

ST JOHN'S MUXTON PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2023

INTRODUCTION

This report is intended to explain how St John's operates, our objectives and activities, our achievement and performance and our financial position. We hope that you find the information helpful.

1. REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATION DETAILS

St John's Church, Muxton

Correspondence address: Lesley Trotman, Church Office,
St John's Church, Saltwells Drive, Muxton TF2 8RJ.

Website www.stjohnsmuxton.org.uk

Church Office: 01952 670033

Email: admin@stjohnsmuxton.org.uk

St John's Parochial Church Council (PCC) had the responsibility of co-operating with the incumbent, the Revd Matthew Lefroy in promoting the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical matters within the ecclesiastical parish of Muxton. The PCC is responsible for the running and maintaining of the church building, namely, St John's Church and Community Centre, Saltwells Drive, Muxton.

Members of the PCC are either ex-officio (Clergy, Churchwardens and Deanery Synod Representatives), elected by the Annual Parochial Church Meeting or co-opted in accordance with the Church Representation Rules. At the 2023 Annual Parochial Church Meeting held in April those listed below were appointed to serve as members of the PCC.

Incumbent: Matthew Lefroy

Curate: Vikki Day

Ordained Local Minister: Jane Evans

Churchwardens: Andrew Hambler and Lesley Trotman

Representatives on the Deanery Synod: Kerry Hoult (+ 2 Vacancies)

Elected Members: James Tagg (Vice Chair), Simon Hartridge (Treasurer) Jon Rawson, Lisa West, Jan Stackhouse, Dan West and Gill Steinert

Banker: CAF Bank

Auditor: Lynne Clifford at Clifford & Co

2. STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

PCC Constitution: The Parochial Church Council is a corporate body established by the Church of England. The PCC operates under the Parochial Church Council Powers Measure. The PCC is registered with the Charity Commission, number 1162098.

PCC Members: PCC members are elected by the congregation. We have twelve elected PCC posts. Four become vacant each year. On election the post lasts for three years. Those elected to deanery synod are also eligible to sit on PCC as are wardens and clergy.

Induction and training of PCC members: At the first PCC meeting the PCC shares Holy Communion and all members are given a summary of how the PCCs work and there is an opportunity for questions. PCC members are invited to attend any relevant diocesan training.

Subcommittees and working parties: The PCC has a sub-committee to help with the day to day running of St John's which is the Standing Committee. This is the only committee required by law. It has the power to transact the business of PCC between its meetings, subject to any directions given by the Council. It is comprised of the vicar, vice chair, wardens, Secretary and treasurer.

We also have working parties which are decided in consultation with the vicar: Working parties include the Building Management Team, Evangelism, World Church & Justice, Pastoral, Personnel and Safeguarding.

SAFEGUARDING STATEMENT

We take seriously the safeguarding of children young adults and adults at risk in our care. The PCCs will take all reasonable care to ensure the safety of the children, young people and vulnerable adults of St John's & St Michael's Churches for whom they bear responsibility.

We recognise that children by virtue of legal status and dependency on adults for their emotional and physical needs will always be vulnerable and at a disadvantage. We also understand that illness, disability, race, mental health and other issues can put adults in a position of vulnerability. We commit to considering these things in our activities – undertaking supervision of staff working with them and risk assessing activities and groups as a check and balance in our work.

Risk Management – is done by Building Management.

3. OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

OUR VISION

WE WANT TO BE PASSIONATE FOR GOD BY...

Visibly developing trust in Jesus

We will offer explicit opportunities for people to reflect regularly on their journey of faith and then challenge and support them to progress to a deeper relationship with Jesus Christ.

Readily taking risks

We will always be ready to share our faith with others and to be in those situations where the Holy Spirit would want us to be.

Generously serving our community

We will actively engage with our local community to provide Christian support where needed and help to develop community spirit.

Unashamedly praying

We will live lives that demonstrate the importance we place on praying alone and together and we will be ready to pray for and with people who are and who are not part of our church.

4. ACHIEVEMENT AND PERFORMANCE

During the year, six scheduled meetings of the PCC were held,

The main items that the PCC have looked at during the year have been:- update of policies, Weekend away, 25th Anniversary, Various Finances – Fees/Wages/Budget/Approval of financial accounts/Parish share, Safeguarding, General Synod, King's Coronation, Shared Chalice, a new Vision and Strategy Team was formed and a giving review for concerns over church finances.

ENERGISED BY FAITH AND GOD-INSPIRED AND INSPIRING WORSHIP

We continued to offer our services online, live streaming via YouTube for both St John's and St Michael's members to join in. REST A half hour session for quiet reflection and an opportunity to take time out of the busyness of the week to 'rest' with God took place regularly during 2023.

Sermon series included 'God, King & the Church', 'Communicating the truth with stories', 'Prayer, Advent, Christmas & Safeguarding'.

Thursday Morning Prayer at 7:30am continues to take place via zoom and in person. In addition we have a time of Bible reading and prayer on two weekday mornings at 9am also via zoom. All welcome to both.

OCCASIONAL OFFICES

Baptisms/Thanksgivings: Our church offers Baptism and Thanksgiving services with 1 taking place during the year and no Thanksgivings.

Weddings: No weddings took place at St John's in 2023.

Funerals: Our pre-funeral pack with information on hymns, readings and tributes etc is available if required and we are grateful to the bereavement team who continue to support those who have recently had a relative pass away. This as with all occasional office ministries occurs across the benefice. 2 Funeral services were held in our church during 2023 and 12 were held at Telford Crematorium. 60 attended the joint annual **Memorial Service** held at St Michael's in March.

EVANGELISM

Aims and objectives of the evangelism Team:

- Primary aim to be visionary; seeking God's vision for outreach/evangelism in order to share the gospel in differing ways
- Facilitating events and initiatives that will contribute to sharing the Christian faith with others

The **EVANGELISM sub group** is made up a group of people who meet every 6 weeks to discern what God wants to do through St John's in order to outreach and share the Gospel. In addition to arranging events, we take time to pray and reflect on where we should be going next. During the year we have met on 7 occasions.

Our activities during 2023 include:

- We have produced and delivered 3 more editions of our local newspaper **The Word around Muxton**. This is a low level evangelism initiative delivered to every household in Muxton. Our aim for the paper to provide local interest and information, whilst sharing Good News. The challenge will be to maintain sufficient material to produce stories and news of interest to the community.
- We continued to deliver 3 **healing services** throughout the year. Whilst numbers of those attending continue to be quite low it is always felt

that those who have attended have benefited. It would be good to see our church family extend invites to friends and families as there is no doubt that there is always a need.

- Our **Community Choir** which attracts both church family members and those from our local community continues to be an integral part of our evangelism. It offers crucial support and friendship to members and their productions are so successful we usually have to add additional showings to cope with the numbers. At Christmas they performed Graham Kendrick's acclaimed **Rumours of Angels** which was hugely successful.
- **A Novel Idea**, our book club, meets once a month. There is a good mix of church family and those from the community and further afield. This is very much appreciated by those who come along and even when we don't like the book we read we have great fun discussing why this is the case!
- We added additional sessions to support our home grown outreach series, **SoulSpeak**, and during June/July ran another series which attracted 24 people, excluding leaders. SoulSpeak has been very well received by those who have come along and as a result we have seen people find and develop their faith in Jesus.
- 4 people who had attended SoulSpeak came along to a short **Alpha Course** that we ran in October/November. The new informal way we ran this, sharing a meal, proved a real success.
- In May we celebrated the **Coronation** over the entire weekend. We screened the ceremony and concert and shared lunch along with live music, games and stalls. This was well attended and clearly appreciated by the community.
- Between September and October we lived screened the **Rugby World Cup**. Whilst it didn't attract as many people as the football world cup it was very much enjoyed by those who came along.
- Christmas again offered opportunities to engage with the community. This year we tried to make more of an impact by calling the overall Christmas period a **Festival of Light**. In November we held a **Christmas Fayre** and initiated our lights switch on and in December we **sung carols** in the community, hosted a **Carols and Candles** evening and for our youngsters had the much loved **Crib Service**. We also shared **bible readings via social media** throughout the Christmas period.

In addition to these events we have also been involved in visioning things for the coming year.

Plans for the coming year

- To deliver another SoulSpeak series
- Count Everyone In. A ministry for adults with learning disabilities.
- Easter Plans 2024
- Alpha Series for whole church
- Christmas
- Continue the development of 'The Word around Muxton'

- Review our outreach groups and activities (carried forward from last year)
- Explore how we can engage with users of our building (carried forward from last year)

Let us also remember and pray for all the groups and activities that are crucial to the outreach of the gospel in our community. Please pray for these groups and especially for their leaders as they discern what God wants of each them.

- Tots
- Community Choir
- Join Us
- Lunch Club
- Forget me not films
- Sub Zero
- Activity Days
- Healing Service
- Book Club
- Walking Wednesdays
- Baptism/wedding visits/contacts
- Bereavement visits/contacts

Please continue to support this area of our ministry and anyone who feels they would like to **join the Evangelism team** please contact Jan Stackhouse 01952 604775 or janicestackhouse@btinternet.com

COMMUNITY

The **Men's Breakfasts** that took place at The Whitehouse Hotel in Muxton met for the first part of the year. These were paused in the middle of the year while the aim of these meetings was reviewed.

We are now in our eighth year of **Join us 4 a Cuppa!** which is usually held on the third Friday of the month.

This year varied slightly with an afternoon tea to celebrate the Coronation and particularly the 25th Anniversary of St John's Church in January where Join us provided lunch for almost 50 friends, including David, our vicar 25 years ago and his wife Irene. C.A.P., Think Pink and Parkinson's have also benefited from our charity fund raising, but primarily our lovely team of helpers like to think we provide coffee and cake with good company in a church setting.

Forget me not films continues to meet once a month on the 3rd Thursday morning to enjoy a time of fun, fellowship, food and films! The film is always a golden oldie and sometimes, but not always, a musical. It starts at 9.30 am but people arrive any time from 9.15 am. We always have a break half way through the film to enjoy chatting with others. If you enjoy good films, good company and plenty of tea/coffee and cake, then please think about coming to join us. All are welcome.

Lunch Club had a lovely year including a celebration for our 25th anniversary in February with a lovely cake made by Beryl. In June we also celebrated King Charles' Coronation with a buffet. We welcomed new helpers, Ros and Gill to our great team working each month to provide a lovely two course meal for usually between 40/ 50 people. Thanks to all Lunch Club members for their continued support and to the fabulous team of helpers/organisers.

Tots are a thriving weekly group meeting every Tuesday in term time from 10am to 11.30am. We welcome children aged

up to the age of 4 with their parent/carer. We have a very varied group of people attending, childminders Mum's and Grandparents, and we have welcomed some of the children and carers to Sunday services. We will be increasing our weekly charge to £3 per session, in the new year. We vary the sessions each week, rotating toys and offering a craft activity, finishing with singing nursery rhymes, a bible story and final prayer – before drinks and snacks biscuits for the children and adults. The group is advertised through church magazines, website etc, however word of mouth and recommendation also brings many new members. We are blessed to have a team of 9 volunteers, who we could not run the group without.

Community Litter Pick (monthly)

This initiative is arranged to coincide with "Join us 4 a cuppa" event but sadly very few people help since the break during COVID. It is a simple way of showing our love and care for our community, we usually meet just before 10am at St John's to get kitted out with equipment supplied by Telford Street Champion project; gloves, gripper tool, bin bag holders and fluorescent tabards. We then go around the streets and parks of Muxton collecting litter that blights the environment. This not only benefits our community but gives us an opportunity to chat with members of the community as we get some fresh air and exercise. We usually fill a bin bag with litter then go back to Church, wash up, have a free coffee for our exertions and continue with our chats whilst indulging in lovely toasted sandwiches or similar.

CAP (Christians against Poverty) DEBT CENTRE We at St John's continue to be one of the partnership churches that oversee the Debt Centre. In 2023 we continued to support people in Telford suffering from un-manageable debt and giving us the opportunity to talk to clients about our faith and pray with them during their journey to debt resolution. We had 40 clients by 31 December and 18 people became debt free during the year.

Once more we had several social events for clients and generous members of St John's joined other churches in providing 50 Christmas hampers to all our clients. Meeting clients with issues of un-manageable debt often brings to light other issues and mental ill- health continues to be very evident in the ever more complex situations endured by our clients. It is also sad to acknowledge that many clients have to live on budgets that are acknowledged to be unsustainable that means that, whilst being manageable for a short length of time, are not sufficient to meet their needs long-term.

There were big changes in our personnel in 2023. After over 7 years, in March, Jane Preston, one of our St John's church members stood down from her role as Debt Centre manager and has moved to the south of England. She did a tremendous job, setting up the debt centre (d.c.) from scratch and putting in robust processes and procedures that have stood the test of time. Meanwhile Marcelle, one of our debt coaches, also stood down from that role in the autumn although she does remain as a volunteer. Meanwhile Lizzie Brown, who joined us as a debt coach in 2021, excelled as interim d.c. manager until in July, we welcomed our new d.c. manager Ann Trehern, who attends Dawley Baptist church.

The team of volunteers/befrienders (several of whom are members of St John's and St Michael's) fill a critical role in supporting clients through, at times, a long journey and this support is an integral (and rewarding) part of our service to our clients. In the last 12 months we have welcomed some new volunteers onto the team and we are so grateful for their support. Could this be something God is calling you to do? The new CAP money management course is now up and running. It's a very useful tool to help anyone manage their money better. For more information, contact Vicky on vickymuxton@blueyonder.co.uk

We are also thrilled to report that we have been awarded a substantial government grant for the period July 2023 to 31 March 2024 that is a huge boost to our funds that were getting depleted. However regular funding is extremely helpful as it enables us to plan for the future. Could you help us in this by completing a standing order form for say £5 or £15 per month? Donations can be made via our account: P C C All Saints Code: 30-99-27 Account Number: 00006531 Ref; CAP followed by your surname. This is a dedicated account for the Debt Centre.

Your prayer support for the Centre as a whole, for our clients and for staff and volunteers is very much appreciated. If you would like to join us in our monthly prayer meetings, please contact Ann Trehern at anntrehern@capuk.org A full CAP Debt Centre annual report is available, on request, from Matthew.

Street Pastors are trained Christian volunteers from local churches supporting the night time economy in their local communities. Teams of men and women go out in the evenings to offer support by 'caring, listening and helping'. The Telford Street Pastors patrolled throughout 2023 on two out of every three Saturday evenings, usually from 9.30pm through to 3.30am the following morning. They moved between Telford Centre, Wellington and Newport depending upon where the need was greatest. In 2023 the usual practice was to spend the first half of the evening at Southwater in Telford centre. For the second half, the team either stayed in Wellington or increasingly, as numbers there have tended to dwindle, moved to Newport and especially the Main Street night club.

St John's and St Michaels have continued to provide active support to this ministry for a number of years and following training for new starters in 2023 the team were pleased to welcome 2 new Street Pastors to our ranks including Ricky Hargrave a regular member of St John's. Ricky joins Simon, Teresa, Justin and Chris from our 2 churches in supporting this mission. For the time being at least, Gill Steinert has decided to step away from Street Pastoring, but her dedicated service over the last few years has been invaluable and she will be certainly be missed. In addition, the church continues to support this venture financially. Matthew is part of the management committee.

The team's role is to help and support those people who are out in the evenings, helping them get home safely, caring for them when necessary or simply providing a listening ear when they need someone to talk to. We also support the homeless, providing woolly hats and sleeping bags, as well as contacting our accommodation partners to arrange night shelter at short notice, although availability has proved very limited.

The team's presence continues to be highly valued by those out in the evenings, as well as by our partners: the local authority, police, ambulance and venue door staff. The Street Pastors are ably supported by a small but dedicated team who pray for the team and any issues they face whilst they are out. These Prayer Pastors are an incredibly important part of our team and mission.

Following a recent review of demand and with the new street pastors now fully integrated, Telford Street Pastors have decided to provide a presence every week by reintroducing a third team. Since Covid the numbers of Street Pastors reduced and so were only able to provide a service two in every three weeks. From February 2024 we are pleased to announce that we are moving back to providing a weekly service on Saturday evenings.

We continue to look for new recruits for both Street and Prayer Pastors. A further recruitment campaign followed by raining course is planned for March 2024. Please see Simon Trotman or Teresa Clarke should you want to find out more about this challenging but very rewarding ministry as we work to show Jesus' love for our community on the streets

WEBSITE/SOCIAL MEDIA Our website is managed by UKchurches and is smartphone and tablet friendly. The St John's and St Michael's parts of the site are more integrated than on our previous website. Any comments on the website would be welcome. Please contact Dan with any feedback. Our Facebook accounts are looked after by Lisa, another way in which we communicate with the local community.

WORLD CHURCH & JUSTICE GROUP

The WCJ group includes representatives from both churches with the majority of activities being jointly organised and held in both churches. The joint group membership comprises of five members; three from St Michael's; two from St John's. The group met on three occasions.

Mission Profile

CPAS, a mission supported by St Michael's, was selected as the main mission to be profiled in 2023 a speaker is yet to be arranged.

Mission of the Year 2023

A Rocha which is a Christian mission of strong environmental background was chosen as Mission of the year but sadly they were unable to provide a speaker due to distance and availability in 2023.

Other WCJ activities

- **Fairtrade Fortnight 2023** (27 February - 12 March 2023) - The theme was 'Endangered Isle' both churches had displays of FairTrade products and cakes were made using FT products at SJM. The young church members enthusiastically participated in the FT activities during the service.
- **World Prayer Topics in Weekly Notices** - These continued to appear on a two monthly basis (approx) and were aimed to help and encourage our congregations focus their private prayers on current world crises, emergencies and disasters.
- **The Tearfund Big Quiz Night** was held at St John's on 18 November 2023. Several teams took part. A Tearfund video was shown and the event raised £171.01 for Tearfund.

Mission Giving

The 12% of income that St. John's donates to support mission projects locally (2.5%), at home (3%) and overseas (6.5%) were donated as follows;

- 3% to Tearfund - £1593; additional £581 for the Turkey Earthquake
 - 3% to CPAS - £1593;
 - 2% to Nepal Leprosy Trust - £1062;
 - 2% to Telford CAP Debt Centre £1385;
 - 1% to Mission of the Year 2023 A Roche £398
 - Restricted Mission Giving: £268 to the DEC Earthquake appeal in March 2023, £171.01 to Tearfund Big Quiz and £142 for Christian Aid Week
- £250 was distributed from the Miscellaneous Appeals Fund between, Embrace the Middle East, The Christian Institute, The Children's Society and Premier Radio

The St John's WCJ group members for 2023 were Di, David and Vicky, Tearfund Representative until her stepping down in the autumn.

YOUNG PEOPLE AND CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

Children's groups comprise of:

LIGHT (our crèche for preschool children) Provision was made for parents and carers to sit in the Acorn Room and watch a live link of the service if they wished. We do not have volunteers to staff this group at the moment.

SAS (for children aged 5 to 10) – **SAS** (for children aged 5 to 10) – This year it has been great to have a slightly larger committed team of regular leaders and helpers, which has enabled us to make plans to hold meetings every week, including in school holidays. Before Christmas, all the leaders met together to pray for the children and share ideas, with the intention of making this a regular, termly event. We are systematically following a syllabus from Energize, which means that each lesson can build on the teaching from the previous ones. The age range of the children ranges from two year old to secondary school age children. The older children are very considerate and good at helping the younger ones but it can be difficult to accommodate such a wide age group, due to their different needs. It would be wonderful if crèche could start again for the preschool age children; we just need more volunteers to come forwards to help with this. Our Summer Activity Days continued enjoying 3 days with approx 60 children attending. St John's was transformed into this 'Godwarts' with games, crafts and lots of energy and fun.

Looking ahead

As always we rely on the teams to carry out the work week in week out and we would just like to thank everyone who has helped in anyway. Sadly our leadership has reduced considerably and we ask that you consider whether Children's work is a ministry you would like to be part of. Please speak to Matthew or Lesley if you are interested.

Young People's groups:

Spark runs on Sunday mornings during the service, led by Andrew and Kathy. To comply with safeguarding, many members of the congregation have joined as helpers. Many thanks to everyone who has volunteered, without you Spark couldn't run. On average, we have around 5 young people each week. 3 of our young people attended 'Contagious' this year, enjoying a fun-filled week worshipping and studying the Bible. We'd love more of our young people to go along in 2024 **sub:Zero and sub:Extra increased, once again, to weekly this year.** However, they have not been as popular since September with numbers being exceptionally low. Despite this, it is enjoyed and valued by the few who do attend. Once

a month we are able to have some good discussions about faith and beliefs, while we eat donuts or cakes in the lounge area. We also give a short talk, and food, at the end of each term. We held our annual 'film-fest' in February half term, which was good fun but tiring as always!

SAFEGUARDING The children, young people's and adults at risk' work is undertaken within agreed policy statements together with an e-safety policy ratified by PCC. This has been devised along guidelines recommended by the Lichfield Diocese. The policy statements, ratified by the PCC, are displayed in the church porch and on the church website. In 2023 the Safeguarding Officer was Jan Stackhouse & the Deputy Safeguarding Officer was James Tagg. A sub-committee made up of members from St John's and St Michael's, along with the PCC, review the detail and practice of the policies for the Safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults. Everyone involved in ministry with Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults are required to undertake training relevant to their position. DBS clearance is required for many of these roles. DBS requirements and training records for all staff, both paid and voluntary are reviewed and lapses reported to the PCC. In addition St John's and St Michael's Safeguarding Officers provide support for Telford CAP workforce.

For the period January- December 2023

Re St John's

- There were **no incidents** that required a referral to Social Care
- There were 3 **Cause for Concern** reports filed in respect of 2 people– which were examined and satisfactorily dealt with using St John's and St Michael's Safeguarding procedures.

Re CAP workforce:

- There were 2 Cause for Concerns and 5 records of support/advice in respect of 1 case. This resulted in a referral to social care.
- There was a recruitment issue that required advice from Lichfield Safeguarding Officer

WELCOME AND CONNECTIONS TEAM

Another year has passed, and it is good to see St John's continuing to grow. Julie S continues to lead the pastoral team. Julie is passionate about supporting new and existing members of St John's. The team meet to try to ensure all members of St John's are cared for. The Church Directory/Pastoral list is available on request. Barbara has experienced the support offered by Julie and members of St John's herself this past year and the genuine love as a church we have for each other. Matthew's recent talk on safeguarding illustrated the importance of caring and supporting each other in a safe environment. As in the previous report a big thank you to Anne, Julie and Nigel for their continuing commitment to the Community Choir and the success of the wonderful Rumours of Angels. A big thank you too for the time given by everyone from the advertising and displays that made this event so successful. A big thank you to our music group. Wonderful to see Stephanie who has joined the music group. Our youth groups continue to offer many and varied opportunities for young people. It is a joy to see

the children setting off to enjoy their various groups. Once again a big thank you to the Group Leaders and the support offered by the volunteers sitting in and supporting both the children and the leaders. Our young people are our hope for the future. The Christmas Lunch invitation offered by St John's provided a warm welcome to share lunch together with Lunch Club and Join us 4 a cuppa! continuing to play a vital role, welcoming and befriending not just members of St John's but also members of our community. New and firm friendships are made between those who serve and those who come along. Our House Groups continue to thrive, offering valued support to each other as well as studying many and varying subjects within scripture. Tots continue to provide opportunities not just for the little ones to play together but support for parents and carers as they meet together. Members of our churches once again welcome befriend and reach out to the community. Welcoming and Connecting with each other at St John's allows us to provide love and support not just to each other but to reach out to our community. Sadly we live in a troubled world but to share the love of Jesus with another is both a privilege and a joy.

John 13: 34-35 NLT

"So now I am giving you a new commandment: Love each other. Just as I have loved you, you should love each other. 35 Your love for one another will prove to the world that you are my disciples." Amen

The Pastoral group consists of Matthew Lefroy (Vicar) Vikki Day (Curate), Julie (Pastoral coordinator), Barbara (Welcome and Nurture), Moira, Jane, Terry and Martie. The pastoral team met regularly throughout the year continuously looking at the pastoral list to identify those in our congregation that may need extra support. Julie continued to send cards out regularly, flowers and also phone calls. Housegroups also support our church family. A welcome tea for new members of the congregation took place in March. Refresher training sessions were offered for existing team members and new members of the team.

SMALL MID WEEK GROUPS continue to be essential to the life of St John's and St Michael's and those that attend find them integral to their daily life offering the opportunity to pray and grow in faith together.

Currently we have 6 groups in Muxton and 1 in Lilleshall that meet either during the day or evening; membership to the groups is not dependant on which church people attend and there is a healthy and valuable cross over between the 2 churches and the groups they attend. At the end of the year the number of people attending all groups was **77**, some of these include membership of more than 1 group. The actual number of members of the church family who are members of a group is **74**.

Each group has its own unique style but all are soundly based in sharing our love of Jesus, learning and deepening our faith and praying for each other's needs. We use material best suited to our groups and on occasions will follow a common theme or material that has been suggested to meet the needs of the whole church family.

Most groups primarily meet physically, zoom is sometimes used as a valuable option when either people have been unwell, or the weather has been inclement.

Group Leaders have met together on 2 occasions during the year to offer each other support, pray, and share ideas and material.

Please pray for these groups and especially the leaders who work hard preparing, leading, encouraging and supporting their members.

Should anyone like to join a mid week small group please contact either Jan Stackhouse or Matthew for more information.

SIDESPERSIONS

This is our current Sidespersons list. The sidespeople arrive at church for 10.20/30am to greet our congregation with a smile and hello and to hand out service sheets/notices. Thank you to all who help. Please speak to Lesley if you would like to help.

Dom & Martie	Ann L
Stan & Susan	Alasdair
Cath	Colin & Judith
Christine K	John & Wendy
John & Moira	Pete & Julie
Geoff & Mary	Terry & Jan
Mel	Simon & Lesley
Steve & Heather	David & Sue

CHURCH ATTENDANCE, ELECTORAL ROLL FIGURES AND OTHER STATISTICS

Electoral Roll: At the 2023 revision the number of names on the roll was 88. After preparation of the Roll prior to today the total stands at 84. We have 47 women and 37 men on the Electoral Roll of which 21 are nonresident, 4 live in Lilleshall parish which leaves 59 people live in the parish of Muxton.

General Attendance: After an unsettled few years we seem to be back to a more settled pattern. We continue to offer a mix of 'in person' and live streaming of our 11am service via YouTube. Our average 'in person' attendance during 2023 averaged 57 adults seeing a slight increase.

STATISTICS	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018
Average Adult Attendance:		57	54	Covid	Covid	79	75
Average Child Attendance:		10	10			15	17
Adult + child attendance		67	64			94	92
Easter Day Communicants:		76	78	9		122	78
Christmas Eve/Day Communicants:		52	107	40	76	62	70
Electoral Roll	84	88	92	96	95	87	104
Baptisms (aged 0-13 years):		0	1	1	0	4	1
Baptisms (aged 13 and above):		1	1	0	0	0	3
Thanksgivings		0	0	0	0	2	1
Marriages:		0	0	0	0	0	0
Funeral service in church:		2	2	0	0	2	1
Funeral service at crematorium:		12	6	15	10	6	6
Total funerals		14	8	15	10	8	7
Confirmations:		0	0	0	0	3	0

THE DEANERY SYNOD OF EDMOND AND SHIFNAL

Encompasses both St John's and St Michael's churches; with 2 vacancies from St John's.

There were three meetings plus the Archdeacon's Visitation evening in the year 2023, held at Lilleshall, Chetwynd, and Albrighton. All the meetings start with worship and end with prayer

The Diocesan-wide "Shaping for Mission" initiative team from across the deanery continued to work to the implementation of ways to share functions, reduce administration and increase efficiency.

The **February** meeting at **Lilleshall** remembered friend & member Pat Jones who was killed in a car crash. Met Deanery Member Rev Helen Morby and heard of her history. Rev Zoe Hemming reported on General Synod and the feedback was discussed. The provision of "Warm Spaces" in Albrighton, Shifnal, Church Aston and Lilleshall. The Rural Dean offered meetings at smaller churches but needed an invitation.

The **June** meeting was held at **Chetwynd Church** with Robert Watson Jones giving a fascinating and comprehensive "potted history" of the church. Election of Officer took place Lay Chair, Mr. Malcolm Maclean; Secretary: Geoff Lott and Treasurer: Kerry Hoult. The Treasurer has successfully changed the banking to "On-Line and for the first time in 6 years "subs" of £10 have been requested. The southern 6 parishes face an interregnum as Rev Keith Hodson has retired. Padre Eddie Wynn is leaving Cosford for Norfolk. Rev. Edward Ward celebrates 50 years with Forton Church and Rev Kay Rogers was priested the weekend of the meeting.

The **October** meeting was held at **St Mary's Albrighton** Rev Simon Foster – Diocesan Mission Strategy Enabler, gave a talk on "*Growing Faith, Pioneering Parishes and Discerning Your Parish Vocation*" a new approach to develop strategies for your Parish and the Deanery, outlining four main approaches: Parish Vocation: Pioneering Parishes: Growing Faith and Gospel Readings: simply reading a whole Gospel together as a group aloud at one sitting. Updates from the "Shaping For Mission" Team who have been considering the cooperation between parishes, and resources for a course on Pastoral Supervision. St Mary's Albrighton offering computer access to enable people without internet to do the Safeguarding Training. Shifnal church is uniting with the local Methodist church, main worship at St. Andrew's and the Methodist church used for outreach events the coming together has been welcomed in the town with pastoral care being shared and a feeling of much energy being generated.

FINANCIAL REVIEW

2023 was even more challenging financially than 2022. Increases in hire charges saw a significant increase in income from the building compared to 2022 but giving from the congregation saw a significant reduction as people passed away or moved churches. The income was not replaced by newer members giving. A planned sermon series on giving in spring saw a slight increase but not enough to cover the forecast expenditure from utilities (£10,000 compared to £3,500 in recent years); wages and increased costs generally following the pandemic.

A further appeal to the congregation in September still did not realise enough forecast income from the congregation and as

a result the PCC were unable to set a budget in the November PCC meeting, as they had previously agreed that a deficit budget would not be set. It was agreed that over Advent the focus would be on prayer and giving.

The PCC continued to pay the Common Fund in full, the wages of two staff as well as all the other regular costs of running the church such as paper, printing, refreshments resources, clergy expenses, copyright licences, outreach through various events and the newspaper and the upkeep and maintenance of the building. As part of the Quinquennial report some items required immediate attention. We are grateful to Cyril, Steve and Simon who have completed some work in an effort to reduce costs.

For the first time in a number of years Activity Days had a cost implication across the two churches as reserved funds were used up.

A successful Weekend Away in May had little impact on church funds, as the Restricted Youth Fund was used to cover the cost of all the children and youth attending. This fund now stands at £10,129.

Income during 2023 was £111,032 with expenditure of £103,124, which shows a surplus of nearly £8,000.

HOWEVER, it was only because of some generous one off gifts that the finances showed a surplus. Without these then there would have been a significant deficit and the church would have had to draw on reserved funds to keep functioning.

At the end of the year the balance in the current account was £10,703 of unrestricted funds and £3680 restricted.

The Deposit account contains £8,000 of restricted Youth Fund and £20,396 of unrestricted funds. An additional £5,000 was still to be credited to the account making a total of £25,396 to cover roughly 3 months operating costs.

Remember, covering the basic costs of keeping the building open for the use of the church and community costs around £70,000 a year.

As always THANK YOU to Simon as Treasurer and Carol as Gift Aid Secretary and to those who give both financially and of their time to continue God's work around Muxton, the surrounding area and further afield.

A BIG THANK YOU to all of you who have given so generously to the church during 2023.

The **FABRIC & ORNAMENTS** of our church are in good order and the Church Warden(s) has (have) very little responsibility for ensuring that this continues, due to the PCC Sub-Committee Building Management Team. A Log Book listing details of work carried out on the building is set up and constantly updated by Building Management. An Inventory of church items, including the silver and moveable furniture is also noted. Photographs of all items are included and the silver weighed and hallmarks recorded for insurance purposes. These are both diocesan requirements.

The Building Management Team ensures that our church is maintained at the highest level at all times, is a safe, warm and welcoming place for all.

During 2023 the following was carried out:

Following the Quinquennial report the Priority A recommendations were addressed:

- Areas around the exterior of the church were re-pointed
- The exterior of the church is being re-decorated by Simon H.
- Soffits have been replaced where necessary
- The cement fillets at the edge of the roof tiles have been repaired/replaced where necessary
- The ivy has been cut back from the west elevations of the hall and lounge

In addition to the day to day maintenance tasks and upkeep of St John's church, the following has also taken place:

- The lightening protection system has been serviced and checked
- PAT testing was completed
- The fire extinguishers received their annual check as did the emergency lighting
- An exterior light was fitted outside the office window to improve visibility when leaving the church in the dark
- Numerous leaks in the ladies and gents toilets have been repaired
- An annual spring clean took place over two afternoons – thank you so much to those of you who came and supported the BMT with this huge task. Many hands make light work!
- The carpets have been cleaned by Simon H

The Building Management Team is: Lesley T, Steve H, Nigel W, Simon H and Gill S.

CHURCH ADMINISTRATOR AND PERSONAL ASSISTANT TO THE VICAR Lesley Trotman continues to work as our valued Church Administrator and St John's Building Manager and we are grateful for all that she does throughout the year.

Matthew Lefroy (Chairman)
On behalf of St John's PCC

14th April 2024

St John's Church, Muxton
Financial Statements for the year ended 31st December 2023

Notes:

RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS ACCOUNT

RECEIPTS

Voluntary Receipts

Receipts from donors

Planned giving

Plate Collections

Income tax recovered

Other voluntary receipts

Grants

Hire of Hall (inc Tots)

Receipts from Church Activities (Magazine, Evangelism, Youth)

Children Youth Sub Extra

Investment Income - CBF Deposit Fund & CAF Bank

From St Michaels for Shared Costs (Wages, Office, Copier, Phone etc)

Other Income

AV

Activity Days

Restricted Mission

Weekend Away

Total Receipts

	Unrestricted General Fund £	Restricted Funds	Total 2023 £	Total 2022 £
	43,575.92		43,575.92	£47,754
	1,037.07		1,037.07	£651
	9,070.48		9,070.48	£10,077
	8,006.34		8,006.34	£6,201
	300.00		300.00	£950
	61,989.81		61,989.81	£65,633
	16,880.27		16,880.27	£11,588
	3,787.04		3,787.04	£2,618
	459.52		459.52	£990
	709.14		709.14	£303
	8,532.60		8,532.60	£7,927
	10,444.51		10,444.51	£1,947
		2,000.00	2,000.00	
	560.50		560.50	£335
		581.01	581.01	£1,104
	5,088.01		5,088.01	£5,300
	108,451.40	2,581.01	111,032.41	113,613.42

Check receipts

Bank Statement 111032.41

Accs 111032.41

0.00

PAYMENTS

Church Activities

Diocesan parish share

Outward Mission Giving (12% Mission and other charitable giving)

Church Activities Evangelism, Publicity, Tots

Youth & Children (inc Sub Zero)

House group & small teams

SML Magazine share

Resources, CCLI Licence and misc.

AV, Music

Activity Days

Other Payments - Insurance, bank charges, accountant fees

Office costs inc phone

Photocopier rental and printing

Wages

Utilities

Maintenance & cleaning & Quinquennial

Clergy Expenses

Other

Weekend Away

Total Payments

	33,894.00		33,894.00	£33,894
	6,495.16	581.01	7,076.17	£9,318
	2,554.30		2,554.30	£2,653
	667.97		667.97	£1,282
	52.53		52.53	£368
	464.00		464.00	£250
	2,134.39		2,134.39	£2,306
		448.49	448.49	£1,091
	711.40	190.53	901.93	£444
	1,696.24		1,696.24	£1,586
	1,167.47		1,167.47	£1,106
	2,359.67		2,359.67	£2,438
	22,277.22		22,277.22	£19,043
	10,286.77		10,286.77	£3,768
	6,746.20		6,746.20	£3,998
	1,533.27		1,533.27	£1,126
	3,369.10		3,369.10	£32,976
	3,835.70	1,659.00	5,494.70	£8,372
	100,245.39	2,879.03	103,124.42	126,019.10

Check payments

Bank Statement 103124.42

Accs 103124.42

Transfer between funds

Excess of Receipts over Payments

	8,206.01	-298.02	7,907.99	£12,406

Bank current and deposit accounts 1st January 2023

Bank current and deposit accounts 31st December 2023

Change in Reserves

	28,084.44	11,788.21	39,872.65	£68,147
	31,099.92	11,680.72	42,780.64	£39,873
	3,015.48	-107.49	2,907.99	£28,274

Check

R over P 7907.99

Change in Res 2907.99

5000.00

STATEMENT OF ASSETS AND LIABILITIES

Cash Funds

Bank current account

CBF deposit account

	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	Total £	Total £
	10,703.52	3,680.72	14,384.24	20,272.47
	20,396.40	8,000.00	28,396.40	19,742.18
	£31,099.92	£11,680.72	£42,780.64	£40,015

RESTRICTED FUNDS

Starting
Balance

£

Income

£

Expenditure

£

Ending
Balance

£

Transferred to
deposit acc

Balance in
current acc

Youth Fund

Activity Days

Restricted Mission

Music AV

TOTAL RESTRICTED FUNDS

	11,788.21		1,659.00	10,129.21	8000	2129.21
	190.53		190.53			
		581.01	581.01			
		2,000.00	448.49	1,551.51		1551.51
	£11,978.74	£2,581.01	£2,879.03	£11,680.72		3680.72

ASSETS

The £5,000 transferred from current account to the deposit account on 22/12/23 has not been credited until 8/1/24.

Advance payment to Octopus on 2/10/23 of £1,692.07. Will be returned on completion of 12 month contract or roll over to new term.

Independent Examiner's Report to the trustees/members of the PCC of St John's Church, Muxton
Registered charity number: 1162098

I report on the accounts of St John's Church, Muxton for the year ended 31 December 2023 set out on the attached pages.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As members of the PCC, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ('the Act').

I report in respect of my examination of the accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination, I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

Independent Examiner's statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination which gives me cause to believe that in, any material respect:

- Accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Act; or
- The accounts do not accord with the accounting records;
- The accounts do not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.



L D Clifford FCA, BSC (Hons)
11 Manor Farm Drive
Hinstock
Market Drayton
Shropshire

28 March 2024