



Annual Parochial Church Meeting

Sunday 11 May 2025

Annual Report 2024-2025

The Parochial Church Council of the Ecclesiastical
Parish of St John the Evangelist, Cambridge

St John the Evangelist Church
Hills Road
Cambridge, CB2 8RN

St John the Evangelist Vicar's Report, 2024-2025

St John the Evangelist seeks to be a 'Transforming Christian presence' in South Cambridge, sharing the Gospel of Jesus Christ, offering life-giving worship and pastoral care, hospitality through our St John's Centre, and wide-ranging partnership with our local community. 2024-2025 has been another full year, further consolidating our mission and congregational life, as well as seeing various changes in our ministerial team.

Most recently, on 5 January 2025, the Revd Nell Whiscombe completed her curacy at St John's, after 2 ½ years, having been appointed as the new Chaplain of St Catharine's College, University of Cambridge. Nell began her new role shortly afterwards, at the start of the Lent Term. Nell has contributed widely to our ministry at St John's, including her insightful preaching, oversight of eco church, children and youth ministry, schools links, and being a key part of our relationship with the student body at Homerton College. Nell, Alexander and Austin will be much missed.

Early in 2024, we were approached about a potentially enhanced relationship with Homerton College, following the retirement of their lay Chaplain, Miss P.M. Maude. Mid-year, I led St John's PCC in envisioning a new, self-supporting Associate Vicar role, with a range of key duties including Chaplaincy to Homerton's Charter Choir, sharing in pastoral care of St John's, preaching and worship leadership, and leading on discipleship development, among others. In due course interviews were held, and the Revd Ceri Payne was appointed, announced on 8 August, as our new Associate Vicar. This followed Ceri's earlier curacy at St John's (2021-2023) and a year's ministry at St Mary the Great, Cambridge. Ceri was licensed by the Ven. Alex Hughes on 20 October 2024.

Also in the autumn of 2024, St John's was joined by a part-time placement curate, the Revd Edward Cearn, who spent 12 weeks in our Parish, contributing in many ways, including through his art-work, which featured in a special exhibition held at St John's before Christmas. Having begun his curacy at St Clement's, Ed is now finishing his curacy at St Bene't's, Cambridge.

On 3 July I completed 25 years of ordained life and it was a blessing, in early autumn, to be appointed as an Honorary Canon of Ely Cathedral. I was licensed at the Cathedral on 25 September and have enjoyed having the opportunity to preach several times, as well as continuing to serve as Rural Dean of Cambridge South, and Bishop's Adviser for Spirituality. In view of a likely extended period without a curate at St John's – having had three curates, only a year earlier – it is greatly appreciated having our new Associate Vicar, sharing in the ministry.

Otherwise, our wider ministry team continues to make a fantastic contribution to the life of St John's, including Canon Kate Aylmer LLM, the Revd John Hillier, Anne Rigby ALM, Jane Gardiner LLM, Suzanne Barton ALM, and our ordinands, Sian Binley, and – for a second year – Daniel Krawczyk, and the Revd Dr Muthuraj Swamy. The Revd Peter Heslam has been living out of the area, in recent months.

In terms of our St John's staff team, I am most grateful to Elizabeth Trenchard, our Choir Director and Director of Music – St John's Choir continues to thrive and has several new adults and trebles – as well as Michael Fincham, our dedicated Facilities Manager, and Liz Hurst, our highly skilled Communications Officer. As regards our volunteer team, Julia Margretts has done St John's proud both as Churchwarden and volunteer administrator; she will retire from both roles this year. Joseph Philip has been a dedicated Churchwarden and is stepping down. Roger Lilley continues as our volunteer Treasurer, and as the Deanery Treasurer; and our PCC Secretary, Janet Tankard, stepped down in autumn 2024, having ably serving in this role for several years. As ever I am so grateful to all our ministers, paid staff and volunteers, who make life at St John's possible.

Some other highlights, in the past year, apart from the celebration of the major Christian festivals, have been our Eco-Fest on 12 October; many concerts throughout the year, including ongoing links with Perse School students; all of our regular Small Groups, and other occasional courses, such as – early in 2025, a youth Confirmation course, and in 2024 an Admission of Baptised to Communion course. We also continue to offer ongoing outreach to local schools; support to our overseas mission links, one of whom (the Bethesda Project in Burundi) sent a representative to tell us about their pioneering work recently; Children's Church, as well as Toddle Along, St John's Youth Group, and various outings; as well as day-by-day pastoral care, Baptisms, weddings and funerals. St John's Friendship Café met weekly from January to March 2025, and we continue to attract many people to our monthly Community Lunches, ably led by Anne Rigby and her team.

As ever, I would like to thank all members of St John's for your dedicated participation in the life, work, teaching, worship and outreach of our local Christian community, seeking God's guidance and blessing on the year ahead. May God's holy will be sought, in all things, for the furtherance of his Kingdom, on earth as it is in heaven.

Revd Canon James Shakespeare
Vicar, St John the Evangelist Cambridge

Associate Vicar's Report, 2024-2025

After completing my curacy training at St John the Evangelist, and following a year on secondment to Great St Mary's in the centre of Cambridge from September 2023 to September 2024, I have been greatly enjoying being back at St John's, since 22 October 2024, as Associate Vicar.

In this new role, my ministry focus is on our vision and strategy for mission and outreach to the people who live, work and study in the parish. Developing learning and discipleship within and beyond the existing congregations (including through small groups and inquirers' groups) is a key responsibility in this ministry.

In addition, together with the Vicar and the wider ministry team, I am involved in the pastoral care and nurture of the congregations and the wider parish. I also share in the leading of prayer and worship, and in the preaching, at all our services, including weddings and funerals.

I also have a new and distinct role as Homerton College's Choir Chaplain, facilitating and developing the existing link between St John's and Homerton College, which I report on elsewhere.

In 2024 I completed a Diocesan-run training course on spiritual care for older people, and I will be commissioned as an Anna Chaplain at St John's on 11 May. With so many of us living for much longer and having such diverse experiences as we grow older, there are wonderful opportunities for ministry amongst older people, including both those with a strong faith and those with little or no faith. I hope as an Anna Chaplain to bring best practice and creativity to our ministry to older people, both in our congregations and in the wider parish.

Revd Ceri Payne
Associate Vicar

Licenced Lay Minister's Report

Life as an LLM continues to be varied and interesting. I preach, serve as deacon and occasionally lead services but most of my work is behind the scenes. I am part of the Sacristan team and spend time with individuals as and when needed. I have also started to be involved in funerals. Away from St John's I am a volunteer chaplain at Addenbrooke's and do an occasional morning at Arthur Rank Hospice.

Jane Gardiner, LLM

Electoral Roll Report

On 1 April 2025 the number on the Electoral Roll was 200, having been reduced by the deaths of four members during the year (Bill Bainbridge, Pat Heap, Beryl Johnson and Mary O'Flynn).

2025 is a year in which, under the Church Representation Rules, every parish is required to prepare a completely new Electoral Roll. The Rules require reasonable steps to be taken to inform members of the existing Roll that they must complete new application forms, and this was done by email letters (which also went to non-Roll members on the email circulation list), or, for those not online, hand-delivered letters (with the exception of a very small number of people not resident in the parish who were thought no longer to fulfil the requirements of membership); announcements were also made at most services during the preparation period and in the weekly e-news. I am very grateful to the clergy and to Liz Hurst and Julia Margretts for their help with this process.

The number on the new Roll, published on 26 April 2025, is 140. Of these, approximately 59% are resident within the parish.

Cherry Hopkins
Electoral Roll Officer

PCC Secretary's Report of PCC Meetings, 2024-2025

PCC members are clergy, churchwardens and others elected by the Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM) of the parish. The principal function of the PCC is "promoting in the parish the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical." St John's PCC is a charity registered with the Charity Commission, its members being trustees.

St John's annual report contains a review of the year in the vicar's report, statutory reports and accounts and individual reports on the activities of the parish generally. Thanks are given to all those who have contributed to this year's annual report.

St John's PCC membership 19 May 2024 – 11 May 2025

Clergy

Revd Canon James Shakespeare, Vicar and Chair

Revd Nell Whiscombe, Assistant Curate (July 2022-January 2025)

Revd Ceri Payne, Associate Vicar (from October 2024)

Ex-officio

Jane Gardiner, LLM

Roger Lilley, Treasurer

Julia Margretts, Churchwarden and Vice-Chair

Joseph Philip, Churchwarden

Janet Tankard, PCC Secretary (until September 2024)

Elizabeth Trenchard, Organist and Director of Music

Deanery Synod Representative

Amanda Taylor (from May 2024)

Co-opted

Revd John Hillier, Retired with Permission to Officiate

Elected members

Alison Baillie, elected 2022, standing down 2025

Brian Heap, elected 2023, standing down 2026

Hilary Pennington, elected 2023, standing down 2026

Joseph Saunders, elected 2023, standing down 2026

Tessa Segaren, elected 2024, standing down 2027

Don Simpson, elected 2023, standing down 2026

Jacqueline Watkins, elected 2023, standing down 2026

Alastair Wilkinson, elected 2023, standing down 2026

One new PCC member, Tessa Segaren, was elected at the 2024 APCM, to serve until 2027.

Janet Tankard stepped down as PCC Secretary in September 2024. We are extremely grateful for her excellent work in this role. Liz Hurst was appointed as PCC Secretary, on an hourly paid basis, from January 2025.

Ali Baillie is stepping down from PCC membership at the 2025 APCM, having completed her three year term. We are very grateful for her valuable contribution to the PCC.

Our thanks go to all the members of the PCC, who have generously given their time to supporting our church life in this way.

Six meetings have been held in person at St John's since the APCM in May 2024. After a prayer and bible reading, meetings include regular reports from the churchwardens, treasurer and safeguarding officer, as well as reports on health and safety, the deanery and diocesan matters. Other updates are given on ministry, music and worship, children, youth and families, eco church and the mission committee. Particular areas of interest are also discussed on a one off basis. Amongst these items, in the last year, we have discussed the dispute with Wave Utilities, Chaplaincy to the Charter Choir of Homerton College and the new PCC committee structure. You will find more information about these topics elsewhere in the Annual Report.

Approved minutes from PCC meetings are available for parishioners to read, copies of which are placed on the St John's noticeboard in the lobby and on file for reference in the Parish Office. Meeting dates are in E-news, on the church website calendar and in the PCC minutes.

We are currently entitled to nine elected members on the PCC and will have two vacancies at the APCM on 11 May 2025. We are entitled to two further deanery synod representatives, although we are already well represented on the synod by our existing representative, plus our Vicar as Rural Dean, and our Treasurer as Deanery Treasurer.

Please consider whether you would like to represent St John's as a PCC member or on Deanery Synod. The PCC would welcome new members and nomination forms can be found at the back of church, online from the parish resources website <https://parishresources.org.uk/pccs/apcms/>, or alternatively ask one of the clergy.

Liz Hurst

PCC Secretary

Safeguarding Report 2024-2025

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

Church Representation Rules: Part 9, Section A, APCM, M5(3) Business; reports etc,

The Importance of Safeguarding

Safeguarding is the action that is taken to promote the welfare of children and vulnerable adults, protecting them from abuse or maltreatment and preventing harm to their health or development.

Proverbs 31v 8 says “Speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves, for the rights of all who are destitute.”

As a church we want to ensure that the children and vulnerable adults in our community are protected and recognise our calling and duty to love and care for the vulnerable and marginalised, protecting all from abuse.

Parish Safeguarding Officer

This time last year, I had audited safeguarding processes and paperwork at St John the Evangelist church and identified historic and more recent gaps. By June 2024, the St John’s Church safeguarding dashboard showed that we were up to date on 57% of mandatory safeguarding actions; by the end of March 2025, we had completed 97% of such actions.

Over the past year, the PCC has:

- read and understood the C of E Code of Safer Working Practices & Safer Environments. This document has also been disseminated to all church volunteers working with children and vulnerable adults.
- approved a policy statement on the recruitment of ex-offenders
- approved Social Media guidance
- reviewed the list of church activities on the Safeguarding dashboard for completeness
- reviewed & approved ‘Responding to Allegations’ – the C of E recommended process
- approved the safe storage of Safeguarding information
- approved the list of non-church activities taking place in the Wilkinson Room
- considered what makes a Safe & Healthy culture in relation to safeguarding at St John’s and identified development points
- taken note of C of E guidance on Responding well to Victims and Survivors

Safer Recruitment

Over the past year, I have focused on ensuring that all DBS checks, references and requisite safeguarding training for volunteers working with children are in place. I have also worked to make sure that we have the policies and procedures to ensure that safeguarding is an integral part of the way in which we work with children and vulnerable adults at St John the Evangelist church. Paperwork relating to the safer recruitment of volunteers has been drafted and is in the process of being reviewed by the Executive Committee. Though policies are in place, more work still needs to be done to embed safer recruitment practices so this will be an on-going focus over the coming year.

Safeguarding Policies

We continue to have Safeguarding as a standing agenda item for all PCC meetings and regular safeguarding reports have been made to the PCC.

The PCC approved a procedure for Responding Promptly to Safeguarding Concerns or Allegations at the PCC meeting on 13 March.

Safeguarding Training

All those on the PCC have completed the 'core pathway' training required - Basic, Foundation and Domestic Abuse modules. Some longer standing members of the PCC have completed refresher training, since Church of England guidance states that this should be undertaken at 3 yearly intervals. I have run safeguarding training for those not able to complete the training on-line.

A Safe and Protective Environment

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility, not because 'we have to', but because we care.

Mark 12:30-31 says: "And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.' The second is this: 'You shall love your neighbour as yourself.' There is no other commandment greater than these."

Jacqui Watkins

Parish Safeguarding Officer

Treasurer's Report 2024

The financial report for the church is certainly a lot healthier than it has been for many years in spite of the fact that our reserves are only just sufficient to meet all foreseeable needs. However, that is the limit of our resources at the moment and to meet longer term objectives there will need to be a significant boost to our income.

There are many reasons why our income should fluctuate from year to year. Our income from lettings of the St John's Centre and the church has remained very steady. Of more concern has been a fall in the income we receive through the Parish Giving Scheme (PSG), the most significant part of the regular donations the congregation makes. This has been the first fall for some years; if it continues then it will certainly be a cause for concern.

Once again, could I ask all of you who don't contribute via the PGS to consider doing so. I would like to be in a position to announce that we are phasing out all other means of making regular donations to our church funds. There may be exceptional reasons why the PGS is not a good vehicle for a few, but for so many reasons - privacy of data, speed of collection of gift aid and administrative burden - any other method of regular payment into our church funds is inefficient.

Our Gift Aid Officer spends many hours each quarter processing the figures involved in donations outside the PGS scheme. It should be possible to reduce this workload drastically if 95% of our voluntary donations were to go through the PGS scheme.

Prompt action has always ensured that our maintenance costs have been kept to a minimum. The major works recorded in the financial statement refer to the audio-visual installation which was largely covered by a generous legacy. This is a reminder of the impact that such a gift can make and we urge all of you to consider St John's in your wills. Many of you will be quite surprised to learn how little income the church at large derives from legacies in contrast to days gone by. We would be very happy to discuss with you how your legacy could make a difference to St John's and its community.

A very big thank you to all those who have made the running of the finances at St John's so smooth. Those who count the collections, put out the card readers everything is done so efficiently.

And thank you, the congregation, whose regular donations, support for appeals, for concerts, coffee money etc etc, when all added together place us in an enviable position compared to many parishes.

As always, please feel free to contact me with questions about the minutiae of the financial statement or church finances in general.

Roger Lilley
Treasurer

Churchwardens' Report 2024-2025

Life at St John's has continued on an upward trajectory in 2024-2025, with good levels of attendance at services, further expansion of the Choir and a continuing increase in external bookings for rooms in the St John's Centre and the church itself.

1. Committee Structure of the PCC

Over the course of the year we have reviewed and updated the Committee Structure of the PCC.

A formal Standing Committee has been set up, which is able to make decisions between PCC meetings, on the occasions when it is not possible to consult the full PCC.

The work of the PCC is now supported by four Committees, which each provide leadership and direction for the following areas:

- Executive Committee – for the Ministry team; Choir; Home Groups; Children, Youth and families work; Homerton Charter Choir; Finance; Safeguarding; Health & Safety and Fundraising
- Employment Committee – for the appointment and work of Administrative staff; Communications Officer; Caretaker/Premises Manager and volunteer helpers in the Office and Church
- Mission Committee – for the Eco Group; Arocha Church and donations to and support for charities

- Site Management Committee – for the care and maintenance of the church buildings, gardens, grounds and St John’s Centre, including relevant Health & Safety issues; the Premises team, including contractors and volunteers; preparation for and follow up to Quinquennial Inspections; external bookings and preparing to reduce St John’s carbon footprint

Membership of each Committee includes representatives of the clergy, churchwardens, members of the PCC and appropriate specialist expertise when needed, for example in areas such as safeguarding and human resources.

Each committee reports to the PCC, has Terms of Reference agreed by the PCC, and has started a programme of regular meetings of at least three per year.

We are extremely grateful to all those members of the congregation who share their expertise and give up their time to support the work of St John’s, by serving on the PCC and associated committees. It is early days as yet but the updated system has got off to a good start and is working well.

2. Wave Utilities

We are pleased to report that, after 18 months of negotiation, the dispute with Wave Utilities, reported in last year’s Churchwardens’ report, has, with the help of the Consumer Council for Water, now been resolved.

Whilst Wave Utilities at no point accepted any responsibility for their failure to contact St John’s from 1 April 2017 to May 2023, we did discover more about the circumstances that resulted in this complete breakdown of communications for a period of six years. Although Wave Utilities refused to acknowledge any shortcomings in the quality of their customer service provision, the company did finally reassess the sum owed for the provision of sewerage services at St John’s, from 1 April 2017 to 31 March 2025, reducing it from £11,770.99 to £2,432.44. This sum is much more in line with the sums charged by Pennon Water (now Source for Business) for the supply of water to St John’s over that period, so it has been paid and the dispute finally settled. Although it was promised, no apology to Sue Mawby has been received from Wave Utilities.

The account was then switched from Wave Utilities to Source for Business, with effect from 31 March 2025. This will be much more convenient as charges for the supply of water and sewerage services will now be levied on the same bill each year.

3. Quinquennial Inspection, on behalf of the Diocese of Ely

The Quinquennial inspection was carried out by Karen Lim, of Cowper Griffith, on 18 July 2023.

Overall the premises are in good repair, including the main roof areas. However work needs to be done on the below ground drainage associated with the north aisle and the north aisle buttress and water damage to brick work on the south-western buttress of the church. All the gutters and rainwater pipes are cast iron and now in need of redecoration and refurbishment, over the next three years.

Lodge & Sons have been appointed to undertake this work and will be starting on site after Easter 2025. The total cost of their quotation is £51,689, but this is likely to be increased as a result of the inflation that has taken place since it was prepared in January 2024. 50% of this sum is the cost of the necessary scaffolding. It is likely that the work will be done one elevation at a time, over the next three years, in order to spread the cost.

The Site Management Committee has recommended that support should be sought from Karen Lim with the monitoring and final inspection of this work.

4. Maintenance and repairs

As much of this work has Health & Safety implications, it has been reported in the Churchwardens' Health & Safety report.

Organ

As in previous years, the organ has been tuned by Norman Hall & Sons three times this year, in September and December 2024, and March 2025.

Signage

The main church noticeboard was replaced very successfully in June 2024 with an attractive green board made by a specialist firm.

Clip frames have been attached to the West Door and church gates, to accommodate posters advertising church events and activities. The result is a much neater appearance and the posters are better protected from the weather, giving them increased longevity.

Care of the gardens and grounds around the church

A part-time gardener has been employed for the first time this year, for three hours every two weeks. Matthew Wolff covered the role in the autumn of 2024 and Clare Donovan took over in March 2025. They are assisted by a hardworking team of volunteers from the church congregation and local community, led by Erica Lowry, Katie Knapton and Angela Fincham. Michael Fincham continues to lead a very committed team of excellent grass cutters.

The garden in the centre of the courtyard continues to be much admired by visitors and special thanks go to Clare Donovan for all her hard work on keeping it looking so attractive.

The range of wildlife continues to develop in the grounds, well supported by the Youth Group, the Guides and the Brownies. Although small, the pond has been a great success resulting in the sighting of a newt for the first time this year.

Caretaking and cleaning

Michael Fincham (Caretaker/Premises Manager), continues to ensure the church and St John's Centre are maintained to a very high standard. The entire premises are always clean, well presented and much appreciated by both the congregation and external hirers of rooms and facilities.

In a voluntary capacity, he also continues to look after all the bookings, which make a huge contribution to the financial status of St John's. The number of both regular and one-off

hirers has expanded again this year, as a result of the excellent service Michael provides. His outstanding work and continuing commitment are much valued and appreciated.

Many thanks are also due to Joseph Philip, Cherry Hopkins, Jane Blackmore, Liz Tavner and Pat Chapman who assist him in the church.

5. Fundraising

For a variety of reasons the Fundraising Group has not met this year, so fundraising activities are being included in this report.

A range of events raised over £8,000 for St John's in 2024. They included a number of evening concerts by a range of choirs, orchestras and groups, a series of lunchtime concerts by the very talented pupils of The Perse School, a Plant Sale in May, a pottery sale in June, an Eco Fest in October and Christmas Stalls in December.

Outstanding issues to be attended to in 2025/2026

- Repairs are needed to the fence between the church grounds and the EF Language School next door. It has been agreed that the cost of this will be shared between EF and St John's and it will be carried out by The Cam Handyman in the next few weeks.
- The rotting sleepers in the car park need to be replaced by bollards, to prevent cars reversing over the sill.
- A damaged gate post, at the entrance to the car park, needs to be repaired.
- Some painting work needs to be done to window frames and external cupboard doors, such as that of the door to the shed that houses the organ blower. It is hoped that a group of volunteers can be recruited to complete these and other minor repairs.

Julia Margretts and Joseph Philip
Churchwardens

Churchwardens' Health and Safety Report

16 July 2024

Several broken tiles on the roof of the south aisle were repaired by Lander & Linsey, after one fell into the courtyard on Sunday 14 July. The Courtyard was closed on Sunday and Monday 14 & 15 July, but was reopened on 17 July. Pointing above the Boiler House was also repaired by Lander & Linsey, while they were on site.

10 September 2024

UK Safety Management completed PAT testing on all portable appliances.

11 October 2024

Lander & Linsey repaired the gutter above the Vicar's Vestry, which had fallen off its mounting and the consequent water flow on the flat roof caused a leak in the Vicar's Vestry.

7 November 2024

Alan Marshall carried out the annual service on the church boiler.

13 November 2024

Briar Security carried out the annual service on the CCTV and alarm systems.

4 February 2025

Alan Marshall serviced the boilers in the kitchen, Wilkinson Room and Vestry.

11 February 2025

The Cam Handyman temporarily repaired the fence between church property and the EF Language School next door, to make it safe pending permanent repair, the cost of which will be shared with EF.

25 February 2025

UK Safety Management conducted a full fixed wire testing procedure on both circuits, (which operate from the control boards in the Vicar's Vestry and the table storage cupboard in the Wilkinson Room), for the EICR Certificate, which is now required every five years. One circuit breaker needs to be replaced, which will be done by DS Electrical early in April 2025.

3 March 2025

Lander & Linsey cleaned all the gutters accessible by ladder and washed the canopy in the Courtyard.

6 March 2025

Camfire serviced the Fire Extinguishers, replacing two due to their age.

21 March 2025

Capital Doors repaired the doors from the Lobby to the Courtyard, replacing the sensors in the Courtyard.

3 April 2025

Safety Audit of the site carried out by two member of the Site Management Committee

4 April 2025

Loose paving slabs in the car park were repaired by the Cam Handyman.

6 April 2025

A Fire Practice was held during the Sunday morning 10.00am service.

Monthly checks

Regular monthly checks continue to be carried out on the:

- Smoke Alarms
- Fire Extinguishers
- Emergency Lighting
- Carbon dioxide detectors

Outstanding issues to be dealt with shortly:

- A loose paving slab outside the front entrance to the Lobby will be re-laid
- A proud drain cover in the car park will be re-seated
- A damaged gatepost at the entrance to the car park will be repaired
- Some high lights bulbs in the church need replacing
- Bollards will be installed along the eastern edge of the car park, to prevent cars reversing over the sill

I am grateful to Julia and Michael for all that they have done in organizing the work schedule.

*Joseph Philip
Health and Safety Officer*

Cambridge South Deanery Synod Report 2024-2025

This has been a full and engaged year for our Deanery, with James leading as Rural Dean. In the earlier part of the year there were two vacancies, St Bene't's, Cambridge plus Newnham and Grantchester. Last autumn two new incumbents were licensed, the Revd Devin MacLachlan and the Rev Jim Robinson. More recently there has been a vacancy at St Barnabas, Mill Road, and following Easter Sunday, 20 April 2025, St James' Church, Wulfstan Way will fall vacant, as our near neighbour, the Revd Steven Rothwell, moves into a full-time Diocesan post heading up curate training and clergy development. Our Deanery Chapter meets regularly, as a place for clergy to connect, share and pray for one another's ministries. Deanery Synod met on three occasions, one of them a joint Synod with Cambridge North. We had a recent Synod focused on Eco Church/ Net Zero, another included a presentation on the Diocesan Open Learning Platform. Otherwise James, as Rural Dean, with Canon Nick Moir, Rural Dean of Cambridge North, has been part of a working group, meeting with Iain Osbourn, Diocesan Director of Strategy, to begin to formulate a Greater Cambridge Strategy, not least concerned with new housing developments in the area, and how as parishes we can work together to ensure a Christian presence.

*Revd Canon James Shakespeare
Rural Dean*

ACTIVITY REPORTS

Children, Youth and Families

Children's Church

It is wonderful to see growing numbers of children joining in with Children's Church, together with all the trebles who have joined the Choir. We are very grateful to our very dedicated team of Children's Church leaders (Philip Wood, Mel Boyle and Nat Segaren) and assistants (John Hillier, June Huntsman and Beth Christie). We continue to pray that more people would join our Children's Church team, as leaders or assistants. This would make it easier for the children to be in smaller groups so that all the children could be involved in activities, and could be engaging with material, that was better tailored to their age (which currently ranges from 5 to 13 years). It would also provide more opportunities for interacting with individual children, both growing their confidence and helping them to develop their own faith.

Revd Ceri Payne, Associate Vicar

Toddle Along

Our group continues to grow with 25 plus children registered. We have been using material from 'Go Teach' which is a resource comprising of 13 sessions of God's word for under 3's. For example:- 'Houses Jesus visited' and 'Heroines in the Bible '. The stories are very short and the text is easy for the children to understand. The children learn a new worship song every term and it is wonderful to see them enjoy this activity.

I am grateful as always for the help by our dedicated volunteers – we could not operate without the continual support from, Monica, Marian, Katie, Janet, Liz and Michael and support from the clergy, James and Ceri.

We are grateful to Liz for the publicity on the church website which has brought us to the attention of families in the area.

We continue to support Mary's Meals with the monetary contributions from parents and grandparents of the children. Looking forward to our Summer term when we will be looking at the series 'Animals in the Bible'.

Anne Rigby, ALM (Pastoral Care)

Youth Group

St John's Youth Group, which caters for the 11-16 age group, met regularly over the past year, on a Sunday afternoon. Usually we meet in the Cavendish Room, and leadership of St John's Youth was shared between Revd Nell Whiscombe, Revd James Shakespeare, and our theological college ordinands, Dan Krawczyk and Ben Sheridan. A range of topics were discussed, relating to Christian faith and to life in society or ecological concerns, as well as food, fun and fellowship being enjoyed! More recently, into 2025, the regular Youth Group has transmuted into a 'Questions about Faith' cum 'Youth Confirmation Course', and some of our 12+ young people are being confirmed at St Bene't's Church, Cambridge, on 10th May. However, it is anticipated that our regular Sunday afternoon or evening Youth Group will continue, thereafter, alongside regular activities at Children's Church (and St John's Choir) during worship on Sunday mornings. It is a joy to empower our youngsters to grow in faith and confidence, as well as in active engaging with the issues shaping our daily lives.

Revd Canon James Shakespeare

St John's Church Choir

2024 was a great year for St John's Church Choir We sang at many community events and supported the worship of other churches in addition to recruiting even more choristers!

We are delighted to build on our chorister recruitment campaign and currently have sixteen trebles singing on the top line. Having the new children in the choir has boosted our energy and enthusiasm levels. Throughout the year the trebles have continued to follow the RSCM

Voice for Life training scheme. Many former choristers maintain a strong link with St John's and we are always delighted to welcome them back especially for the Christmas services.

The choir have continued to lead the music at all the main services. We stretched our repertoire this year by singing anthems by Stanford for a whole month, including a choral evensong, to commemorate 100 years since he died.

Outreach and Community

We started our year with a trip to St Mary's church in Sawston where we sang evensong for Candlemas, kindly hosted by the Revd Petra Shakeshaft. The following month we sang choral evensong at St Mary's church in Bury St Edmund's and had a fascinating tour of their huge, ancient church.

We were delighted to join our partnership church choirs at St James' for Ascension Day this year.

We participated in the Diocesan Choir Festival in Ely Cathedral where one of our choristers read the second lesson. We hosted the preliminary rehearsals for this event at St John's.

We hosted a young voices event in partnership with the RSCM. This was aimed at singers under the age of 16 who enjoyed coming together from beyond the Diocese to sing with children of the same age. They entirely led evensong for us – including readings and prayers as well as the music.

The choir family enjoyed a trip to Chippenham Fen to feed the water buffalo and a visit to Ely Cathedral to see the amazing illuminations. We had a number of social activities, including socials post evensong, and we are grateful to James and Alison for hosting the summer party in the vicarage back garden.

On Advent Sunday we enjoyed singing an Advent Carol Service with the Revd Andrew Hurst at Grantchester parish church. We had hoped to sing Christmas Carols at Wimpole Hall but this event was unfortunately cancelled due to a severe weather forecast. We were lucky to have relatively mild weather for our annual carol singing on the punts in association with "Let's go punting". We raised a total of £1400 for the Cambridge Community Fund and we donated £250 to Wintercomfort. We ended our year with a lovely (if very wet) evening of carol singing around the parish when we brought Christmas cheer to members of the congregation who enjoyed carols sung on their doorstep.

Future

We continue to enjoy leading the worship at St John's. We hope that our trebles will continue to work through the RSCM training scheme and go on to achieve awards from Ely Diocese. We look forward to continuing to host and visit our partnership choirs and choirs from the Diocese (who may join our rehearsals for Diocesan events) next year.

We are extremely grateful to Roger Lilley for acting as Assistant Director of Music throughout the year. We are also grateful to our choir chaperones Jacqui, Suzanne and Catriona who enable and support our work with young children.

We are truly a choir family and we still have room for new members. If you are aged 7 years or older and enjoy singing please give us a try. We rehearse every Thursday evening and we have lots of fun as well as leading the worship.

Elizabeth Trenchard
Organist and Director of Music

Community Lunches

The Community Lunches have grown in popularity over the past year. Our numbers now are 60 -70 each month. At our Christmas lunch in 2024 the room was full and we served at least 70 meals. We have had excellent feedback from the attendees which proved it is a worthwhile project, meeting the needs of the community.

This venture could not operate without the invaluable help from the team of volunteers. I extend my grateful thanks to Janet, Jane, Joseph, Don, Hilary, Monica, Marian, John, Mary Ellen, Cathy, Liz, Peter and Michael. A fantastic team.

I also extend my gratitude to Mike Payne for continuing to head up the lunches during March and April while I have been away caring for family in Lancashire. We continue to cover costs with the £5 charge and have also been able to purchase more equipment for the kitchen. We look forward to providing another year of Friendship and Food for our Community outreach.

Anne Rigby
ALM (Pastoral care)

Eco Church Team

The team has nine members, Matthew Wolff and James Sims Williams joining in early spring 2024. We were led by the Revd Nell Whiscombe for most of her curacy at St John's and she is sadly missed. The Revd Canon James Shakespeare is now acting as interim chair, and other members are Lyn Guy, Brian Heap, John Hillier, Katie Knapton, Roger Lilley and Erica Lowry. We are now working towards an A Rocha silver award, having achieved bronze in 2021. The two assessment areas that most need our attention are the lifestyle and community sections. Other dimensions, buildings, worship and land, we believe are already reaching silver level. In the current APCM report The Gardens at St John's covers the compliance with land issues, including our local wildlife support.

Following the successful screening of the film *Pure Clean Water* and panel discussion early in 2024, we have developed a valuable link with John Latham, Chair of Hobson's Conduit Trust. We publicise their annual Bioblitz Weekend in June involving school-age children, and are now planning a biodiversity walk along the Conduit for members of St John's led by John Latham. We are aware that our sophisticated A V system will enable further film showings with a green agenda.

In early October 2024 we hosted a successful Eco Festival with 17 groups from within and outside the church represented. The primary objective was to share, along with others, commitment to practical action in caring for God's earth. Income of over £1200 was though a welcome bonus. Participants were roughly estimated at 250-300. In late November Nigel Blackmore, a member of St John's, gave an evening presentation with slides on *Climate Adaptation: Food, Energy and Water*. He shared his considerable understanding of these topics, encouraging our engagement rather than negativity and despair. In February 2025 a member of our team visited a Cambridge Carbon Footprint Swish (used clothing exchange) event in Great Shelford, with a view to running such an initiative at St John's in early spring 2026. A good number of helpers would be required, plus supporting stalls and refreshments to attract sufficient participants.

We are currently planning our third Eco Festival in late September 2025 with a mix of familiar participants and some new ones. A sincere thank you to all the team members and to our congregation for their valuable support. Through the year we aim to regularly highlight local and national green issues via e-news and maintain the profile of Eco Church with lobby displays/information.

We would welcome others to the team as we address the requirements needed for further progress.

Erica Lowry
Eco Church Team

Facilities

In 2024/2025 we saw much local use of St John's Centre: leisure activities (Zumba, yoga, drama), musical activities (choirs and orchestras), local interest groups (ornithology, gardening, history, art, tapestry), parties (birthday and anniversary), toddler groups, Brownies and Guides. In addition, the Wilkinson Room was used for wakes for funerals and breakfasts for weddings. Many local organisations, including the Addenbrookes Charitable Trust, the City Council and Queen Edith's Forum used our facilities during the year.

There has also been interest from groups from further afield who wish to arrange events in somewhere as attractive as Cambridge. We offer excellent facilities, a location easy to get to by train and car, complete with a car park and, at the weekend, free on-street parking. The Wilkinson Room is versatile and has excellent kitchen facilities, a lovely courtyard garden and well-maintained lawns at the front. One highlight is the monthly Community Lunch (the last Wednesday of each month except over the summer and Christmas) which regularly draws in around 60 people who enjoy a two-course lunch for £5, freshly prepared by Anne Rigby and her team. We also have the smaller Gray Room upstairs with its large picture window and view over our front garden. Use of this room has increased during 2024. It makes an excellent space for smaller groups, whether they are teaching, counselling, meeting or playing music.

The excellent acoustics of the church are appreciated by various groups who put on concerts. At Christmas time, Saturday evenings are booked up long in advance by groups such as Out of the Shadows Choir, New Cambridge Singers, Cambridge Wind Band, Cambridge Sinfonietta and the Mawson Road Community Orchestra. These concerts are well attended and appreciated by locals whether they regularly attend the church or not. We also put on a very well attended screening of *Pure Clean Water* during 2024 (with a question-and-answer session) about water supply issues in the ever-expanding Cambridge, using our new audio-visual system. We have also seen a substantial increase this year in young people keen to practise on the organ. Students from Homerton, pupils from the Perse, and members of St John's number amongst those learning to play the organ, grateful to be able to practise on an organ as fine as ours. For the first time, in November, we hosted an artist in residence (Debbie Baxter), who gave us an excellent talk about painting in Finland, under the aegis of the Cambridge Drawing Society, before displaying her paintings in the church.

All of this puts a strain on our facilities so it will come as no surprise that some of the money we earn from letting out our facilities goes towards maintenance. Often these things go unnoticed, unless they go wrong, but you may have appreciated new LED uplighters in the lobby (brighter and more eco-friendly than the originals which had come to the end of their life), new PIR lights down the side of the Wilkinson Room, silver A3 clip frames for the posters on the gates advertising our many activities, a set of new display boards for our lobby displays and powerful spotlights for the church to allow us to light up the area at the front of the church for concerts.

In 2025 for the first time (I think!), we will be hosting two or three local artists as part of Cambridge Open Studios on the first, second and fourth weekends of July. I shall report on that next year.

Michael Fincham
Operations Manager

The Gardens at St John's

As always, it has been a busy year in the gardens at St John's. Our wild areas continue to thrive and take on a wild and natural shape of their own. We try not to be too controlling of what nature does best left to itself. A 'manicured look' isn't our aim! Hence the profusion this year of many self seeded primulas which have naturalised nicely after a few being planted several years ago.

Pond

Our mini-pond has settled in well in the quiet corner outside the Wilkinson Room. With its escape ladder in case of stranded creatures and pond plants still establishing themselves, we hope to attract more wildlife to the area, in line with our eco-church credentials. We are encouraged by reports of occasional sightings of frogs and newts. Perhaps dragonflies, butterflies and even a hedgehog will also be attracted by the water and come for a drink.

Autumn gardening party

In November we were joined by volunteers for an autumn clearance, preparing the garden for the onset of winter. Weeding, leaf clearing and removing self-set trees and shrubs took most of our time, with welcome coffee and cake to finish the session.

2025 Plant Sale

We look forward to our 2025 plant sale on 18 May. Following some glorious spring weather we expect plants to have grown more robustly than usual and hope to have an abundance of attractive flowers, vegetables and house plants to sell.

Large areas of the garden were mulched in the autumn and a few plant casualties were removed. We would like to thank the mowing team, now reduced to four only, for their hard work, the bird feeding team, and also the Brownies for their supervision of the hedgehog shelter and some planned upgrading of the bug hotel. Thanks also go to Matthew Wolfe who was taken on in the summer for several months to help out in the gardens.

At times the size and demands of the garden can be a challenge, but the pleasure given to the congregation, to outside groups using St John's and to the local community is a bonus. Hide-and-seek and frisbee challenges take place, flat-sharing students come for a restful change of scene and parents bring a sleeping baby to enjoy the shelter of the courtyard. All are welcome.

Clare Donovan, Gardening Team

Groups Activities

Book Group

The St John's Book Group completed its third year in 2024, with another five books read and discussed. We mainly enjoy reading modern fiction, which has taken us from *Moon Tiger* by Penelope Lively with its grand sweep across twentieth century history, to *A Town called Solace* by Mary Lawson telling a touching domestic story set in a remote Canadian town. We also tried some non-fiction: memoirs including *The Salt Path* by Raynor Winn, with a intimate portrait of walking the glorious coast of Devon and Cornwall against great personal obstacles.

The Friday evening meetings are very informal, with everyone having something to say over a glass of wine (or something softer). It continues to be a lovely way to get to know some of you from St John's and the wider community. We are always keen to recruit more members.

For 2025 our plan is a variety of modern novels after a detour to some Thomas Hardy, so there is lots to look forward to. The group has certainly helped me to pull my eyes away from a screen and keep up the habit of reading!

We are thankful to the PCC for letting us have use of the Wilkinson Room for our meetings.

Miles Baillie

Men's Group

The Men's Group meets every two months for a variety of social activities. These include pub nights, which in the past have been either at the Rock on Cherry Hinton Road or the Queen Edith, curry nights which have been at the Taj and, occasionally, a cooked breakfast. Each event is advertised in E-News, generally for three weeks before the scheduled date, and everyone is welcome to attend. It has been very encouraging this year to have had a diverse group of people attending each event and to see how well everyone has interacted – a genuine demonstration of our love for our brothers in Christ. If you have not joined us for previous events and/or feel nervous about doing so but would like to give it a try, I would recommend that you join us for one of the pub nights as you can stay for as long or as short a time as you wish. Also, if you would like to suggest alternative activities for future events, particularly if they might appeal to a different demographic and/or a larger number of participants please do come and discuss these with me.

Mike Payne

Walking Group

We are a small, committed group who love to walk and explore the countryside. The Vicar is one of our most enthusiastic members! I plan a monthly walk of up to four miles in length, either in Cambridge or the local villages and countryside.

In 2024 we walked on Royston Down with our friends Kay and John Blayney, around Hadstock, Bartlow, Wandlebury, Grantchester and the Cherry Hinton Beech Woods.

Most walks take place on a Thursday morning, meeting at church at 9.30. We offer some alternative dates for those who cannot make Thursday. Walking together gives us a great opportunity to build friendships as well as to get outside and exercise in the fresh air. We are always looking for more members.

Please do come and join us! Details of upcoming walks can be found in the weekly email or from the church office.

Cathy Davies

Homerton College Choir Chaplain's Report

The Charter Choir has been singing a weekly service of Choral Evensong at 6.30pm on Tuesday evenings during university terms since 2012. With the retirement of Trish Maude, who served for many years as the much-loved Lay Chaplain to the Choir, we had the opportunity to create a new link with the Choir and with Homerton College. We are delighted that Homerton College agreed to my appointment to the new role of Choir Chaplain.

My role includes responsibility for planning the services, together with the Director of Music, and overseeing the leading of the services, which involves liaising with the College

fellowship. There's also a pastoral aspect which connects me with the College's tutorial system and the College's provision for student wellbeing.

I've greatly enjoyed getting to know all the students who sing in the Choir, the two organ students, and the Director of Music. A particular highlight was the trip to Hampton Court Palace in March 2025 for the Choir to sing Evensong in the Chapel Royal.

Revd Ceri Payne

Homerton College Choir Chaplain

Lobby Displays

Lobby displays have continued into a fourth year. They aim to acknowledge and share some of the important activities that take place within the church and our local community and to mark the ecclesiastical seasons like Lent, Easter, Harvest, Advent and Epiphany. Throughout the year at the appropriate times the focus has been on charities supported during Lent, Christian Aid Week in May and the Big Brew Coffee Morning for Transform Trade. A regular feature now is the exhibition of art produced by Denise Schoenberg's students, which lifts our spirits over the mid-winter months.

In 2024 Cambridge: Past, Present and Future displayed details of their Nature Festival with outdoor activities open to all through the early summer period. The 5th Cambridge Brownies then treated us to a vibrant display celebrating 100 years of local activity. Beyond this, Kate Aylmer and Liz Hurst accepted the challenge of representing the work of Small Groups at St John's. They illustrated so well that metaphorically from tiny shoots in a bible study group, large trees can grow and flourish. On a similar if practical theme, the Cambridge Garden Club offered eco-friendly garden tips with an invitation to join their programme of events. Very recently Michelle Peters, coordinator of our local Fairbite Food Club, used colourful photos, enabling us to appreciate this important work being carried out at St James' Church, Wulfstan Way.

Whilst recognising the outreach now achieved via on-line communications, we hope there remains a place for eye catching material that heralds and supports one-off events in and around the St John's Centre. To this end lobby displays have linked into the October 2024 Eco Festival, to Nigel Blackmore's talk on Climate Adaptation and to the art exhibition and Cambridge Drawing Society talk by Welsh artist Debbie Baxter. Of late we have reminded people of the membership and role of the Eco Church Team, working now for a silver award, and linked this to relevant events in the Cambridge Literary Festival. We hope that others will be encouraged to join the Team and we would also welcome another coordinator for lobby displays in the future.

Finally, a big thank you to Michael Fincham for his support throughout the year and to all the participants in the kaleidoscope as pictured above.

Erica Lowry

Mission Committee

This small committee meets three or four times a year to discuss, mostly, issues concerning our overseas mission partners. Our meetings are still conducted by Zoom which we continue to find convenient. We are James Shakespeare (Chair), Roger Lilley (Treasurer), Katie Knapton (Secretary), Dominic Barton, Anne Jarvis and Matthew Wolff. During the year we were sorry that Roger Lilley withdrew from the committee but are very pleased to have been joined by John Hillier.

The PCC has delegated to the Mission Committee the decisions about charities for the congregation's personal support during Lent each year. By tradition one local and one national/international are chosen. The nominated charities in 2024 were Blue Smile and Friends of the Holy Land and in 2025 Centre 33 and Mercy Ships.

It was noted during the year that funding to the Bethesda Project in Burundi was less than that given to our other Mission Partners and, with the agreement of the PCC, this was rectified.

This small charity, part of the Kepplewray Trust in the UK, works with some of the poorest people in the world, many of whom were born with severe disabilities. In February one of the Trustees, Marian Browne, accepted with her husband Rory our invitation to speak during a Parish Communion service about the valuable work carried out at Bethesda and some of the severe cases being treated. Talk continued during coffee and further during a bring-and-share lunch which we provided for our visitors. A retiring collection was donated to the charity and several people signed up to regular giving, for which the charity was hugely grateful. We are very grateful to Marian and Rory for coming to St John's and strengthening our links with Bethesda and we continue to pray for the country and the people, guided by prayer points left for us by Rory.

We have also invited Ultan McCabe, our Church Mission Society Mission Partner to make a second visit to St John's and await his reply. Ultan works with Middle East Concern in support of persecuted Christians in the Middle East and North Africa, assisting them with relocation, visa applications and finance, and drafting reports to highlight the situation at the UN, Westminster and elsewhere.

Our second charity in Burundi is Great Lakes Outreach (GLO) which was established by Simon Guillebaud who has an open invitation to return to speak at St John's. His powerful talk during his last visit left a lasting impression on the whole congregation as they learned about more amazing work helping the people in Burundi.

In line with the Environmental Agenda at St John's and its Eco Church credentials, the fourth charity receiving our financial donations is the World Wildlife Fund where our funding helps to fund the work with local communities to monitor snow leopard movements and reduce human-snow leopard conflict, and to fund other work around the world. Snow leopards, an endangered species, were the choice of Children's Church and the Youth Group.

Collections at Toddle Along help to offset the regular donations sent to Mary's Meals which now comes under the umbrella of the Mission Committee.

All Mission giving and Partners will be reviewed annually at our Autumn meetings.

Finally, we liaise closely with the Eco-Church team to encourage work towards obtaining the A Rocha Silver Award. Following the success of last year's Eco-Festival, another is being planned for Saturday 27 September.

Katie Knapton

Parish Communications

The Communications Officer continues to focus each week on the production of Friday's E-newsletter and Sunday's pewsheet. The circulation list for E-news has risen from 145 in March 2024, to 168 in March 2025, maintaining the same encouraging open rate of around 75%. It remains one of our primary means of communicating with the congregation.

In addition, time is spent promoting events and seasonal services, keeping the website up to date and posting on the St John's social media pages. Since December 2024 we have activated our previously dormant Instagram account, and stepped back from our X account. Both the Facebook and Instagram can be run together using the Meta interface, which makes them less time consuming to manage.

Highlights this year have included:

Promoting events and activities

- April 2024 - Earth day photo story in the Cambridge Independent, with a focus on the swift boxes and other eco-projects.
- September 2024 – Revd Nell Whiscombe radio interviews about the 'Blessing of the Backpacks' service on BBC local radio and Cambridge 105 radio.
- September 2024 – Revd Nell Whiscombe radio interview, Cambridge 105 radio re: Eco-Festival.

Website

- February 2025 - Review meeting between St John's representatives and website providers, Hubb Church, resulting in a streamlined home page and improvements to other aspects of the site.
- February 2025 – Google Analytics was set up, with the first full month of data being March 2025:

Month	Views	Active Users
1-31 March 2025	2236	530

Photography and video

In December 2024 a camera phone was bought for St John's use, to enable good quality photos and video to be taken and kept in one place. The camera phone is available for the choir and church events, so that any photos with Safeguarding implications can be managed appropriately.

To launch the Instagram account, four short videos were compiled to promote the Advent, Christingle, Carol and Nativity services. These were time consuming to create but an effective marketing tool.

Social media

The social media data has been encouraging.

FACEBOOK	Reach	Interactions	Link clicks	Followers	Top 3 posts (number of views)
2023-2024	4,300 (+238%)	446 (+265.6%)	40 (+207.7)	147	1 Easter flowered cross 2 Easter Sunday services 3 Community Lunch invite
2024-2025	9,200 (+114.2%)	860 (+94.6%)	57 (+42.5%)	167	1 Nell's farewell (557), 2 Nativity promo video (549) 3 Thanks after Carol Service (514)
INSTAGRAM					
2024-2025	1,700 (+100%)	153 (+100%)	2 (+100%)	127	1 Choir punting video (1,600) 2 Convoy4Ukraine drop point (337) 3 Advent Sunday video (270)

This year we also replaced the wooden noticeboard in the church grounds with a new, green noticeboard, which displays information about regular service times and who to contact.

Liz Hurst, Communications Officer

Fairtrade at St John's

Following the demise of Traidcraft plc we now have a reduced presence at St John's, raising funds in a smaller way for the Fairtrade charity Transform Trade (formerly Traidcraft Exchange), with reminders that we are a still Fairtrade Church.

In March we held another successful Big Brew event, publicising fair trade and attracting many old and new friends to enjoy tea, coffee, cakes and friendly company. The event was enhanced this year by the display of pottery which John Hillier kindly sold on our behalf. Huge thanks to the team who ran the event, to the bakers who made so many delicious cakes, to John for his generosity and to all those who came along to make it such a happy event. We were able to donate the magnificent sum of £500 to Transform Trade and have displayed a thank you certificate in the lobby.

We took a stall at the Eco-Fest last autumn and were pleased to add to the diversity of this annual event. Our Christmas and Easter cards, which we sell in the run up to these festivals, continue to be popular and are another reminder of our Fairtrade status, as is our serving Fairtrade tea, coffee and sugar, and biscuits where possible, at church events.

From the outset we have had our own bank account, with our end-of-year accounts published alongside the church accounts. With reduced income and expenditure coinciding with the bank introducing charges for community accounts, we now carry out our transactions within the church accounts.

Katie Knapton

Small Groups

Monday small group

The Monday night small group meets fortnightly in a local home. Topics covered in 2024-2025 have included different approaches to prayer, the letter to the Hebrews, and the book of Jonah. After Easter the group will be looking at Luke. It is a diverse group, with a range of different people taking part in preparing and leading bible studies. Meetings always feature coffee and cake and, in the week of Ash Wednesday, included pancakes.

Mike Payne

Tuesday small group

We meet on a Tuesday morning, during term-time, in one of the church's small rooms. This year we have focused on a number of subjects which have been approached in a variety of ways:

- Nehemiah: getting to know better the story of Nehemiah and his relationship with God
- Water: tracing the instances of water being mentioned throughout the bible and its different significance in each case.
- The Messiah – George Frideric Handel: listening to some extracts of how this composer portrays the life of Jesus, setting the music to biblical text.
- The Kingdom of God: A particularly reflective session where we created a visual display of all the different images we find Jesus giving to his listeners helping them to understand what God's kingdom is like.
- The Lord's Prayer: taking a slow and steady reflection of this prayer.

In September, the group also prepared a display for the church foyer, explaining what we do when we meet, along with information about the other small groups. We created a leaflet for people to take away. There are now copies at the back of church, so please do give one to newcomers who are interested.

Our grateful thanks to members of the Ministry Team who have guided us in our meetings. Also, to those who have provided refreshments – and washed up! *Canon Kate Aylmer, LLM*

Wednesday small group

We are a group of fourteen who meet on Zoom on alternate Wednesday evenings. We have found this to be more convenient than meeting in person, especially for those who are housebound or who prefer not to go out after dark.

This last year we have covered a number of subjects, the most recent being based on a course written by a local Theologian, Michael Schluter, titled "Lessons from the Ten Encounters with Jesus as recorded in the Gospel of Mark."

It has proved to be a very engaging and uplifting course from which we all feel we have benefited. We are open to new members by emailing peter.heslam@gmail.com

Revd John Hillier



Financial Statement

For the year ending 31 December 2024

The Parochial Church Council of the Ecclesiastical Parish of
St John the Evangelist, Cambridge

St John the Evangelist Church
Hills Road
Cambridge, CB2 8RN

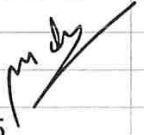
Approved by the PCC on 11 March 2025

Signed: 

Revd Canon James Shakespeare, Vicar

Independent Examiner: *Professor Martin Dove*

Treasurer: *Mr Roger Lilley*

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT									
To the PCC of St John the Evangelist, Cambridge									
<p>This report on the accounts of the PCC for the year ended 31st December 2024, which are set out on pages 2 to 11, is in respect of an examination carried out under Regulation 3 (3) of the Church Accounting Regulations 1997 and section 43 of the Charities Act 1993.</p>									
Respective responsibilities of Trustees and Examiner									
<p>As trustees and members of the PCC you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts; you consider that the audit requirement of the regulation 3 (3) of the Church Accounting Regulations 1997 and section 43 (2) of the Charities Act 1992 (the Act) do not apply. It is my responsibility to issue this report on those accounts in accordance with the terms of Regulation 25 of the Church Accounting Regulations 1997 and Regulation 7 of the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 1995.</p>									
Basis of Independent Examiner's report									
<p>My examination was carried out in accordance with the General Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 43 (7) (b) of the Act and to be found in the guidance from the CBF. That examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the PCC and a comparison of the accounts with those records. It also includes considering any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts and seeking explanations from you as trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently I do not express an audit opinion on the view given by the accounts.</p>									
Independent Examiner's Statement									
In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention:									
<p>1. Which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● to keep accounting records in accordance with section 41 of the Act; and ● to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and to comply with the requirements of the Act, as also contained in the Church Accounting Regulations 1997, have not been met; or 									
<p>2. To which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.</p>									
<p>Signed and dated </p> <p>20 March 2025</p>									

St John the Evangelist, Hills Road, Cambridge

Statement of Financial Activities

For the year ended 31st December 2024

	Notes	Unrestrict ed Fund	Restricted Fund	Total 2024	Unrestricted Fund	Restricted Fund	Total 2023
		£	£	£	£	£	£
INCOMING RESOURCES:							
Income from regular donors	(2a)	81,855	0	81,855	83,718	0	83,718
Other donated resources	(2b)	23,094	2,880	25,974	33,082	3,654	36,737
Mission activities	(2c)	256	0	256	140	0	0
St John's Centre	(2d)	27,501	0	27,501	27,604	0	27,604
Other incoming resources	(2e,6a)	22,322	284	22,606	19,551	300	19,851
TOTAL INCOMING RESOURCES:		155,029	3,164	158,193	164,095	3,954	168,049
RESOURCES EXPENDED:							
Ministers' expenses	(3a)	1,908	0	1,908	1,942	0	1,942
Church maint., servs.,mission, admin.	(3b)	41,472	65	41,537	31,569	273	31,842
St John's Centre maint & admin	(3b)	17,281	0	17,281	11,024	0	11,024
Payments outside the Parish	(3c)	86,140	2,880	89,019	85,469	3,681	89,150
Major Works	(3d)	31,890	0	31,890	0	0	0
Costs of generating Traidcraft funds	(6b)	567	0	567	2,452	0	2,452
TOTAL RESOURCES EXPENDED:		179,258	2,945	182,202	132,455	3,954	136,409
NET INCOMING/(OUTGOING) RESOURCES		-24,229	220	-24,009	31,640	0	31,640
BALANCES BROUGHT FORW. AT 1 JAN.		132,637	1,035	133,672	100,997	1,035	102,032
BALANCES CARRIED FORW. AT 31 DEC.		108,408	1,255	109,663	132,637	1,035	133,672

St John the Evangelist, Hills Road, Cambridge							
Balance Sheet at 31 st December 2024							
	Notes			2024 Total £		2023 Total £	
CURRENT ASSETS:							
Barclays Bank PLC Accounts				106,119		130,035	
Church of England CBF Deposit Account				1,249		1,201	
CBS Deposit Account (Traidcraft)				608		384	
Petty Cash (Traidcraft)				25		27	
Stock (Traidcraft)				121		65	
Debtors	7			1,542		1,960	
				109,663		133,672	
LIABILITIES:							
Amounts falling due within one year							
Creditors	8			0		0	
				0		0	
NET CURRENT ASSETS:				109,663		133,672	
FUNDS:							
				2024 Total £	2024 Total £	2023 Total £	2023 Total £
Unrestricted							
General Fund Reserves					34,362		48,868
Traidcraft					754		476
Restricted (r) & Designated (d)							
Choir Fund (r)				4,547		4,328	
Future Works Fund (d)				70,000		80,000	
Total Restricted & Designated					74,547		84,328
TOTAL FUNDS					109,663		133,672

St John the Evangelist, Hills Road, Cambridge

Notes to the Financial Statements

For the year ended 31st December 2024

1 ACCOUNTING POLICIES

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the Church Accounting Regulations 1997 as amended by the Church Accounting (Amendment) Regulations 2001 together with applicable accounting standards and the

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention.

Funds

General funds represent the funds of the PCC that are not subject to any restrictions regarding their use and are available for application on the general purposes of the PCC.

The accounts include all transactions, assets and liabilities for which the PCC is responsible in law.

Incoming resources

Voluntary income and capital sources

Collections are recognised when received by or on behalf of the PCC.

Planned giving receivable under Gift Aid is recognised only when received.

Income tax recoverable on Gift Aid donations is recognised when the income is recognised.

Grants and legacies to the PCC are accounted for as soon as the PCC is notified of its legal entitlement, the amount due is quantifiable and its ultimate receipt is reasonably certain.

Other income

Rental income from the letting of the church premises is recognised when the rental is due.

Income from investments

Interest entitlements are accounted for as they accrue.

Resources used

Activities directly relating to the work of the Church

The diocesan parish share is accounted for when paid.

Fixed assets

Consecrated property and movable church furnishings

St John the Evangelist, Hills Road, Cambridge							
Notes to the Financial Statements (continued)							
For the year ended 31st December 2024							
2 INCOMING RESOURCES							
	Unrestrict ed Fund	Restricted Fund	2024 Total	Unrestricted Fund	Restricted Fund	2023 Total	
	£	£	£	£	£	£	
VOLUNTARY RECEIPTS:							
2a INCOME FROM REGULAR DONORS							
Parish Giving Scheme	46,719	0	46,719	49,166	0	49,166	
Other regular giving	22,223	0	22,223	19,705	0	19,705	
Tax recovered and recoverable	12,913	0	12,913	14,847	0	14,847	
Total	81,855	0	81,855	83,718	0	83,718	
2b OTHER DONATED RESOURCES							
Service cash collections	7,717	0	7,717	5,032	0	5,032	
Gift Day incl. tax recovered and recoverable	5,308	0	5,308	1,705	0	1,705	
Legacy and gifts in memoriam	1,500	0	1,500	13,000	0	13,000	
Occasional donations incl. Gift Aid/CAF	8,565	0	8,569	13,345	0	13,345	
Collections for charity	0	2,880	2,880	0	3,654	3,654	
Total	23,094	2,880	25,974	33,082	3,654	36,737	
2c MISSION ACTIVITIES							
Donations	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Magazine (subs & adv.)	0	0	0	140	0	140	
Other income incl. events	256	0	256	0	0	0	
Total	256	0	256	140	0	140	
2d ST JOHN'S CENTRE INCOME							
Letting income (prev. 2e)	25201	0	25201	25,304	0	25,304	
Church use of St John's Centre	2300	0	2300	2,300	0	2,300	
Other income (prev. 2e)	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Total	27501	0	27501	27,604	0	27,604	
2e OTHER CHURCH INCOMING RESOURCES							
PCC fees	460	0	460	1,704	0	1,704	
Service fees	623	0	623	876	0	876	
Letting income (church)	10,594	0	10,594	8,510	0	8,510	
Interest	32	0	32	39	0	39	
Fund raising events	8,104	0	8,104	6,093	0	6,093	
Choir Fund	0	284	284	0	300	300	
Sundry income	1,662	0	1,662	942	0	942	
Residentials	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Parish Share Rebate	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Total	21,475	284	21,759	18,165	300	18,465	

St John the Evangelist, Hills Road, Cambridge						
Notes to the Financial Statements (continued)						
For the year ended 31 st December 2024						
3 RESOURCES EXPENDED						
	Unrestricted Fund	Restricted Fund	2024 Total	Unrestricted Fund	Restricted Fund	2023 Total
	£	£	£	£	£	£
3a THE MINISTRY:						
Clergy expenses incl. Travel	1,908	0	1,908	1,942	0	1,942
Total	1,908	0	1,908	1,942	0	1,942
3b CHURCH BUILDINGS, SERVICES & GENERAL ADMINISTRATION:						
Property charges (Church)						
Gas (50%)	4,957	0	4,957	1,117	0	447
Electricity (20%)	501	0	501	455	0	455
Water (20%)	16	0	16	16	0	16
Insurance (50%)	2,510	0	2,510	2,140	0	2,140
Repairs & maintenance	8,106	0	8,106	4,593	0	4,593
Total	16,090	0	16,090	7,650	0	7,650
Property charges (St John's Centre)*						
Gas (50%)	4,957	0	4,957	1,117	0	1,787
Electricity (80%)	2,004	0	2,004	1,819	0	1,819
Water (80%)	66	0	66	63	0	63
Insurance (50%)	2,510	0	2,510	2,140	0	2,140
Repairs and maintenance	2,491	0	2,491	1,728	0	1,728
Total	12,028	0	12,028	7,536	0	7,536
Salaries and fees (Church)						
Salaries	11,535	0	11,535	7,452	0	7,452
Chair	272	0	272	315	0	315
Total	11,807	0	11,807	7,767	0	7,767
Salaries (St John's Centre)*						
Salaries	4,776	0	4,776	3,052	0	3,052
Total	4,776	0	4,776	3,052	0	3,052
Service overheads						
Service expenses and books (incl. new altar)	1,279	0	1,279	561	0	561
Youth work incl. Children's Church	407	0	407	0	0	0
Service fees	525	0	525	749	0	749
Organ & piano	375	0	375	764	0	764
Chair Fund	0	65	65	0	273	273
Total	2,586	65	2,651	2,073	273	2,694
Mission overheads						
Youth work incl. Messy Church	0	0	0	65	0	65
Events	1,822	0	1,822	2,174	0	2,174
Other expenses incl. printing	0	0	0	455	0	455
Total	1,822	0	1,822	2,694	0	2,694
Other costs (Church)						
Subscriptions & copyright licence	2,694	0	2,694	2,483	0	2,483
Telephone & email (50%)	477	0	477	435	0	435
Printing and stationery incl. mag. and post.	2,354	0	2,354	4,616	0	4,616
Use of St John's Centre	2,300	0	2,300	2,300	0	2,300
Gifts	0	0	0	0	0	0
General expenses incl. training	366	0	366	574	0	574
Residential	0	0	0	0	0	0
Fund raising events	670	0	670	77	0	77
Office equip e.g. computer	304	0	304	899	0	899
Total	9,167	0	9,167	11,385	0	11,385
Other costs (St John's Centre)*						
Telephone and email (50%)	477	0	477	435	0	435
Printing and stationery	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other costs	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	477	0	477	435	0	435
Total buildings, services and admin.	58,753	65	58,818	42,592	0	42,592
3c PAYMENTS OUTSIDE THE PARISH:						
The Diocese - Parish Share	80,976	0	80,976	78,646	0	78,646
Missions & Charities	5,164	2,880	8,044	6,823	3,681	10,504
Total	86,140	2,880	89,019	85,469	3,681	89,150
3d MAJOR WORKS						
Major Works	31,890	0	31,890	0	0	0

St John the Evangelist, Hills Road, Cambridge

Notes to the Financial Statements (continued)

For the year ended 31st December 2024

4 MISSIONS AND CHARITIES SPECIFIC COLLECTIONS

	Unrestrict ed Fund	Restricted Fund	2024 Total	Unrestricted Fund	Restricted Fund	2023 Total
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Combat Stress	0	182	182	0	187	187
Blinds Veterans UK (St Dunstan's)	0	182	182	0	187	187
Wintercomfort	0	709	709	0	656	656
The Children's Society	0	1,078	1,078	0	701	701
Samaritans	0	60	60	0	0	0
Toms Trust	0	150	150	0	0	0
Green Hedges	0	152	152	0	0	0
Trade Transform	0	0	0	750	0	750
Arthur Rank	0	0	0	0	250	250
Camsight	0	0	0	20	0	20
Christian Aid	0	0	0	0	799	799
Emmaus	0	0	0	0	95	95
Dementia UK	0	0	0	350	0	350
UNICEF	0	0	0	1,041	0	1,041
Addenbrookes	0	0	0	0	300	300
Alzheimer's	0	0	0	0	506	506
Breast Cancer	0	0	0	250	0	250
Hobson's Conduit	28	242	270			
Friends of the Holy Land	0	50	50			
Blue Smile	0	75	75			
Total	28	2,880	2,908	2,411	3,681	6,092

5 OVERSEAS MISSION COMMITTEE

	2024	2023
Payments		
5c WWF UK	1,200	500
5c Keppleway Burundi	936	912
5c CMS: Middle East	1,200	1,200
5c Marys Meals	900	600
5c Great Lakes Burundi	900	1,200
Total	5,136	4,412

St John the Evangelist, Hills Road, Cambridge

Notes to the Financial Statements (continued)

For the year ended 31st December 2024

6 FairTrade@StJohns (formerly TRAIIDFAIR ST JOHN'S) ACCOUNTS (UNRESTRICTED)

	2024	2024	2023	2023
	£	£	£	£
6a Income				
Sales		847		1,386
6b Cost of sales				
Opening stock at cost	65		709	
Purchases (net of donations)	523		418	
Total	588		1,127	
Less closing stock at cost	121		65	
		467		1,062
Gross Profit		380		324
Donations				
6b Summer & Xmas Fairs	0		10	
6b Gift Day	0		0	
6b Traidcraft projects	0		0	
6b Easter eggs	0		30	
6b Donations to Traidcraft/Transform	100			
		100		1,390
Nett Profit		280		-1,066
Balance brought forward		476		1,538
Balance carried forward		756		472
Represented by				
Stock in hand		121		65
CBS account		608		384
Cash in hand		25		27
Total		754		476

Donations in kind to St John's of tea, instant coffee and sugar for Sunday mornings and church events & and chocolate eggs for Easter Sunday.

Fairtrade St Johns accounts prepared by Katie Knapton

St John the Evangelist, Hills Road Cambridge									
Notes to the Financial Statements (continued)									
For the year ended 31 st December 2024									
7 DEBTORS						2024	2023		
						£	£		
Income tax recoverable (estimated)						1,542	1,960		
Outstanding receipts						0	0		
Total						1,542	1,960		
8 LIABILITIES: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR									
						2024	2023		
						£	£		
Outstanding payments						0	0		
Total						0	0		