. During Lent 2023 similar groups discussed the Church of England’s Lent book “Failure” by Bishop Emma Ineson.

A service of Thanksgiving for the Life and Ministry of Revd Canon Priscilla White was held on the evening of Candlemas, 2nd February 2023, almost exactly one year after Priscilla's farewell service on 6th February 2022 (which was also a celebration of Candlemas). Some of the same music from the farewell service was used, Priscilla's husband, Revd John White, gave a moving reflection on the Nunc Dimittis and Sally Griffiths recalled Priscilla's love of Julian of Norwich.

On 26th March 2023 David Parker was licensed and installed as Interim Priest-in-charge of the parish: Bishop Anne performed the Licensing and subsequently presided at communion, while Archdeacon Jenny Tomlinson preached and performed the Installation. Music was provided by a massed choir drawn from St Faith and St Laurence, St Peter's, and St Mary's Selly Oak (David's previous church).

David Parker and Sally Griffiths

CHOIR AND MUSIC REPORT 2023

At St Faith and St Laurence, we have a fine musical tradition and know the importance of good music to our worship.

In recent times, it has been difficult to recruit choristers, but we are determined to try to build up our musical resources once again, as we know how important this is to our church. Our long-term plan is to recruit a group of new choristers to re-establish a regular choir, but this will take time. In the meantime, we are lucky to have a core of able and willing singers, plus an increasing pool of musicians who attend from time to time.

By encouraging good music in church, both within the liturgy and for concerts, we hope to attract able musicians into the church, who will return to join us on a more regular basis.

I am very grateful to Mark and Susannah who keep everything going week by week. I also thank our dedicated small band of singers who come when they can. I am pleased that over recent months we have managed to recruit other friends for some important services and have made links with the University and Conservatoire.

Reflecting on a selection of musical events over the past year:

- We joined the RSCM choir for their Annual Festival Service in the Cathedral in September.
- The Advent Carol Service by candlelight was effective and moving, with a small choir.
- We had large numbers for our Carol Service, and Sam Gray sang a solo in 'The Three Kings.'
- It was good to have many singing for 'Carol Singing at The Court Oak'

We were pleased to welcome musicians from the local area into church:

- West House School joined us and led the music for a Harvest Service.
- Woodhouse Primary Academy performed their Christmas Concert.

- Even though we do not have many regulars of school age, we are pleased to have reinstated 'choir pay' – a small token of our appreciation for their singing. Choristers were also given a Cadbury's *selection box* after the Carol Service.
- In January, our singers joined the RSCM Orchestral Evensong in January in Birmingham Cathedral.
- Priscilla White's death was very sad to all of us. I was honoured to be asked by John to play the organ for her funeral in Kingsbury Parish Church. We were also pleased that members of our choir who knew Priscilla could be there to sing for the service, a most moving occasion.
- The Thanksgiving Service for Priscilla was a joyful celebration of her life. The choir included new and old friends, plus our colleagues in the choir of St Peter's, Harborne. I was delighted to have the services of Charlie Cooper (Birmingham Conservatoire) to play for the Burgon *Nunc Dimittis*, a piece that Priscilla loved.
- It has been great to see Sam Gray thriving in the choir of Trinity College, Cambridge
- We were pleased to welcome Norfolk House School (Headmistress Susannah Palmer) for their concert on Wednesday 1st March.
- Most recently, I was delighted that we formed a joint choir of St Faith and St Laurence, St Pater's and St Mary's, Selly Oak for the happy occasion of David Parker's Licencing Service. As someone commented, the first 'Three Choirs Festival'! I hope that this is the first of many joint events.
- I have been publishing the organ voluntaries on the pew sheet.

With Susannah and Mark, I am working hard to make connections with musicians outside church and encourage them to sing and play for us. These are my priorities for the coming year: -

- Keep contact with, and encourage our current regular singers
- Encourage local school choirs to use us for concerts, and then join us for services
- Make contact with other local schools, groups, and musicians
- Go into schools and audition potential choristers
- Print a new Choir Leaflet for advertising
- Arrange singing events in church
- Try to get the community involved in services eg an 'Education Sunday' service.
- Make use of the website and social media for recruitment
- Consider ways to give financial support for choir and music events

I value the support of the PCC and congregation that I receive, and I am always pleased to discuss the development of music with members of the church.

Simon Palmer
Organist & Choirmaster

CHURCH FLOWERS

Flowers have been arranged on the main altar every week except during Advent and Lent. Now the church is open daily it is easier to get access but the church is not fully open and it requires someone with a key to be able to turn off the alarm in the vestry area. Previously the caretakers were there on Friday mornings, so it was possible to have access. At festival times there have been flowers on the altar, in the porch and at the lectern. The Advent ring was decorated on the lead up to Christmas. Easter, we plan to have flowers back to normal.

Again, my thanks to the small band of ladies who now arrange flowers in church. They do an excellent job.

I am reluctant to produce a flower rota until church services are back to normal but if we are to continue to have flowers in church they must be funded and so I ask that people who like to support the Flower Fund would continue to donate on celebrating a special event or remembering a loved one or a special anniversary. We would be happy to welcome more volunteers to the list, you do not need to be an award-winning arranger, a simple vase of flower also looks good

Anita Tippin

THE COMMUNITY GARDEN

We have decided to leave the long bed to grow wild to attract birds and insects. Some weeds will be kept under some control and we will put some wild flower seeds in. We will remove some of the shrubs in the bed down the side of the church but keep the best ones. Weeds will be removed and plum coloured slate put down around the shrubs to help prevent weeds from spreading. The colour will go with the church roof. Our thanks to David and Lesley Arkell for planting up the rose bed and keeping the large front bed looking so good. Our thanks also go to all those who keep the grass mown and the privet cut. There is always a lot of weeding and tidying to do and any help would be appreciated.

The Garden Team

STAY AND PLAY

Stay and Play is held on Thursday mornings from 9.30am - 11am. Our numbers have been slowly growing since re: opening post- pandemic.

The aim of the group is to provide families with a safe and inclusive environment where they can freely mix with other families.

We are open all year round including the school holidays.

Judith Bennett

CHURCH WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP

The Fellowship held their first meeting since March 2021 on Tuesday, 1st March 2022 at 2pm which was a new day and time for the group. Mary Bodfish came that day to talk about "The Kings Loose Box" and then in April Theresa Wilcox explained the work of Focus in Harborne. We had our annual Spring Lunch in May at The Bell in Harborne which was very enjoyable. In June we heard from Upjeet Sidhu who talked about St. Mary's Hospice and in July we heard from Henrietta Lockhart about Winterbourne House and Gardens. We always take a summer break in August and in September we held our AGM and quiz. We were greatly entertained by two speakers from the Birmingham Rep. in October and in November we were given an update on The Food Bank in Quinton by Brenda Stott and Carol. We ended the year in December with a Christmas Lunch at The Court Oak.

Special thanks go to Caroline Marshall for organising a lovely and varied programme, to Carole Mason for taking good care of the finances and Wendy Watts for looking after the raffle each month. We have a very good attendance at the meetings for which I thank the nineteen members who also provide the raffle prizes and take turns in making the teas and coffees.

We always look forward to welcoming new ladies who would be interested in any of the talks – a copy of the programme is on the Notice Board in the Lobby of the Hall. For more details please do get in touch with me.

Helen Hayward
Chairperson