

# **PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL (PCC) OF ALL SAINTS' FARINGDON**

## **ANNUAL REPORTS AND ACCOUNTS FOR 2023**

### **AIMS and PURPOSES**

All Saints' PCC is responsible, in co-operation with the Vicar, and during the vacancy until 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2023 the PCC Lay Chair, for promoting the whole mission of the Church – pastoral, evangelistic and social – within the ecclesiastical parish, and for maintaining the fabric of All Saints' Church and Coach Lane cemetery.

The PCC of All Saints' Faringdon is a corporate body established by the Church of England and operates under the Parochial Church Council Powers Measure. The PCC exceeds the limits for exemption from registering with the Charity Commission and is therefore registered under the name of "The Parochial Church Council of the Ecclesiastical Parish of All Saints' Faringdon" (Charity No. 1134401).

The method of appointment of PCC members is set out in the Church Representation Rules. The membership of the PCC consists of the Vicar/Lay Chair, Licenced Lay Ministers, Churchwardens, Deanery Synod representatives and members elected by those members of the congregation who are on the electoral roll of the church. All those who are members of our congregation are encouraged to register on the Electoral Roll and stand for election to the PCC.

The PCC is aware of the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit in "The advancement of Religion for the Public Benefit" and have regard to it in the administration of the parish.

The PCC believes that, by fulfilling its responsibility to work together with the Vicar and co-operating in all matters of concern and importance for the promotion of the whole mission of the Church, it provides a benefit to the public, both to individuals and to society as a whole, by: providing resources and facilities for public worship, pastoral care and spiritual, moral and intellectual development, both to its members and for anyone who wishes to benefit from what the church offers; promoting Christian values and the service by members of the church to their communities.

To facilitate this work, it is important that we also maintain the fabric of both All Saints' Church and the Barber Rooms.

This review summarises the life of All Saints' church during the calendar year 2023 and highlights a number of events and activities. Again this year, those responsible for many of the church's activities have been invited to contribute.

The PCC met 6 times during 2023, with an average attendance of 17. During the year the following served as members of the PCC, ex-officio, elected or invited to attend.

#### **Ex officio members:**

Vicar	Rev Maria Jukes
Licensed Lay Minister	Graham Weller
Church Wardens	Linda Ritchie Mark Jackson
Deanery Synod Reps	Peter Foot John Seedell Geoff Loosemore

**PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL (PCC) OF ALL SAINTS' FARINGDON**  
**ANNUAL REPORTS AND ACCOUNTS FOR 2023**

**Elected Members (members are elected for three years)**

Until APCM 2024	Jim McGowan Helen Jackson Mandy Hathway Wendy Tynan
Until APCM 2025	Janet Deane Katie Foot Immy Newcome Alun Watkins
Until APCM 2026	Chris Horley Christopher Raybone Sarah Mais (resigned Sept 2023) Alice Boughton
Children's & Families'	
Leader (Co-opted)	Josey Speller
Safeguarding (Co-opted)	Isobell Weller
Hon Treasurer	David Wilson
Hon Secretary	Mandy Hathway

## **Vicar's Report**

It is quite exciting to write my first vicar's report for this APCM having started this role at All Saints' following the Institution, Induction and Installation service on 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2023. I want to begin by firstly thank all those who stepped up in different ways and covered extra roles and responsibilities during the vacancy. I know this was an enormous team effort that included many people, but I particularly want to thank the wardens Mark and Linda for all they did during this period, all those who were involved in the creation of the parish profile, those organising arrangements around interview day, and the ministers (ordained and lay) who covered services and contributed to the mission and ministry in Faringdon during this period. It seems to me that everyone came together and did a fantastic job which helped enormously when starting this role.

I thought it might be good to look back over the year and mention a few highlights:

The **Super-Teddy Zip-Wire** and **Historic Tours** during Folly Fest saw brilliant engagement from the community and I'm hoping we can build on this in coming years. Many thanks to Josey, Alice, James and Andrew Sargent for your lead and expertise which made this event possible. And also thanks to Mark who braved the church organ to send the teddies flying across the church, and to everyone who was involved on the day welcoming and assisting with activities which ensured that everything went smoothly.

## PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL (PCC) OF ALL SAINTS' FARINGDON

### ANNUAL REPORTS AND ACCOUNTS FOR 2023

**Summer and Advent Teas** were both really well attended and provided a valued space for those living on their own. Attendance was beyond expectation and I've received some very positive feedback from both these events. A massive thanks to John Seedell, Helen Jackson, Jeni Summerfield, and everyone who was involved in baking, serving, setting up and clearing up – I know your efforts were greatly appreciated by all who attended.

The introduction of **Creationtide** in September fitted in with our ongoing work with Eco Church well and the sermon series that ran throughout this helped us to think more theologically around creation care. The Eco Group that has been set up this year was central in inspiring ideas and themes for this, as was Graham in his support with preaching and Josey for All Age activities that fitted in – many thanks to you all.

Please do look through all the reports submitted for APCM to get a full view of everything going on in the life of the church. It is inspiring to see the scope and diversity of activities, mission, and ministry that takes place through different people and groups contributing their gifts and time.

Alongside these particular activities and events, we have sustained the existing service pattern with 9am BCP Holy Communion every Sunday and a 10.30am service (with a mixture of All Age, Holy Communion, and Service of the Word throughout the month), seasonal services, our monthly prayer meeting continues on Zoom, and in addition Morning Prayer on Monday, Wednesday and Thursday in church has been introduced in addition to the Friday morning prayer on Zoom which has continued. In all these things I am extremely grateful to the ministry team for their support and contribution to All Saints' as well as lay leaders who have contributed much to the prayer life of the church. I think the gift of having different voices and experiences to draw from is something which contributes greatly to our worshipping life, and the support of Rev'd David Pickering alongside the retired clergy with PTO: Rev'd Chris Etherton, Rev'd Tim Hewes, Rev'd Dick Whittington, Rev'd Barbara Mapley, Rev'd Paul Winchester, lay minister Graham Weller, and Childrens and Families Worker Josey Speller has been invaluable to me as I've settled in, and we all continue to be blessed by their ministry amongst us.

Alongside exciting and good things, this year has also contained sadness and loss, particularly as several beloved members of our congregation have died. Shortly before I arrived Rev'd Jeremy Mais sadly died, and I know this loss is felt widely across the church and that Jeremy continues to be deeply missed. I met Jeremy briefly during interviews and am very sad I never had the chance to minister together with him. It was also a great shock when Helen Wilson died shortly after my arrival. Not one week has gone by since I started here where Helen and her many gifts has not been mentioned to me and I think we are all still coming to terms with what our lives and All Saints' without her ministry looks like. As we continue to work through these bereavements and the voids they have left both in our hearts and in the ministry in the church, we also give thanks to God for all he has done through their lives and the certain hope we have been given through Jesus Christ that they are enjoying their time in His glory until we get to be together again.

After carrying out the role as administrator for two years, Alison decided that it was time to step down. We are thankful for her administrative support, particularly over the vacancy period and I'm grateful for how she helped me settle in and the introduction to how the church office operates. As PCC considered how we might best fill this vacancy it was agreed that a slight change to the job description would be helpful in the ongoing running of the church office, and we were able to recruit Jilly as Office Manager during 2023 with a start date of January 2024.

I think it is important to mention both those things that have been good throughout the year whilst also noticing and reflect on those things that have been challenging. I appreciate that with any major change, such as the arrival of a new vicar, there will be both good and more difficult things. I am so grateful to all of All Saints' for the warm welcome both Richard and I have received. It is truly a joy to live in Faringdon and, for me, to minister amongst you. We have both settled in and feel very much at home. I am thankful for your encouragement, and the way you have met my shortcomings with grace and forgiveness. I also cannot

## **PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL (PCC) OF ALL SAINTS' FARINGDON**

### **ANNUAL REPORTS AND ACCOUNTS FOR 2023**

thank you enough for all your support and willingness to get stuck in (even with slightly unusual ideas!); being part of your church family is a gift to me. A huge thank you to everyone in church who continue to faithfully serve and help in various roles and carrying out a multitude of tasks (from building and churchyard maintenance, to sound/IT, vergering, communion assistants, prayer ministry, readers and those leading intercessions, flowers, CTiF engagement and much more!) – I know a lot of this goes largely unseen and the space here is too short to mention everything, but please know that all you do is so very appreciated and none of the work we do would be able to happen without you.

As we look forward to the coming year I am full of excitement and hoping that, as the dust has settled a bit and I am getting more familiar with how everything works, we will have space to think a bit more strategically and long term about how we feel God is calling us to take part in his mission in Faringdon. This will involve some thinking about our church building and its use, but also how we might grow in our faith and discipleship regardless of age, circumstance, and stage of faith, as well as being open to opportunities to share the Good News we have all come to know in Christ. I hope we can continue to combine that desire to follow Jesus with an intentionality of living out His love in our everyday lives. May we all continue to grow in God's love, and may He inspire us to share it faithfully in this place and time.

Maria Jukes

### **Financial Review for 2023 – David Wilson**

Total receipts on unrestricted funds were £131,240 of which £84,696 was unrestricted planned voluntary donations, and a further £20,544 was from Gift Aid. Restricted income and donations (including gift aid) of £25,531 were also received. Of this, £15,275 is a grant from the ODBF, covering half the cost of our Children & Families leader Josey Speller. No legacies were received in the year.

£128,692 was spent from unrestricted funds to promote the whole mission of the church within the parish and beyond. Our diocesan parish share of £67,203 was paid in full (£63,451 after rebates received for paying by direct debit, being in an interregnum for 4 months and because the deanery share for the first half of the year was paid in full before the end of July). Donations to missions and charities of £13,034 were made.

Overall funds increased by £42,193 during the year. There was an increase in the General Fund of £20,628. Designated, Restricted and Endowment funds also all increased in value due to increases in the value of funds invested in the stock market.

### **PCC Reserves Policy – David Wilson**

The PCC needs to hold reserves as it has fixed (and usually rising) expenditure each year to cover expenditure such as Parish Share, Parochial expenses, Insurance, Repairs and Maintenance, Gas/Electricity/Water to support church services with no guaranteed income.

The risk of income not arising each year to cover these core expenditure items is small (there are a reasonable number of committed/planned givers who provide a good base level of income each year).

The PCC believe that reserves amounting to between three and six months of annual expenditure on the items above is reasonable to cater for a downturn in income as well as providing an appropriate level of funds to cover expected buildings expenditure. This would equate to around £33,000 to £66,000 on 2023 general expenditure.

The PCC currently has reserves (unrestricted and designated) within this range, and due to the increase in the General fund mentioned above, our reserves are now at the top end of this range.

**PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL (PCC) OF ALL SAINTS' FARINGDON**  
**ANNUAL REPORTS AND ACCOUNTS FOR 2023**

It is our policy to invest the short-term investment fund balances with the CCLA Church of England Deposit Fund, and the remainder typically in the CCLA Church of England Investment Fund.

## **Church Fabric Report - *Jim McGowan***

Probably the most significant event over the past year has been the energy audit that was completed last October, with the work being co-ordinated with the Eco church group. The audit was part of a wider programme within the diocese and the diocese subsidised the cost of our audit. We are still considering how we can implement the audit recommendations, but there will be plenty to keep us busy for the next few years!

During the year, we received permission to go ahead with repairs in the baptistery, covering the roof and guttering and replastering and redecorating the walls; this work will take place very soon. We also worked closely with the Commonwealth War Graves Commission on proposals for two new commemorative headstones in the churchyard; the new headstones will be installed in the next few months.

Another change in the churchyard has been the trimming of the two large red cedars (near the western end of the church) – this work will reduce the problems we get with blocked gutters and drains. We have had a series of discussions over the past year about our lightning protection system and we will probably need to carry out an upgrade to this soon.

Thank you to everyone on the Fabric Group for all their work over the past year – for looking after the heating system, organising regular maintenance and servicing, changing inaccessible light bulbs, participating in decluttering days, removing weeds and cutting back shrubs, sorting out repair jobs and everything else! We are extremely grateful for all that you do to look after our wonderful buildings.

## **Coach Lane Cemetery – *Wendy Tynan***

The work being done may be placed into two broad categories.

Firstly there is routine maintenance. This includes the weekly clearing and sorting of the bins, not a trivial task! Mowing the paths and general tidying of the graves of sticks and leaves and in addition the planting of bulbs this last year with irregular spacing in the older half of the cemetery as a resource for pollinating insects. At longer intervals encroaching grass is cleared from the gravel path leading from the main gates and past the tree line for access of coffins for interment. Grass is also cut back periodically from the cremation stones. This task has recently been done superbly by Ernestine who worked hard all day to get the job done.

Secondly, there is the work being done to support and generate habitats for wildlife.

1. The cutting of the back hedge is done routinely, but Sorbus Gardening Care is now creating wild life environments by putting all hedge trimmings in spaces beneath the hedge. In previous years these have gone out as garden waste. This is providing a habitat for insects and with build up over time, both cover and nutrition for small birds. Tree fall twigs will also be used to back fill the hedge. More hedgerow flowers donated as unwanted intruders from gardens, including wild violets, will contribute to ground cover, as will survivors of scattered wild flower seeds!
2. In addition to excellent maintenance of paths, Gentle Giant Gardening is creating wild flower swathes from the memorial mound. This grass is given a top cut to allow smaller wild flowers to flourish and be overgrown in turn by taller flowers and grasses as the year progresses. Similar

## **PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL (PCC) OF ALL SAINTS' FARINGDON**

### **ANNUAL REPORTS AND ACCOUNTS FOR 2023**

work is being done at one end of the dividing lines of trees. Earlier planting of the mound itself continues, and a plan has been made for erecting a wire support construction between poles close to the back fence to support climbing plants for diversity and further interest together with the wildlife support.

3. A start was made at the beginning of this year to create a composting area for grave wild flowers and grass cuttings and a row of three containers constructed by Mark Jackson from wooden pallets is in place to create a sequence of composting material. As one is filled the next is started. There is a need to consider further how to store and put to use earth from flower pots and removed from graves, which will mount up quite rapidly. The compost bins will require careful and regular monitoring to remove plant pots and other rubbish that is likely to be thrown in.
4. Ash die-back is a problem in the cemetery. Replacing the trees is a long term project. I have been advised that Ash pollarded to a height of 5-6ft will continue to produce new growth as they weaken and finally die over the succeeding five years. Within the same time frame hedge planting in the intervening spaces between the trees is proposed, with hawthorn and other hedge plants selected to produce a succession of flowers and berries during the year as a food resource for both birds and pollinators.

In summary a good foundation for future works has been laid in 2023/24. An opportunity lies ahead not only to provide a tranquil place of rest, but to tackle practical issues raised; to rethink, re-plan and adapt, as required, to take forward the protection and nurture of this lovely garden as we should in 2024/25 and beyond.

## **Deanery of the Vale of the White Horse – Peter Foot**

2023 was an unusual year for the Vale of White Horse Deanery in that all seven authorised clergy posts were filled! The Deanery's ministry team was obviously strengthened by the arrival of the Revd Maria - but also by Revd Patrick Mobutu (from Zimbabwe) to Ashbury, and Fr Sebastian Mattapally (from South India) to Longworth. We are most grateful for the added strength this gives to the witness and work of all in our area.

Each Wednesday morning, Deanery Prayers are offered by the online group, beginning with the rotating list of Benefices - Faringdon and Little Coxwell, like the others in sequence, are prayed for specifically once every 6 weeks. The Incumbents are invited to provide subjects for prayer. In every session, topics such as our health services, care homes, schools, food banks, finances, and the pressures on young people are committed to God. Links are made to the work of the Diocese and the Church of England more broadly. Particularly important is adding to the prayers worldwide for the restoration of peace with justice, wherever these are being violated. (Please contact Peter Foot if you would like to receive the weekly Deanery Prayer suggestions.)

There have been two strong features of the Deanery's work this past year. The first is Eco Church. Of the 27 churches and chapels in the Deanery, 17 have either already received a Bronze Award or are registered and on their way towards that goal. At All Saints', we are working with the PCC to achieve a Silver Award. The second focus area has been working with the Faringdon Learning Trust to establish a School Chaplain - this would provide much improved Christian leadership and provision for most of the children attending secondary school across the Vale of White Horse. It will also reinforce Christian teaching in the primary schools - already very fruitful and in good hands - that are part of the Academy Trust.

## **PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL (PCC) OF ALL SAINTS' FARINGDON**

### **ANNUAL REPORTS AND ACCOUNTS FOR 2023**

As with many Deaneries, a particular worry is finding volunteers to cover the many roles that all churches need filled for their everyday life and ministry. The post-Covid dearth of people willing to offer their time and talents is a major challenge and leaves Incumbents with too many things to do - even in Deaneries that are fully staffed.

### **Safeguarding – Isobel Weller**

We continue our work at All Saints' to do our utmost to ensure that our church is a safe place for all.

Isobel and Helen Wilson shared responsibility for safeguarding until Helen's death in July 2023. We owe Helen an enormous debt of gratitude for her commitment to safeguarding and for leading on the tasks of administration and responding to concerns in a timely manner. Thanks are also due to Margaret Townsend and Alison Scott for their assistance with processing DBS checks whilst in office. Isobel was approved by the PCC in September 2023 as Parish Safeguarding Officer, and Jilly Strongman, the Church Administrator, is the DBS Recruiter/Verifier.

Josey Speller, the Children and Families Leader, oversees the different children's groups and liaises with Maria and Isobel as necessary, ensuring amongst other things that the safer recruitment procedures are carried out for all new volunteers.

The Safeguarding Dashboard, provided by the diocese, is an excellent tool and we continue to use this. It clarifies the steps required to work towards the safest possible environment, and gives links to the latest documentation. This also produces an action plan, which is shared with the PCC at intervals. This has now been supplemented by the Safeguarding Hub, which is tailored to the specific DBS and Training requirements for members of All Saints, and is proving to be a useful tool.

Following the end of the interregnum and Maria's installation as Vicar, it has been possible to resume regular safeguarding meetings with Maria, Josey, Jilly, and Linda. The Safeguarding team have continued to be responsive and pro-active. They have responded to a small but not insignificant number of concerns (children and adults) raised over the past year, involving the diocese and external agencies where necessary.

### **Church Warden Review of the Year 2023 – Linda Ritchie & Mark Jackson**

2023 at All Saints church began in vacancy following the retirement of Steve Bellamy the previous summer. The closing date for applications for the post of new vicar was 6 January and shortlisting took place the following week. Three candidates attended on 30 January to find out more about us and about Faringdon and St Mary's and All Saints PCCs hosted an evening meal for them. Interviews took place the following day. Bishop Gavin, Archdeacon David Tyler and four parish representatives were unanimous in offering the post to Rev Maria Jukes. Maria and Richard moved into the vicarage on 10 May and the service of induction and installation with Bishop Gavin took place on 23 May 2023. Our thanks to those who attended several days of garden maintenance and inside painting in the vicarage prior to Maria's arrival. We were delighted to welcome Maria and her family and greatly appreciate her ministry among us.

The Churchwardens would like to thank the retired clergy, LLMs and others who so generously led our church services throughout the period of vacancy.

Special services during the year at All Saints comprised All Age Christingle and Taizé service in January, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday and Easter Day in April. On Easter Day, a CTiF sunrise service took place on Folly Hill with breakfast after. The Easter Day services were followed by an Easter egg hunt. Thank you Jim and Julie !

## **PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL (PCC) OF ALL SAINTS' FARINGDON**

### **ANNUAL REPORTS AND ACCOUNTS FOR 2023**

On Saturday 8 July, for Folly Fest, we held a teddy bear zip wire challenge inside the church followed by a CTiF joint open air service in the town square the following day at which Maria preached.

Sunday 15 October we held a service for churches together in Faringdon followed by the AGM. Also, in October we held an AllSaintstide service and in November a remembrance service after which we met at the town war memorial.

December 9 was the Messy Nativity and on 17th was our candlelit Carol service followed by mulled wine and mince pies. Midnight communion was held on the 24 December which was very well attended especially by people who do not normally attend church.

In addition, we would like to thank Chris and Josey Speller for organising a number of Prayer and Praise midweek evenings in the first half of the year.

Attendance at services during the year 2023 is still down compared to pre pandemic attendance taking random week samples from 2019 but is steadily increasing. We are delighted to have welcomed new members over the year.

It was a great sadness that we lost Rev Jeremy Mais on 1 May and LLM Helen Wilson on 1 July. Both were hugely supportive of the church at both St Marys and All Saints and both are greatly missed. As a church we have held Sarah and Dave and their families in our prayers and shall continue to do so. We also grieve the loss of Margaret Gantlett, Patricia Jervis, Norman Leslie, Maggie Pepper and David Thacker.

A new church sign arrived and was erected near the main entrance gateway early in March. Many thanks to those who formed the committee to organise this and special thanks to Kitty Marlow for her design input. Following on from our bronze Ecochurch award in 2022, PCC set up an Ecochurch working group which has provided ideas of how to make progress towards the next stage and to this end we had an Energy Audit in October. Also in October, the archdeacon and deanery lay chair came for the first church inspection in some years and gave a satisfactory report.

Many thanks to all who have served on the PCC and on our teams of vergers, readers, welcomers and intercessors both at the 9am and 10:30 am services.

Special thanks to Dave Wilson our treasurer, Josey and her team of helpers with children's work, our administrator, Alison who resigned in the autumn, Caroline our cleaner, Jim McGowan and the fabric team, Helen Jackson and the social events team, Jeni Summerfield and the flower guild team, Karen, Ruth and the music group, Chris Raybone on sound and visuals, Peter Hunt and his team of bellringers, Geoff Edgington for maintenance, those on the coffee rota, Wendy and team for work in the graveyard and many others who volunteer their time and their gifts in order to make our church such a friendly and welcoming community.

## **ACTIVITIES**

### **Children and Families Leader Report – Josey Speller**

January to December 2023 was a year of great highs and some challenges. It has been great to welcome Maria to All Saints, and I have thoroughly enjoyed serving in ministry with her and learning from her along the way. Both she and Richard have a great heart for children families and young people that I look forward to see where God takes the ministry in 2024. It was always a highlight of my job to lead services



## **PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL (PCC) OF ALL SAINTS' FARINGDON**

### **ANNUAL REPORTS AND ACCOUNTS FOR 2023**

with Helen Wilson and Jeremy Mais. It was a privilege to lead Easter Sunday with Jeremy and gain from his love for doing a service well. It was also a huge joy to lead many an all age service with Helen who also had such a gift for doing them well. Although they are no longer with us, they still have a huge influence on my ministry and I thank God for them and all those who have supported me in the work of children and families leader

### **Little All Sorts**

This is All Saints' group for babies and their parents and carers meeting on Monday mornings in term time for play, craft, refreshments and a bible story.

Throughout 2023 the numbers increased and we were regularly getting 15-20 children each week. We said goodbye to several regular families at the end of the summer term as their children were due to start school and nursery/pre-school. The autumn term still saw us average around 15 children a week, which is great.

We have a lovely group of parents, grandparents, and carers who bring their children. Some come most weeks and there are some we see less regularly. We are still getting newcomers every few weeks. The parents relate well to each other and are happy to welcome new members.

In the summer we were blessed to receive a sum of £500 from the rotary club as part of their dragons den style event. Thanks to Julie McGowan for attending with me. This meant that we were able to buy some new toys, pens and books for the group as well as team t-shirts. These are great at helping the families know who is a part of the team and also give opportunity to remind of the faith of those who help as the phrase on the back of the t-shirts read 'Love God, love self, love others'.

It is a great encouragement to see the families relate well to each other and support each other. The crafts are enjoyed by the children but also the parents/carers. They also enjoy the biscuits, breadsticks and squash. My highlight is seeing some of the children who are a little reluctant to begin with come out of their shell and enjoy the surroundings. Many of the parents comment how much they enjoy our group – particularly the welcome they receive.

I am so grateful for the team, they are truly wonderful and make the group a real joy. I wish to thank them formally for all that they do and the support they provide to me and the families we welcome into Little All Sorts. There is always room for more on the team so if you can help once a month, please do speak to me.

### **Junior Saints**

We have a great team of leaders with Joanne, Jo, Helen and Immy – I wish to formally thank them for their support and leadership in 2023.

We are still using material from Roots to plan the teaching as this offers flexibility of activities for different ages. I aim to make sure that we teach on the same passage as in church so that families can share their learning when they get home. It feels like we are seeing more families week to week, but priorities do change and some we see less often. Although the children are from different schools they gel well together and are a delight to teach.

The all age slots at the beginning of the services are a great way to get all ages talking together and introducing the theme for the week. My hope is that these are just the beginnings of conversations that may continue over coffee after the service. The church is a great family to be a part of and it wonderful to see different generations encouraging each other.

In the middle of September, thanks to a booking by the Bond family, we are able to have an afternoon at The Ranch. It was a wonderful opportunity for families to get together and have a longer time chatting

**PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL (PCC) OF ALL SAINTS' FARINGDON**  
**ANNUAL REPORTS AND ACCOUNTS FOR 2023**

than is usually possible on a Sunday. The Ranch had great facilities for the children to enjoy and they made the most of the play equipment, animals and crazy golf.

If you would like to talk about becoming a leader with the children, please do speak to me. They children really are a delight to teach and be with on a Sunday morning.

## **Youth**

FROG did not meet at all in 2023, but working with Maria we exploring and praying for an offering for young people during Sunday morning services twice a month.

## **Schools**

I continue to try to deepen relationships with the two primary schools in the parish. I have done a lesson with the year 6 classes about moving on to secondary school. Our PCC kindly provided a booklet called 'It's your move' for around 90 children. It was well received and I am hoping to repeat this year. Once again I took Christmas assemblies in both schools and was working towards other lessons to go in and help but sadly the member of staff at the school I liaised with has moved on. There have been other opportunities in 2024 (90 children in for an morning of Easter activities) but that will be covered in next year's report for 2024!

## **Other activities**

This year we were able to run Messy Nativity again which was a great success, especially with some new families and those from Little All Sorts. I must express my huge thanks for my husband and his support in my role – although I think he got just as much enjoyment from being Festive Fred at Messy Nativity as we did in seeing his spectacular Christmas Suit! Other Christmas services were well received, especially Christmas Day and the Christingle with Chris Tingle making another appearance. A knitted nativity trail in some of the local shops also took place at Christmas – thanks to the faithful sheep knitters for your skills!

A new addition to the work this year was Folly Fest and the first ever Super-teddy zipwire. Due to the weather there was a last minute change to the plans meaning we had to move inside but in hindsight this was actually a real blessing because I believe that we had many people join in who had never need inside the church before. It was a great event to plan and run and we very much hope to do similar in 2024 as it is such a wonderful way to connect with the community.

As always, the All Age services are a pleasure to lead enable families to worship together but also the wider family at All Saints. Ice-cream Sunday was a huge success again in 2023 and often attracts those we don't necessarily see at other times of the year.

Finally, I wish to thank my support group and the whole church, for all the prayer and encouragement you give to me personally and the children and families in All Saints.

## **Eco Church Group – *Peter Foot***

This group has been operating as a sub-committee of the PCC for about a year. Initially, its purpose was to look towards gaining a Silver Award from A Rocha/Eco Church as a natural follow-on from our Bronze Award. However, as time went on, we realised that getting a higher award was of less importance than helping the congregation to a better view of how God's creation - that bit which is clearly our responsibility - can be cherished, safeguarded and loved. All of us are broadly clear what has to be done but find that altering our own behaviours and choices is not so easy.

## **PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL (PCC) OF ALL SAINTS' FARINGDON**

### **ANNUAL REPORTS AND ACCOUNTS FOR 2023**

In order to assist in this, the Eco Church Group reports to the PCC on what activities it is planning, or have achieved or to seek new ideas. As the regular Newsletter from our Vicar makes clear each week, we now have a planned series of Eco Tips, also shown on the welcome screens at the 10.30 Sunday service, outlining things to think about, choices to be made, guidance to be considered. At the request of the PCC, we parallel each Tip with a relevant piece from The Bible, anchoring the ideas and suggestions in scripture and thereby respecting our Creator and his marvellous gifts to us all. A particular feature for the year ahead is to provide assistance in planning the environmentally enhanced future for the Coach Lane Churchyard.

What we have warned ourselves away in all of this is to see things as a simple box-ticking exercise merely directed at enhancing our church's status with a Silver Award. If we as a church and a congregation increasingly honour our part of God's acre, a Silver Award will be the consequence, not the purpose, of the effort. The members of the Group are Mark Ritchie, Jim McGowan, Dan Butcher, Chris Hurley, Pam de Wit, Anne Gill, Pat Saunders, Tim Hewes, Jeni Summerfield, Gerald Bohm, Wendy Tynan, and Peter Foot. Please bring to any of us your concerns or with your ideas and assistance.

### **Social Committee – *Helen Jackson***

This committee was formed (in 2022) to help organise all the social events in the life of the church. Members; Julie McGowan, Sarah Mais, Josey and Chris Speller and Helen Jackson.

The first major event was putting on a dinner for 50 in the Barber Rooms for the applicants and their partners who had applied for the job of vicar (January)

The committee did do a survey to establish what social activities the congregation would like to see in the life of the church and these results are available. (February and March)

A welcome tea for newcomers was held to introduce new people to the life of the church. 32 people attended (April)

May was organising drinks and canapes for 200 for Maria's induction and enabling her friends to have a meal before the service.

We had a bring your own picnic in June.

Sadly we were then involved in helping with two big thanksgiving services in June and July. July also saw a tea for people living on their own – historically known as the strawberry tea. 35 people attended.

There was a bring and share lunch for the Harvest Festival on October 1<sup>st</sup>.

An Advent Tea took place at the end of November for people living on their own. 47 attended. Mulled wine and mince pies were served after the candlelit carol service for 150 people in December

All these events involve setting up the rooms, preparing food, purchasing food, clearing away, washing up, washing tea towels, cleaning the floors and organising who will do what when, in advance. Some events are more labour intensive than others. We are always looking for helpers who are willing to lend a hand so that it is not always the same people every month. Thank you to all who have worked hard in 2023 and please do contact Helen Jackson if you would be willing to be asked to help on occasions.

**PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL (PCC) OF ALL SAINTS' FARINGDON**  
**ANNUAL REPORTS AND ACCOUNTS FOR 2023**

## **CMS Link – *John Seedell***

### **Noemi and Marcio Ciechanovicz, Brazil**

All Saints' connection and support of the Church Mission Society (CMS) has existed as long as I can remember

During 2023 our CMS mission partner, Lyn Treneary retired from her post in South Sudan and returned to the UK. We are grateful for the hard work Lyn put in to her work with communities in South Sudan and pray that she will have a healthy and blessed retirement.

Our PCC asked a small group to consider 4 new projects that had been recommended to us by CMS to replace Lyn. Through God's guidance we overwhelmingly were led to recommend the work of Noemi and Marcio who work on the edges of society in Sao Paulo, Brazil. They work with street children and addicts, the people that are often ignored by society. This resonated well with the All Saints' strapline: 'Connecting people with Jesus; sharing his love in our everyday lives.'

PCC agreed that this is the work we should support, and so a new chapter begins of All Saints' Faringdon supporting a CMS project.



You can find more information about Marcio and Noemi on the CMS notice board on the way out to the Barber Rooms where we also display letters from them.

## **Prayers on Friday 7.40am – 8.30am - *Helen and Mark Jackson***

This group has been going for about 40 years, started by the Scott Browns when they moved to Faringdon. It continues to take place on zoom since lockdown and the link is published every week in the church newsletter. We start by praying into a passage of scripture that is shared and then pray over a variety of subjects and situations, locally and world-wide, as the Spirit leads. We are usually 9 or 10 in number! All newcomers warmly welcomed.

## **Monthly Prayer Meeting – *Maria Jukes***

The monthly prayer meeting has continued on Zoom throughout the year. Prayer points are issued via the News Letter and the meeting begins with a gathered time of reflection before breaking into smaller groups for a time of open prayer.

The prayer meeting is important to continually hold the mission and ministry in the church in prayer, as well as having the opportunity to intercede for our world together. It has been encouraging to see a committed regular attendance to this, normally of around 10-15 people. Anyone able to join us would be warmly welcomed.

**PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL (PCC) OF ALL SAINTS' FARINGDON**  
**ANNUAL REPORTS AND ACCOUNTS FOR 2023**

## **Morning Prayer – Maria Jukes**

This year we started in-person quite informal morning prayer 8.30am to sit alongside the existing Zoom prayer meeting on a Friday morning. Monday, Wednesday and Thursday takes place at All Saints' Pye Chapel, and Tuesday in St Mary's, Little Coxwell. We have an average attendance of 5-6 people and pray for the church, the world and those in need, on Wednesdays we particularly focus on prayer points from the Deanery prayer list. I normally take the prayer service, but at times this is led by other members of the ministry team or lay members of the church. All are welcome to join in - entrance is through the Barber Room door.

## **Prayer Chain – Jeni Summerfield**

This is a much valued aspect of our prayer life at All Saints' with the three strands of the prayer chain continuing to work to uphold those in need before the Lord.

If you wish to make a prayer request you can speak to Maria, the church wardens or any one of the three of us. We are all happy to receive an email which is then forwarded to the three prayer chains. If however the request is extremely urgent you may make contact by phone to one of us.

If you would like to be on the prayer chain please let Jeni know and you will be added to one of the three.

Jeni Summerfield	240912
Ruth Seedell	242440
Barbara Mapley	615009

## **ALPHA Course – Helen Jackson**

The Alpha course was held in the Barber Rooms in 2023 from January to March on 8 evenings plus a Saturday morning Holy Spirit morning. It started with a total of 19 people including helpers on two tables. We are grateful to all the helpers who made the course possible. There were volunteers who cooked a two course meal for each week, those who washed up, set up, cleared up, and prayed for all those attending. It is always a team effort and we thank those who gave of their time and resources sacrificially. Advance warning - we are planning on running another course in 2024 if you think you might be able to help in any way. Pray about it!

## **Home Groups – Andrew Sargent**

Home Groups are all different. They can be a great way to get to know a smaller number of church members, as well as a help in strengthening our own spiritual lives and understanding. If you would like to join a group, or just to know more, drop our co-ordinator an email at [andrewsargent@gmail.com](mailto:andrewsargent@gmail.com) or catch him over coffee after the 10.30 service.

## **Monday Home Group – Martin & Bridget Adams**

Our Monday Homegroup meets fortnightly in Fernham during term-time and we have 9 regular members. During the first half of 2023 we completed the 'Creation Matters' course which we found very helpful and encouraged us to look at practical changes we can each make to help our environment.

**PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL (PCC) OF ALL SAINTS' FARINGDON**  
**ANNUAL REPORTS AND ACCOUNTS FOR 2023**

After the Summer break we explored how fruitfulness in our lives stems from being 'in Christ' and did a single session from John 15: 1-11, followed by a study of Ephesians.

We also enjoyed both a Summer and Christmas bring and share meal.

### **Monday Home Group – *Josey and Chris Speller***

Our group began meeting in November 2023. We meet every week during term time on a Monday evening and alternate between two hosts in Faringdon. We started off with a few stand-alone studies before following a short advent course, finishing the term with a Christmas social. We are a group of 9 and the majority have joined the church within the last year. It has been great to get to know each other better and study the bible together.

### **Tuesday Home Group – *Peter Foot***

The @Kay's Bible Study Group is a largely online group which meets on Tuesday mornings each week throughout the year for study and prayer. It is a strong, self-regulating group that operates by consensus and is best when study leadership is shared. As a group, we have severally enjoyed using study guides (e.g. the Cover-to-Cover series) that enable each member to lead the preparation and discussion in their own way. On occasion, the group meets via Zoom just for prayer.

Most recently, the group has been studying Tom Wright's major biography of St. Paul, in order to better understand the historical circumstances that are the setting for the immortal letters. For all, although it seemed daunting at first, this engagement with St. Paul has freshened and deepened our appreciation of both the man and his writings. The group looks forward to equivalent challenges in the year ahead.  
Group,

### **Wednesday Home Group – *Helen Jackson***

The Jackson Home Group of 11 meets alternate Wednesdays in their home. The group prays and sings together and in 2023 did The Bereavement Journey course (thereby training up helpers to run the course in the Church in 2024), and a course called The Unity Course about Loving Disagreement amongst Christians.

### **Thursday Home Group – *Graham and Isobel Weller***

We have been meeting on a fortnightly basis in Katie Foot's home and we much appreciate her hospitality. The group has grown over the year to about 12 members. For the majority of the year we studied Mark's Gospel, with a break over Lent when group members joined in the CTIF study series. Andrew Sargent and Graham have generally shared leadership of sessions.

### **All Saints' Singers – *Karen Bruschi***

This last year has been an exciting year, welcoming Maria into our fold and discovering new songs with each other. We have endeavoured to maintain a good balance of well-known hymns and songs with some

## **PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL (PCC) OF ALL SAINTS' FARINGDON**

### **ANNUAL REPORTS AND ACCOUNTS FOR 2023**

newer ones, using the lectionary to discover songs that enable us to worship through the Word. The Worship group remain a core team of 4 singers, Taiwo skilfully playing the bass (and singing from time to time) and Karen on keyboards and organ (again singing from time to time). We always welcome interest in musicians who want to join us, especially for the 3rd Sunday of the month when we have The Word service, but we also extend an invitation out wider for Christmas, Easter and other special occasions for more singers. These special occasions give us the opportunity to explore additional songs, and we had great fun with the Gaudete! at Christmas. This Easter we were really excited to bring No Longer Slaves into the Service, a song we have wanted to learn for a long time, a song with such meaning and realisation of what God has done for us. We look forward to the year ahead, with various special events already in the planning, including Pentecost, FollyFest and more. Please continue to pray for us as we help lead worship in our beautiful Church.

### **Faringdon bellringers' – *Peter Hunt, tower captain***

#### **AGM**

The tower AGM was held on April 3<sup>rd</sup> last year in the Barber Rooms on the Monday of Holy Week replacing our normal practice. Peter Hunt and Julian Watson were re-elected as Tower Captain and Steeple Keeper respectively. A new treasurer, Elin Bornemann, was elected to replace Jon Chamberlain and Daniel Watson agreed to carry on generating monthly bell ringing articles for the Faringdon Advertiser in place of Jon.

#### **Visiting Ringers**

All Saints hosted a band of ringers from Marlow on 4<sup>th</sup> March 2023. Later in the year on 9<sup>th</sup> September we welcomed a visiting band from High Wycombe led by a ringer who is known to us at All Saints. During the year we often had enthusiastic ringers attend our Monday practices, in particular a group of two or three from Highworth who still attend regularly.

#### **VOWH Branch AGM**

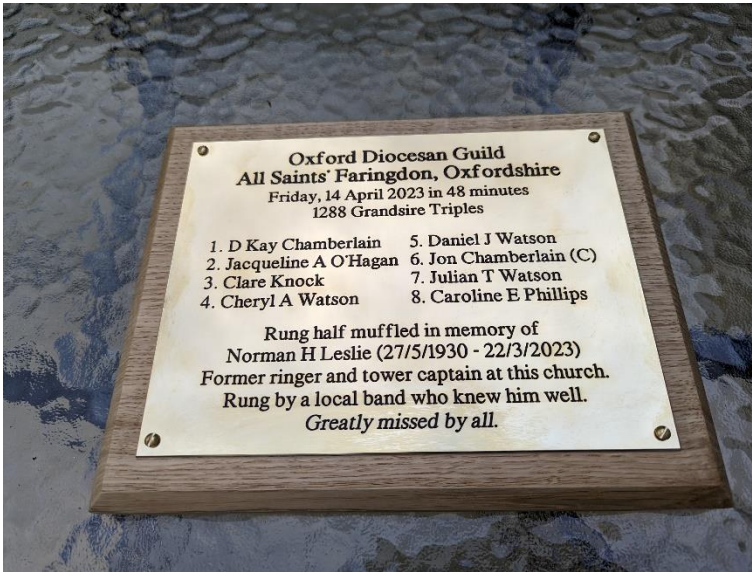
Faringdon hosted the VOWH Branch AGM on Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> March in the Barber Rooms following a ringers' service in the church and then tea. The event was very well attended. A donation was made by the VOWH Branch to the church for the use of the rooms following the church's decision to allow the rooms to be used without charge.

#### **Funeral of Norman Leslie**

For the funeral of Norman Leslie on Friday 14<sup>th</sup> April, we had open half-muffled ringing before the service (at 12.00 noon) and then rang a half-muffled quarter peal after the service coinciding with the procession to the Coach Lane cemetery and the interment. Norman was a long standing and prominent member of the ODG and Tower Captain at All Saints prior to 2006. A plaque recording the quarter peal was produced - see below - and is now mounted in the ringing room.

## PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL (PCC) OF ALL SAINTS' FARINGDON

### ANNUAL REPORTS AND ACCOUNTS FOR 2023



#### **Coronation of King Charles III**

On Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> May we rang a quarter peal in the afternoon following the coronation in the morning and then held open ringing up to the start of festivities in the market place at 4.00 pm. Details of the ringing, together with photographs of the ringers are available on the following links:

<https://bb.ringingworld.co.uk/view.php?id=1617968>

<https://bb.ringingworld.co.uk/view.php?id=1618914>

#### **Induction of New Vicar**

On the evening of Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> May we rang for Maria's induction service. Ringers attended the service and I, as Tower Captain chimed the fourth bell on behalf of Maria at the relevant point in the service.

#### **Striking Contests**

Faringdon entered two teams (as did Shrivenham) in the VOWH Branch 6 Bell Striking Contest on 25<sup>th</sup> May at Shellingford. There were seven teams in total. The contests are judged on the quality of the way a test piece is rung. The All Saints teams came first and seventh, one of our teams winning for the second successive year. The judges were able to tell that we had several learners in our second team and congratulated us on their participation.

As in 2022 the winning team went on to represent the Branch at the inter-branch contest of the Oxford Diocesan Guild (ODG) which in 2023 was held on 7<sup>th</sup> October at Shipton-under-Wychwood. Unlike in 2022 we failed to win this but came third out of eight teams, still a respectable result.

Faringdon contributed four ringers to the VOWH 8 bell team in the ODG competition. Unfortunately we didn't do very well coming seventh out of eight teams.

We contributed three ringers to the VOWH 10 bell team in the ODG competition. This band came fourth out of five teams but only five of the fifteen branches entered a team.

#### **Daniel's Peal**

On Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> July Daniel Watson, a very competent young ringer from Faringdon, rang a complex peal at All Saints lasting three hours, to celebrate his sixteenth birthday. He chose the band, including his mother Cheryl, and the ringing was of a very high standard.



# **PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL (PCC) OF ALL SAINTS' FARINGDON**

## **ANNUAL REPORTS AND ACCOUNTS FOR 2023**

### **Weddings**

There was only one wedding which required bells in 2023, on September 16<sup>th</sup> compared to seven the previous year. We made the most of this on one of the bells by successively using, for five minute periods each, three learners and one elderly ringer.

### **Training and Recruitment**

Two members of the family that we recruited last year from our 'Ring for the King' campaign are still ringing and progressing well, albeit with a recent period where preparation for the Faringdon Dramatic Society pantomime took priority. We are now training a new recruit as a result of the articles in the Advertiser and her New Year's resolution 'to learn to ring' in 2024.

### **General**

We have rung every Sunday for the 10.30am service and nearly always manage to ring all eight bells. We rang for the NSPCC Carol Service (4<sup>th</sup> December) and rang a quarter peal for the All Saints Carol Service (17<sup>th</sup> December). We had a Christmas celebration in the ringing room on the 18<sup>th</sup> December, which Maria attended and we rang for the late Christmas Eve service.

### **Centenary of the recast and rehang of the bells in 1926**

We have scanned several photos in the ringing room from the time of the recasting and rehang of the bells in 1926. One such photo is reproduced and artificially coloured below. Starting with names on the peal boards in the tower from the time and approaching the centenary of this event we plan to try and track down families of ringers from around 1926 to see if any can be contacted.



**All Saints' Flower Guild - Jeni Summerfield**

## **PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL (PCC) OF ALL SAINTS' FARINGDON**

### **ANNUAL REPORTS AND ACCOUNTS FOR 2023**

2023 was not as busy a year for the Flower Guild with only one wedding requiring flowers but we did have a number of significant events including Maria's installation and the funeral flowers for our dear friend Helen. That was a remarkable coming together of the church family as so many people donated flowers from their gardens and came to help to fill the church with the flowers that Helen would have loved.

We will continue to use a mix of fresh and silk flowers through the year and as we are even fewer in number now it keeps the work load manageable.

We would love to welcome new members, so if anyone is interested in joining us, please get in touch and come and see what we do and have a go!

### **Friendship Directory - Margaret Starr**

This list exists so that church members can exchange telephone numbers and email addresses. To receive a copy of this list you must be on the list. There are currently 116 members on the list which is updated biennially. To be added to, or removed from, the list please contact Margaret Starr on 01367 240201 or email [margaret.starr@gmail.com](mailto:margaret.starr@gmail.com).

### **Churches Together in Faringdon – Katie Foot (President)**

We were delighted to welcome Rev Maria Jukes as Vicar of All Saints' church in May and Rev Mark Greenwood as Minister of Faringdon Baptist Church in November. At last we have a full complement of clergy in our churches again. We were deeply saddened to hear of the death of Rev Jeremy Mais, after a very short illness, in early May. Although only in Faringdon since mid-2021, he was a great supporter of Churches Together and indeed took the FollyFest service and Remembrance Sunday services in 2022, as well as several services before and during the vacancy at All Saints', finishing on Easter Day 2023. Helen Wilson, LLM at All Saints' and a great supporter of CTiF during her 40 years or so in Faringdon, also died after a short illness in July and is hugely missed. Among many other activities, she regularly took services at Ferendune and Coxwell Hall Nursing Homes.

Activities we have variously organised during 2023 have included:

- Monthly columns in The Advertiser magazine (distributed to every household in Faringdon)
- Talk to Women's Fellowship at Faringdon United Church (Mustard Seed)
- Warm Spaces with lunch or tea at Blessed Hugh, All Saints' and other venues in town throughout the winter months
- Taize service at All Saints' (Earth and Faith Group)
- Five mixed Lent house groups (nearly 50 people in all), who studied the Life on the Breadline course, looking at Christian responses to different kinds of poverty.
- Fair Trade Fortnight and talk to Women's Breakfast at Stanford in the Vale (Mustard Seed)
- World Day of Prayer, hosted by Faringdon Baptist Church
- Trash and Treasure swap "Reuse and Recycle" (Earth and Faith Group)
- Palm Sunday Procession of Witness, from Faringdon United Church to the Market Place, ending with a short act of worship by Fr Bartholomew from the Carmelite Priory at Boars Hill, who was presiding at Mass at Blessed Hugh that day.
- Good Friday service at All Saints.
- Sunrise service on Easter Day on Folly Hill, with about 50 people present (this was to have been led by Rev Dick Whittington who sadly contracted Covid a few days beforehand but kindly sent his

## **PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL (PCC) OF ALL SAINTS' FARINGDON**

### **ANNUAL REPORTS AND ACCOUNTS FOR 2023**

prepared material to the All Saints' CTiF team) followed by a delicious breakfast at Faringdon United Church.

- Christian Aid week e-collection.
- Big Green Day (stalls included Earth and Faith and The Mustard Seed).
- A new Facebook page, kindly set up by Rev Maria Jukes (do please "like" it and comment on the various posts if you are a Facebooker).
- FollyFest open air service, led by Tim Gerry, with Rev Maria Jukes preaching, an excellent drama arranged by Dominic Bullock, and Fr Claro making the intercessions.
- General support to Ukrainians and other refugees in the area and welcoming new residents at Brackendale (Sanctuary Faringdon).
- Advent Sunday service (Blessed Hugh).

### **Earth and Faith**

In the past year the group focussed on re-using and recycling:

1 April - Trash and Treasure 'pre-loved' market throughout the town: "Re-use and Recycle. Let's reduce our carbon footprint".

17 June - Big Green Day: we took part in this annual event in the Corn Exchange organised by Faringdon Town Council. E&F chose the theme "Can we just use less?" with a focus on the impact of the clothing industry carbon footprint.

Beside our own local events we were discussing the headline issues that featured in public debate, from COP 26 to the fuel crisis; and seeking ways to engage with other local initiatives, especially the Town Council's Climate Action Group, and the deanery churches' experience of taking part in the A Rocha Eco Church programme.

EARTH & FAITH has been part of CTiF since 2014, offering a Christian focus on environmental issues. In November 2023 the group decided it was now time to disband. There is still plenty of work to do, but the issues are now much higher on the Churches' list of priorities than they once were, and we hope the energy of younger members will carry them forward. We have been grateful to CTiF for their encouragement over the years, to local ministers and church leaders for their support, and to Faringdon Town Council for their endorsement.

As the Churches in Faringdon continue to be concerned for the environment, I hope ideas and activities will also continue to be shared, so that the ecumenical dimension is not lost.

### **Pam de Wit**

With thanks to the whole E&F Group: Dave Headey (United Church), Jenny Braithwaite (Friends), Joy Smith and previously Libby Smedley (Baptist Church), Julia Burn (All Saints'), Sjoerd Vogt and previously Mairead Boyce (Blessed Hugh).

### **Faringdon Food Bank**

Faringdon Food Bank is run by Churches Together in Faringdon in partnership with the Town Council.

Since December 2023, following the dramatic increase in demand on food banks in general, our food bank is now managed on a part time paid basis by Adele Vincent who is supported by a small sub-committee of members representing All Saints, Faringdon Baptist Church, Blessed Hugh and Faringdon United Church.

## **PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL (PCC) OF ALL SAINTS' FARINGDON**

### **ANNUAL REPORTS AND ACCOUNTS FOR 2023**

Our volunteers come from all denominations and none and work very effectively together to deliver a caring but efficient service to those in need. We are also in need of more volunteers, and if this is something that you feel you could do, please ask Jeni Summerfield for more information.

We continue to experience a very high demand for our services in these straitened times, with over 150 clients or families from Faringdon, Stanford in the Vale, Shrivenham and Watchfield on our records; and this has increased with the introduction of some asylum seekers being housed in the Brackendale complex off Ferndale Street.

We are always grateful for the generous donations from members of all the churches, and also of many others not connected to a church who are keen to help - especially those who donate at Waitrose and Stanford Co-op. Adele is also working hard to get even more help from other local supermarkets and has recently secured a large grant to help provide foods for us to distribute.

#### **Jeni Summerfield – All Saints' Rep**

#### **Mustard Seed**

Once again, turnover has been slower than usual though we are still in profit. Nevertheless, grants were given from the charity account to Faringdon Day Centre, Probus and Faringdon Food Bank. There is also a grant still pending to All Saints' for 50% of the cost required for planting one or two new trees in the churchyard, but a decision is still awaited from the District Council/Town Council about this work.

It was a huge blow when Traidcraft, our main food supplier (in fact, our main supplier of all Fairtrade goods for over 35 years) went into administration at the end of January 2023. Fortunately Karen Vogt had already started getting craft items from different suppliers, and also opened various food accounts with PremCrest and other suppliers to try to minimise stock gaps in our favourite items. This has not been at all easy and she's done a great job!

A second huge blow was when The Lighthouse in Highworth closed at the end of January 2024. The Seekers' Light Trust (under three shop managers, but for the past 23 years, Malcolm and Val Swift) have kept us supplied with a wonderful range of books and cards since we opened, nearly 40 years ago. Happily, we have made a new arrangement with The Cornerstone Centre at Grove.

Market stalls were run during Fair Trade Fortnight in March and on Faringdon's Big Green Days in October 2022 and June 2023. The Big Bali Bonanza in November raised nearly £1,000, which provided the profits we usually make from the hampers.

Karen and Katie Foot (shop managers) both spoke at the Women's Breakfast in Stanford in the Vale in February 2023. A small stall showed the range of products we sell and ultimately brought some new customers into the shop, as well as explaining the benefits of buying Fairtrade goods. Since then, Maz Galley, one of the church wardens at St Denys', has kindly re-started the monthly sale in Stanford.

We miss Margaret Gutsell, Emily Smith and Liz Kilpatrick (a founder volunteer!), who have recently retired after many years of serving in the shop. Happily, Maureen Courtney has taken on "Emily's Tuesdays" and Ann White has joined the team. Additionally, Ben Jukes gave us some great extra help over the summer holidays.

Our shop staff are wonderful and so reliable – as is Kath Thacker, who keeps us in clean towels each week. Our condolences to her, following David's death earlier in the year. We are also very appreciative of our window dressers for their attractive displays, and of Lois Chell for her hard work keeping the books in order and arranging for the accounts to be audited by Alder Demain Akers free of charge.

## **PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL (PCC) OF ALL SAINTS' FARINGDON**

### **ANNUAL REPORTS AND ACCOUNTS FOR 2023**

We were very sad to hear that Barbara Caldecourt, widow of Rev Dr Len Caldecourt, one of the founders of The Mustard Seed, died in May, and Bob Plumptre, widower of Joan Plumptre, another founder, died in September. They were both great supporters and regular customers

#### **Sanctuary Faringdon**

Work has continued helping and befriending the Ukrainians, including the monthly "Gathering" at Faringdon Baptist Church.

In May 2023, Host Abingdon referred a young Eritrean woman to us with a nearly 3 year old autistic son who had been placed in temporary accommodation in Faringdon Travelodge by the District Council while they sorted out a flat for her. She was far away from her support network and the child's nursery in Abingdon (a multiple bus ride) and without cooking facilities or even a fridge in her room. One of the team invited her to cook at their house, so she could at least feed her child reasonably most days. Fortunately she was able to return to Abingdon after 5 weeks and is now settled in her own apartment.

In November, Host Abingdon alerted us that the house in Abingdon was being cleared of women and children. It transpired that Brackendale (Ferndale St/Lansdown Rd) had been taken over by the Home Office for asylum seekers (mostly couples or single women with children, who moved in over the following 2-3 months). There was very little information as to who was coming and when, but we are gradually getting to know them and welcome them. Father Claro and Blessed Hugh have been very generous in offering special meetings, meals, and access to WIFI on a Friday morning. Faringdon Baptist Church are now hosting an English class with creche on a Monday afternoon. The residents (around 20 families of various sizes) are also being introduced as best we can to the Food Bank and The Pump House Project, the Library, schools, The Place and so on. The staff at the Tourist Information Centre have also been most helpful. As each individual or family gets their own Leave to Remain, they will be moved out of Brackendale and into temporary accommodation for a certain number of weeks while working their way up the housing ladder. It is hard to get to know them, or get them together, as the community room in Brackendale is out of bounds (the landlord proposes to make two more units out of it but no work has started to date).

#### **World Day of Prayer 2023**

On Friday March 3rd 2023, the Baptists in Faringdon hosted ecumenical services at 3pm and 7.30pm to celebrate the World Day of Prayer (WDP). This annual worldwide Day of Prayer is held on the first Friday in March and has been celebrated in England since 1932 (in Faringdon since 1965). It takes approximately 38 hours for the service to be repeated right around the world starting and ending in Samoa. This year approximately 55 people from all of the denominations in Faringdon gathered over the course of the two services, to lead the service and share fellowship together.

This year's service was written by the ladies in Taiwan on the theme "I have heard about your faith", based on Ephesians 1 v 15-19. Several examples of the faith and service of women overcoming adverse situations to serve God were used to demonstrate how God's power in our lives can enable us to do great things. We were reminded that this power from God is still available for each of us today in our journey through life.

The service was enhanced by a beautiful display using materials inspired by the Taiwan ladies with traditional artwork and photographs.

We give thanks to God for the generous offering of £205 towards the work of WDP and our brothers and sisters around the world.

**PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL (PCC) OF ALL SAINTS' FARINGDON**  
**ANNUAL REPORTS AND ACCOUNTS FOR 2023**

May God bless you richly,

Sharon Gerry 2023 Branch Secretary (Faringdon Baptist Church)

## **The Barber Garden – *Janet Deane***

The Barber Garden is to your left when accessing the Barber Rooms from outside.

Each year taking care of the Barber Garden is a challenge: persistent weeds and insufficient help to bring the area into a pleasant place to wander around and to experience a sense of tranquillity.

After a request for volunteers, in November, there was a tidy up and the area is now looking better. I have, reluctantly, needed to say that I cannot continue to help.

I sincerely thank all those who have contributed over the last 6+ years - the Barber Garden is yielding to the care and attention given and which it deserves.

**ALL SAINTS' PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL**  
**Financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2023**  
**Statement of financial activities**

2022 £	Notes	General funds £	Designated funds £	Restricted funds £	Endowment funds £	Total £	
<u>INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS</u>							
138,208	Voluntary Income	2a	131,240	-	25,531	-	156,770
	Activities for generating funds		-	-	-	-	
5,467	Income from Investments	2b	1,194	-	5,836	-	7,030
12,258	Church Activities	2c	11,337	-	-	-	11,337
	Other income		-	-	-	-	-
155,932	TOTAL INCOME		143,770		31,367		175,137
<u>EXPENDITURE</u>							
57	Raising Funds	3a	72	-	-	-	72
	Church Activities						
12,962	- Missionary and Charitable Giving	3b	12,232	-	802	-	13,034
68,885	- Diocesan Parish Share (£67203, less refunds)		63,451	-	-	-	63,451
78,563	- Other activities	3c	52,717		25,650		78,366
220	Governance Costs	3d	220	-	-	-	220
160,687	TOTAL EXPENDITURE		128,692	-	26,452	-	155,144
(4,755)	NET INCOME/(EXPENDITURE) BEFORE INVESTMENT GAINS/(LOSSES)		15,078		4,915		19,993
(26,536)	NET GAINS ON INVESTMENT ASSETS (on revaluation)	11		1,077	9,081	12,042	22,199
(31,290)	NET INCOME/(EXPENDITURE)		15,078	1,077	13,996	12,042	42,193
-	TRANSFERS BETWEEN FUNDS		-	-	-	-	-
-	- Move £750 from General Fund to CL Designated		(750)	750		-	-
-	- Move £6300 from Celia Walker Fund to General Fund		6,300		(6,300)	-	-
-	(pay for repairs in 2023)					-	-
(31,290)	NET MOVEMENT IN FUNDS		20,628	1,827	7,696	12,042	42,193
815,896	Total funds brought forward 1 January		515,098	11,071	130,449	127,988	784,605
784,605	Total funds carried forward 31 December		535,726	12,898	138,145	140,029	826,798

**ALL SAINTS' PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL**  
**Financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2023**  
**Balance sheet as at 31 December 2023**

2022 £		Notes	General funds £	Designated funds £	Restricted funds £	Endowment funds £	Total £
<b>Fixed assets</b>							
475,880	Tangible fixed assets	7	470,440	-	-	-	470,440
214,114	Investment assets	8	-	12,898	85,136	140,029	238,063
<u>689,994</u>	<b>Total fixed assets</b>		<u>470,440</u>	<u>12,898</u>	<u>85,136</u>	<u>140,029</u>	<u>708,503</u>
<b>Current assets</b>							
0	Stock		-	-	-	-	-
0	Debtors (tax recoverable)	9	-	-	-	-	-
74,889	Short term deposits		36,123		53,009		89,132
19,722	Cash in hand and at bank		29,163	-		-	29,163
<u>94,612</u>	<b>Total current assets</b>		<u>65,286</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>53,009</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>118,295</u>
<b>Liabilities(Creditors): amounts falling due within one year</b>							
0	Interest Free Loans		0	-	-	-	0
0	Barber Rooms costs	10	0	-	-	-	0
<u>94,612</u>	<b>Net current assets</b>		<u>65,286</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>53,009</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>118,295</u>
<b>Liabilities(Creditors): amounts falling due after one year</b>							
0	Interest Free Loans		0	-	-	-	0
<u>784,605</u>			<u>535,726</u>	<u>12,898</u>	<u>138,145</u>	<u>140,029</u>	<u>826,798</u>
<b>Funds of the church</b>							
<b>Unrestricted funds</b>							
515,098	General fund		535,726	-	-	-	535,726
11,071	Designated fund	12	-	12,898	-	-	12,898
<u>526,168</u>			<u>535,726</u>	<u>12,898</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>548,624</u>
130,449	<b>Restricted funds</b>	11	-	-	138,145	-	138,145
127,988	<b>Endowment fund</b>	11	-	-	-	140,029	140,029
<u>784,605</u>	<b>Total funds of the church</b>		<u>535,726</u>	<u>12,898</u>	<u>138,145</u>	<u>140,029</u>	<u>826,798</u>
-			-	-	-	-	-

Approved by the Parochial Church Council on 9th April 2024 and signed on its behalf by:

Maria Jukes  
Vicar, All Saints Church

Dr David Wilson  
Treasurer, All Saints Church



**ALL SAINTS' PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL**  
**Financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2023**

**Notes to the accounts**

2022		2023				
		Unrestricted	Designated	Restricted	Endowment	Total funds
Total funds	<b>2 INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS</b>	£	£	£	£	£
£						
	<b>2a Voluntary Income</b>					
	Planned Giving:					
65,534	Tax - efficient planned giving (excl. tax)	68,451	-	-	-	68,451
19,545	Tax recovered/recoverable	20,544	-	1,955	-	22,499
20,184	Other planned giving (bankers order and payroll)	16,245	-	-	-	16,245
6,265	Collections of loose cash at services	7,661	-	-	-	7,661
	Legacies	-	-	-	-	-
14,990	Children & Families Leader Contributions (ODBF etc)	-	-	22,775	-	22,775
1,039	Grants Received towards activities	-	-	-	-	-
	Youth Work Related Donations	-	-	-	-	-
	Mission Fund Donations	-	-	-	-	-
	Little All Sorts Donations	687	-	-	-	687
6,439	Other donations (Gift Aided)	7,984	-	304	-	8,288
4,127	Other donations (Non Gift Aided)	9,667	-	497	-	10,164
85	Wall Safe/Cask etc.	-	-	-	-	-
<b>138,208</b>		<b>131,240</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>25,531</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>156,770</b>
	<b>Activities for generating funds</b>					
	Fetes, Bazaars, Other fund-raising events	-	-	-	-	-
		-	-	-	-	-
	<b>2b Investment Income</b>					
971	Deposit accounts (CBF, CAF, Virgin)	671	-	1,812	-	2,482
4,496	CBF Investment Account Dividends	523	-	4,024	-	4,548
<b>5,467</b>		<b>1,194</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>5,836</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>7,030</b>
	<b>2c Incoming resources from charitable activities</b>					
9,834	Fees - weddings, funerals etc	8,148	-	-	-	8,148
	Church magazine	-	-	-	-	-
2,424	Room Hire	3,189	-	-	-	3,189
<b>12,258</b>		<b>11,337</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>11,337</b>
	<b>Other incoming resources (If required )</b>					
		-	-	-	-	-
		-	-	-	-	-
	<b>3 EXPENDITURE</b>					
	<b>3a Raising Funds</b>					
57	Stewardship Campaign. Gift Aid Envelopes etc.	72	-	-	-	72
	<b>3b Missionary and Charitable Giving (see note 6)</b>					
9,663	Overseas Mission, Relief & Aid	7,790	-	500	-	8,290
2,554	Home Missions	3,022	-	252	-	3,274
745	Secular Charities	1,420	-	50	-	1,470
<b>12,962</b>		<b>12,232</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>802</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>13,034</b>
	<b>3c Church Activities</b>					
731	Ministry: Clergy Expenses	620	-	-	-	620
	Curate Costs	-	-	-	-	-
28,317	Children & Families Leader	8,183	-	24,650	-	32,833
1,582	Other Staff & Expenses	890	-	-	-	890
4,371	Church Cleaning	5,414	-	-	-	5,414
3,559	Heat Light & Water	3,354	-	-	-	3,354
450	Telephone & Wi-Fi	590	-	-	-	590
5,113	Insurance	6,427	-	-	-	6,427
565	Repairs & Maintenance: Organ & Bells	-	-	500	-	500
13,596	Other (mainly Quinquennial work)	6,333	-	500	-	6,833
	Church Development	607	-	-	-	607
632	Cost of church services	2,114	-	-	-	2,114
2,803	Upkeep of Churchyard	1,675	-	-	-	1,675
	Magazines Expenses	-	-	-	-	-
635	Training, Mission & Education	1,499	-	-	-	1,499
5,440	Depreciation charge for year (Barber Rooms etc.)	5,440	-	-	-	5,440
	Other expense items (£100 Petty Cash written off)	-	-	-	-	-
10,770	Admin, Printing, Stationery, Bank Charges	9,568	-	-	-	9,568
<b>78,563</b>		<b>52,717</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>25,650</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>78,366</b>
	<b>3d Governance Costs</b>					
220	Audit fees, legal advice, PCC meetings	220	-	-	-	220
	<b>4 STAFF COSTS</b>					
46,117	Wages & Salaries	46,117				
4	Average no. of employees	4				

During the year the PCC employed a Children and Families leader, an administrator, a cleaner (and for most of the year a 2nd clean  
There were no P11D employee benefits paid to any staff in this, or previous, years

**ALL SAINTS' PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL**  
**Financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2023**

**Notes to the accounts**

**5 Trustee remuneration and expenses - related parties**

No members of the PCC received any remuneration for their work on the PCC. The clergy, who are ex officio members do receive a stipend but are not remunerated for their service on the PCC. No PCC members claimed expenses although they would be entitled to claim travel costs for attending meetings.

**6 Grants made** - grants were made to the following institutions:

Christian Aid	900.00	CMS	3000.00
Wycliffe Bible Translators	240.00	Royal British Legion	400.00
INF (Pokhara Hospital)	650.00	Interserve	1200.00
Scripture Union	450.00	The Bible Society	450.00
The Children's Society	950.00	Simeon's Trustees	240.00
Tear Fund	900.00	Torch Trust	120.00
WATSAN	900.00	Faringdon Food Bank	50.00
Gaza Appeal (Tear Fund)	500.00	A Rocha	900.00
Root & Branch/Pennyhooks Farm	900	Bishop's Outreach Fund	284.20

2022 TOTAL

<b>12962.00</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>13034.20</b>
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No grants were made to individuals.

**7 Tangible fixed assets (all unrestricted)**

	Freehold land & buildings	Fixtures fittings & equipment	Other	Total
Cost or valuation	£	£	£	£
At 1 January 2023	500,000	2,200	-	502,200
Additions/Disposals	-	-	-	-
Revaluations	-	-	-	-
Disposals	-	-	-	-
At 31 December 2023	500,000	2,200	-	502,200
<b>Depreciation</b>				
At 1 January 2023	25,000	1,320	-	26,320
Charge for year	5,000	440	-	5,440
Disposals	-	-	-	-
At 31 December 2023	30,000	1,760	-	31,760
<b>Net book value</b>				
At 1 January 2023	475,000	880	-	475,880
At 31 December 2023	470,000	440	-	470,440

**8 Investment assets**

<b>Fixed asset investments</b>	£
Carrying (market) value on 1 January 2023	214,114
Add additions at cost/value	-
Less disposals at carrying value	-
Net gain/(loss) on revaluation	23,949
Market Value - 31st December 2023	238,063

**9 Debtors and prepayments** (no amounts were due in more than one year)

Amounts falling due within one year	
2023	2022
£	£
0	0

**10 Creditors and accruals** (no amounts were due in more than one year)

Amounts falling due within one year	
2023 £	2022 £
0	0
0	0

**11 Endowment and restricted funds**

	Fund balances b/f	Incoming resources	Resources expended	Gains and losses	Fund balances c/f
	£	£	£	£	£
<b>Endowment funds</b>					
Craven/Rawlings/John Wright (Inv A/C)	19,814	-	-	1,864	21,678
Haines/Spinage (Inv A/C)	3,151	-	-	297	3,448
Celia Walker Fund (Inv A/C)	105,022	-	-	9,881	114,903
	127,988	-	-	12,042	140,029
<b>Restricted funds</b>					
	£	£	£	£	£
Chamberlain (Organ Fund) (Invest)	58,883	0	0.00	7,399.04	66,282.32
Chamberlain (Organ Fund) (Deposit)	848	27.00	297	0.00	578.50
Celia Walker Fund (Deposit)	23,756	4,323	1,000	0.00	27,079.45
Celia Walker Fund (Invest)	12,582	1,000	-	1,230.85	14,813.03
Bell Ringers Fund (Deposit)	4,270	230	218	(0.00)	4,281.66
Fabric Fund (Quinquennial grants etc.)	8,507	273	-	(0.00)	8,779.53
Accrual for tax refund	0	-	-	0.00	0.00
Mission Fund (Deposit)	16,982	544	-	0.00	17,526.09
Boffin (Bells, clock, chimes) (Inv)	3,590	-	-	451.07	4,040.83
Boffin (Bells, clock, chimes) (Deposit)	1,031	33	-	(0.00)	1,063.74
	130,449	6,430	1,515	9,081	144,445.15

**12 Designated Funds**

	£	£	£	£	£
Coach Lane Investment Fund	11,071	750	-	1,077	12,898

## **Independent Examiner's Report to the Parochial Church Council of ALL SAINTS'**

I have examined the financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2023 which comprise the Statement of Financial Activities, Balance Sheet and related notes.

### **Respective responsibilities of the PCC (Charity trustees) and Independent Examiner**

The charity's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The charity's trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 144 of the Charities Act 2011 (the Charities Act) and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to:

- examine the accounts under section 145 of the 2011 Act,
- to follow the procedures laid down in the general Directions given by the Charity Commission (under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act, and
- to state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

### **Basis of Independent Examiner's Statement**

My examination was carried out in accordance with general Directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts and seeking explanations from the trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair' view and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

### **Independent Examiner's Statement**

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

1. which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in, any material respect, the requirements:

- to keep accounting records in accordance with section 130 of the 2011 Act; and
- to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the 2011 Act have not been met; or

2. to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Gill Garrard  
5<sup>th</sup> March 2024  
Independent Examiner  
3 Stanford Road  
Faringdon  
Oxon SN7 7AQ

