THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF ST THOMAS' STOPSLEY

England & Wales · Charity number 1175152

Details

Other names	ST THOMAS' PCC STOPSLEY
Status	Registered
Legal form	Other
Registered	2017-10-13
Register	View on the Charity Commission register

Contact

Address	585a Hitchin Road Luton LU2 7UL
Phone	01582729194
Email	office@stopsleyparish.org.uk
Website	www.stopsleyparish.org.uk

Activities

Objects: PROMOTING IN THE PARISH THE WHOLE MISSION OF THE CHURCH, PASTORAL, EVANGELISTIC, SOCIAL AND ECUMENICAL.

Activities: PROMOTES THE WHOLE MISSION OF THE CHURCH, PASTORAL, EVANGELISTIC AND SOCIAL IN THE PARISH OF STOPSLEY AND ALSO THE WIDER AREA OF LUTON

Classification

- **How:** Makes Grants To Organisations, Provides Buildings/facilities/open Space
- **What:** Religious Activities
- **Who:** Children/young People, Elderly/old People, People With Disabilities, Other Charities Or Voluntary Bodies, The General Public/mankind

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Geography

- Luton

Finances

Period end	Income	Expenditure	Assets	Employees
2025-12-31	£105,369	£111,754	-	-
2024-12-31	£80,344	£116,844	-	-
2023-12-31	£77,697	£105,284	-	-
2022-12-31	£233,281	£101,584	-	-
2021-12-31	£78,594	£96,913	-	-
2020-12-31	£128,269	£105,835	-	-

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Trustees

Name	Role	Appointed
Rev David Graham Alexander	Chair	1995-03-31
Amanda Heffernan		2025-07-21
Beverley Grace Rolls		2025-05-16
CHRISTINE ELIZABETH YOUNGER		2017-03-31
DEBORAH ANN BACHINI		2017-03-31
Deborah Tracy Newbound		2024-05-12
Dr Clive Wheeler		2025-05-16
Ian Malcolm Anthony Marshall		2024-05-12
John Dyson Kingham		2024-05-12
Julie Bailey		2025-07-21
Kerri Judith Green		2024-05-12
LINDA ANNE CLITHEROE		2017-03-31
Mary Rose Godfrey		2024-05-12
Natasha Abigail Cole		2024-05-12
Neil Rolls		2016-04-01
Rev Anne Abok		2025-07-21
Richard Garwood		2025-05-16
STEVEN GARY DOLBY		2017-03-31

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Accounts

St Thomas's, Stopsley
Seeking to Share God's Love

Annual Reports
For Annual Church Meeting
2026

Welcome!

Welcome to our Reports for the Annual Church Meeting 2026. It is wonderful to have you as part of our Church Family, and thank you for reading through these reports and (hopefully) attending our APCM this year. If you have any queries or comments please raise them at the meeting, or mention them privately if you prefer to me or one of the Wardens of Church Council (PCC) members. There is also a slip at the end of this document.

As we meet together it is important to honour one another in the life of our church family and especially all those who do so much to care for members and to reach out to our community, and beyond, with the food news of Jesus. We are truly called to seek to share God's love with everyone!

Let us be praying … that together we might be the Church God wants us to be, and the Church that Stopsley needs.

Welcome, indeed.

David Alexander (Vicar)

St Thomas's, Stopsley

Parish Profile & Mission Action Plan

Mission Statement: ***Seeking to Share God's Love.***

- We seek to be a ***Mission-orientated*** evangelistic church, intent on sharing God's love with all in our local community, and beyond.
- We aim to reach out in ***love*** to all we can, witnessing for Christ through word and action.
- We wish to be a ***welcoming community*** in all we do.
- We offer a wide range of worship styles, including ***established*** services and ***Fresh Expressions*** for those presently unchurched and newcomers.
- We are aware of our need to be prayerful, seeking the power of the ***Holy Spirit.***
- We value being taught from the ***Scriptures***, desiring that they are expounded in a relevant and inspirational way.
- We endeavour to be a ***pastoral*** church, caring for the Church family and any others we can.
- We are a ***servant*** church seeking to serve people in our community and town, and further afield, in practical and caring ways in the name of Jesus.
- We prize our history and are ***forward-looking*** in faith to what God will do through us in the future.
- We are a ***friendly*** church, valuing fellowship, eating together, homegroups and hospitality.

SOME PARISH DETAILS

Population : 10,000 approx. (This figure gives some idea of the 'pastoral area' for our church, rather than exact count of the population).

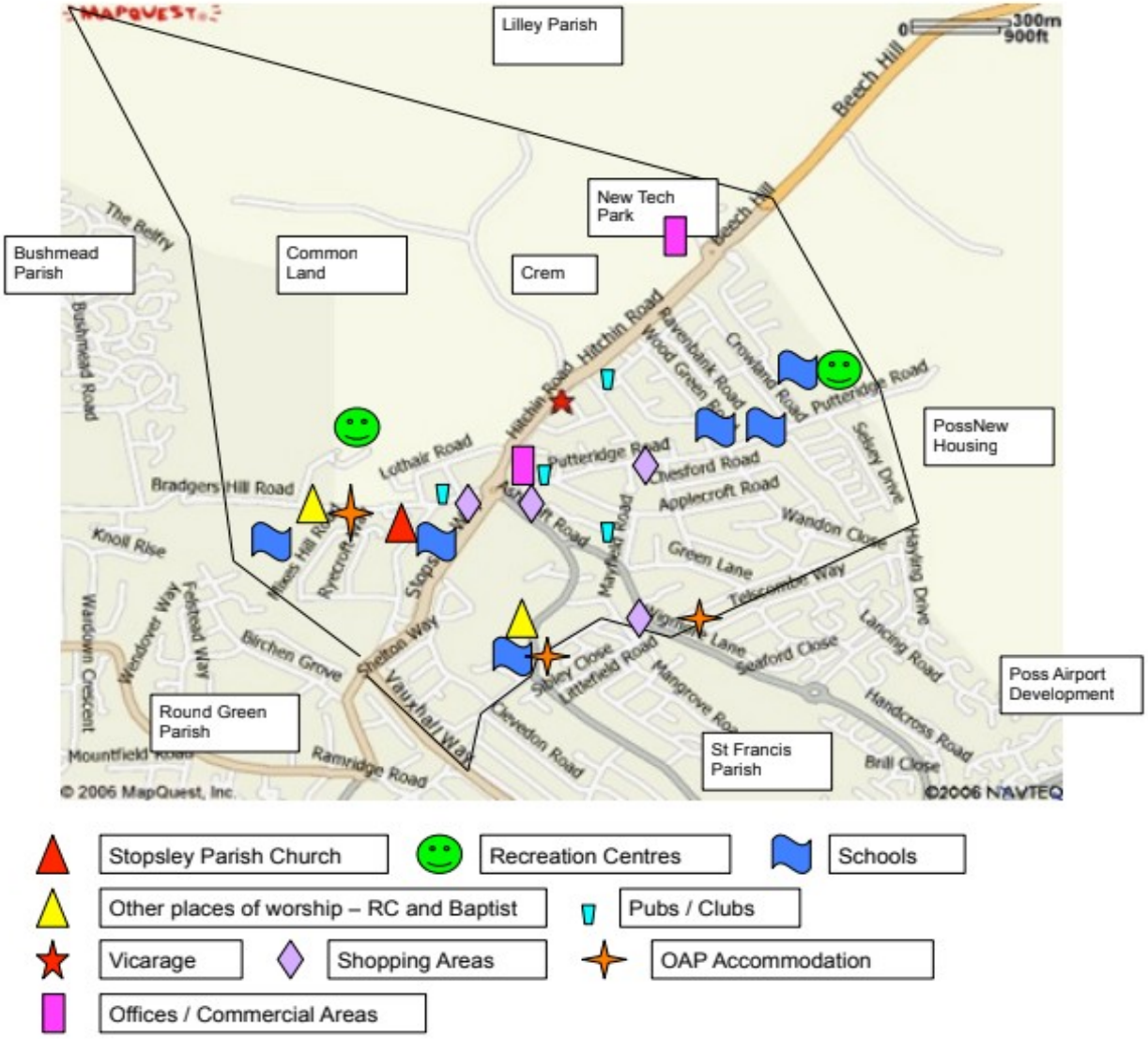
Location : North East area of Luton, at the boundary with Herts. The parish includes the wards of Stopsley and Putteridge. The busy A505 from Luton to Hitchin runs through the parish and separates the church geographically from much of the rest of the parish.

Type[s] of housing : Mainly owner occupied, with some rented accommodation, and pockets of housing association or council property.

Community facilities : Two high schools, two primary schools, one special needs school, and a large sports complex with Olympic swimming and diving facilities.

History of the community : In 1862, when the church was built, Stopsley was a village. Over the years since then Luton has gradually swallowed it up and it is now a suburb of the town. Some of the major employers of people in the community over the past 100 years have closed or declined in size, but employment remains fairly high. The airport and the car industry are major employers.

Parish boundaries: No longer quite the same natural cohesive community that it once was but boundaries mainly make sense except confusing boundary on Ramridge Estate with St. Francis.



PARTNERSHIP IN WORSHIP, MISSION & MINISTRY
We are active participants in the Luton Deanery in working together in mission to our town of Luton.

In the early 1990's we planted Christchurch, Bushmead, a thriving church largely within what was the much larger former parish of Stopsley.

Other Christian Churches : we have a good friendly relationship with Stopsley Baptist Church and Ramridge Baptist Church with whom we have co-operated on various events and projects. SBC has a much bigger congregation, and with its better facilities and style of worship it attracts younger people and people from a wider area. We have different styles of worship but complement one another in our evangelistic task. We have friendly relations with Sacred Heart (RC). Ministers are involved in local and town wide fraternals, and we also participate in a local evangelical hub for prayer and mission, and a similar but larger grouping for the whole town.

Annual Parish Report on 2025 (Prepared for AGM 2026)

by Stopsley (St Thomas) Parish Church Council (PCC)

Charity Number: 1175152

Background – What is the PCC? Stopsley Parish Church P.C.C. has the responsibility of co-operating with the incumbent, the Reverend David Alexander, in promoting in the ecclesiastical parish of Stopsley the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical. Our Parish Mission Statement is as follows: Seeking to share God's love with everyone.

Membership – Who is on the PCC? Members of the P.C.C are either ex officio or elected by the Annual Church Meeting (properly known as the Annual Parochial Church Meeting) in accordance with the Church Representation Rules.

During 2025 (after the 2025 AGM) the following served as members of the P. C. C:

Ex-officio Members

1. David Alexander (Vicar, Chairman)

2. Churchwarden – Natasha Cole

3. Churchwarden – vacant

Elected Lay Representatives (We are entitled to 12 elected representatives)

(The rules state: 6 reps if up to 50 on the Electoral roll

9 reps if up to 100 on the Electoral roll

12 reps if up to 200 on the Electoral roll

15 reps if over 200 on the Electoral roll)

Elected Year Elected Term of Office Term Ends

1 Linda Clitheroe 2023 3yr 2026

2 John Kingham 2024 2yr 2026

3 Ian Marshall 2025 1yr 2026

4 Vacant - - 2026

5 Deborah Bachini 2024 3yr 2027

6 Mary Godfrey 2025 2yr 2027

7 Debbie Newbound 2024 3yr 2027

8 Neil Rolls 2024 3yr 2027

9 Vacant - - 2028

10 Julie Bailey 2025 3yr 2028

11 Bev Rolls 2025 3yr 2028

12 Amanda Heffernan 2025 3yr 2028

Elected Representatives on Deanery Synod** (automatically also serve on the PCC)

1 Christine Younger 2023 3yr 2026

2 Steve Dolby 2023 3yr 2026

3 Vacant - - 2026

** We have between 100-199 names on our electoral roll and so are entitled to 3 Elected Deanery Synod Representatives. NB Clergy of the church also serve on the Deanery Synod

Co-opted PCC Member(s) Jennifer Obinna

Elections at 2026 AGM

We are very appreciative of the significant contributions of the PCC members coming to the end of their period of office. Under the present rules in place for our PCC, elected members who have served for 3 years, apart from ‘office holders'*, are not eligible for re-election until 12 months after the end of their term of office.

Served for 3 years:

Linda Clitheroe*

Served for 2 years, and coming to end of period of office. Eligible to stand for 1 year:

John Kingham (Elected for 2 years in 2024)

Ian Marshall (Elected for 1 year in both 2024 and 2025)

Served for 1 year, and coming to end of period of office. Eligible to stand for 2 years:

Nil

(Any names marked * are eligible for re-election as they are office holders)

There will be elections for the following positions: 4 PCC member(s) to serve for 3 years to 2029

0 PCC member(s) to serve for 2 years to 2028

1 PCC member(s) to serve for 1 year to 2027

3 Deanery Synod member(s) to serve to 2029

Committees - Standing Committee The Standing Committee is the only committee required by law, and is our only official committee. It has power to transact the business of the P.C.C between its meetings, subject to any directions given by the council. In the past we also have had a number of ‘Action Church Teams’ (ACTs) that organise activities, or discuss matters, as directed by the P.C.C. and Vicar.

PCC Electoral Roll Report There are 111 (this is presently being compiled for the AGM*) parishioners now on the Church Electoral Roll. This represents a change of +/-X* from the previous year’s ACM Electoral Roll. There have been new members, and others have left the roll - changes due to new church attendees, parishioners moving, changing church, death or people who live outside the parish and no longer regularly attend St Thomas's.

PCC Review of the Year

We want to stress the importance of all being welcomed into a safe place, and the crucial role of safeguarding. We have worked hard to complete all the training provided by the diocese and national authorities, and all proper procedures and governance. We place a very high priority on excellence in this area and are working hard to constantly improve this aspect of our church’s life. If anyone has any safeguarding concerns they should speak

urgently to our Safeguarding Officer Linda Clitheroe, or the Vicar David Alexander, and we are delighted to welcome Julie Bailey to this team.

It has been a joy to continue to receive the ministry of Steve Dolby, our Lay Reader. We are very grateful for him and all his hard work in the services at Church, and also in the Deanery.

We are thankful for the wonderful pastoral support offered by David Newbound as Pastoral Worker and Debbie Newbound as Parish Nurse. This work has expanded in various ways, including the Well Being Coffee Mornings, the Monday Friendship meetings, Twins Group, Cancer Support and various other community groups supporting wellbeing and health.

We are also very grateful for Guy Clark, our Administrator, and all the work he does in the Church Office.

We were delighted when Anne Abok joined us as Curate in June 2025. Unfortunately, she was diagnosed with stage 4 ovarian cancer not long after starting this ministry and we have sought to support her during this very difficult time. We continue to pray for her and hope she may recover her health and return to her ministry.

We have continued to livestream our Daily Prayers. We also livestream all our services from the church building. We are grateful to all who make this possible, especially John Pinnock and Rosemary Stipta. We have also worked hard at producing a weekly email to keep people in touch via a mailing list.

A priority continues to be care for, and support of one another, and for those we can in our local community. Thank you for all the ways in which each person has contributed to this.

The Sunday Club continues to blossom and everyone at the 10am Service enjoys the children sharing what they have been learning each week. Thank you to the children and to their leaders for all their creative hard work.

In 2024 we started the Wednesday Evening Gathering when people can join us for a meal, some worship, and to choose one of the streams: Bible Explored and Spirituality Explored.

During the year we have, as a church family, enjoyed many wonderful services and activities. We have also made many attempts to reach out to our community, not least in many acts of service and kindness shown by individual members. Another key part of our outreach has been our chaplaincy work in the community, working together with Stopsley Baptist Church in this.

The ‘homegroup’ and the Christianity Explored groups, and the Wednesday Gathering nurture fellowship and spiritual growth. This is a significant part of our church life and very important for future growth.

We continue to seek to give a warm welcome to visitors to the Church. Much effort and preparation is given to provide services that develop further an atmosphere of welcome. We particularly organised special events to welcome people over Christmas, Easter, Remembrance and throughout the year. We have enjoyed social activities that enhance our welcome to people.

Baptism policy for children offers a choice between a ‘Thanksgiving Service’ to families who want to have a celebration service in Church but who do not intend coming to Church

regularly, and Baptism for those families willing to undertake preparation to make the commitment involved in that service (please see the vicar if you are interested in this). Thanksgivings are generally held after the usual services and Baptisms are held during the main Sunday Service. We also provide preparation for weddings. The weddings themselves appeared to be thoroughly enjoyed by the couples and their guests. Although both christenings and weddings have diminished in number over the years, as they have elsewhere, these continue to be an excellent opportunity to provide a good witness for the Church, alongside our funeral ministry.

Thanks are due to John Alexander, our Director of Music, who plays our church organ and keyboard, and has provided music recordings for when he is unavailable. We are grateful to all who have helped with the maintenance of the Church and Churchyard, especially Ian Clitheroe, and those who clean our Church, and to the flower arrangers. Their hard work enhances our worship.

The witness of individuals in their community, work and leisure environments remain vital for our evangelistic mission. We have also been keen to support the World-wide Church, particularly focussed through our links with ‘Hands of Mercy’ in the Philippines. Our Church has been open for prayer and visitors during weekday mornings. We served the community in caring for bereaved people at the time of funerals and welcome them to an annual commemoration service, as well as other services.

Communications within the Church are enhanced through the website and ‘A Church Near You’ advertising of events and our weekly email newsheet, the details of which are also projected onto the Church screen. Communications with the wider parish through our magazine is greatly appreciated by large numbers inside and outside of the Church family. Our thanks to the editorial team for all their hard work in producing our magazine.

We have continued to run our Stewardship Scheme. We are grateful to everyone who respond to stewardship initiatives, and all the Finance Team, our Treasurer, Neil Rolls, and our Stewardship Secretary, Les Sims, and the skilled help of Sarah Vyvyan. Full details of the finances are provided in the relevant reports and the presentation at the AGM.

We wish to thank many, both Church members and others, who have contributed to the ongoing work of the Church in the last year. We are also very appreciative of the sacrificial work of our Churchwarden, Natasha. The PCC wishes to thank all those who contributed to the services: as sanctuary assistants, servers, sidesmen/women, readers and intercessors, not forgetting all who provided welcome refreshments after the morning service and on other important occasions, and also to those who have helped provide such excellent food at various events and meetings.

We are grateful for God's faithfulness in the past, and the present and look forward to the future with confident hope in God as we share His love together.

David Alexander, Vicar. On behalf of the P.C.C

Warden's Report

A year in her keeping begins with the keys, cold brass in her palm as she walks through the breeze. The churchyard awaits her: the weeding, the mowing, the ivy that creeps when no one is knowing. Neighbours complain—"It's on my fence again!"— she smiles, breathes deep, and counts to ten.

The quinquennial report looms large in her mind, chasing surveyors who are never on time. Cracks in the sanctuary wall appear in the drought, and she prays for the rain as she measures them out.

Sunday brings rhythm: the readings, the greeting, the counting of collections, the welcomers meeting. The doors—freshly treated—swing open with grace, as she ushers the faithful into their place.

Then Christmas arrives in a twinkling glow, trees dressed in splendour, row upon row. She shepherds the festival with laughter and tea, and wonders how many lights one socket can see.

June 29th brings a curate, appointed with joy, celebrated with hymns that the rafters enjoy. And off to St Albans she travels with pride, for Anne's ordination—she beams by her side.

A milestone of joy fills the church with delight— Rev. David's three decades of faithful, steadfast light. Thirty years shepherding, guiding, and prayer, celebrated with stories, and tones of "COYH", in sermons are heard.

The visitation comes, as it faithfully must, clipboards and questions, polish and dust. Yet through every season, each task, every chore, she serves with a love that grows more and more.

For a year in her life is a tapestry spun of faith, of resilience, of work never done— and still she stands steady, her lantern held high, a warden, a guardian, beneath God's wide sky.

Thank you one and all for the work and support you selflessly give to our church, week in week out. Our church would not thrive as it does without the offers of help, your time and talent.

Natasha Cole

Administrators report

I cannot believe I have been here for a year. It seems to have passed very quickly. Most importantly, it has been a pleasure to get to know the people at St Thomas's. The warmth, support, and dedication of this community have made my transition seamless and deeply rewarding.

I am finding the role to be very varied and enjoyable. The responsibilities span practical fabric maintenance to vital pastoral care. No two days are alike, and the workload generally falls into two core categories

Building and Fabric Management: Ensuring the safety and preservation of our physical structure. This hands-on work has included tasks such as being up a ladder to check the roof and consistently monitoring cracks in the building.

Occasional Offices and Liturgical Planning: managing life events for the community. This involves arranging Weddings and Funerals, ensuring families are supported through moments of both great joy and deep grief.

The first year has provided a solid foundation and a clear understanding of the parish's operational and pastoral needs. In the coming year, I look forward to deepening these relationships, continuing the stewardship of our historic building, and serving the congregation of St Thomas's

Guy Clark

Deanery Synod Report

Deanery Synod Report

David Kesterton, who served as Luton's Area Dean for several years, retired last July. At present, Revd Josias de Souza (Vicar of St Francis) and Revd Anne Crosby (Vicar of St Anne's) are serving as Acting Area Deans for Luton

.Over the past two years, David Kesterton worked closely with Stephen Moore, Diocesan Programme Manager for Growing Younger and More Diverse, to develop a funding bid to the national church. This was submitted in October 2025 and has been a major focus of the Deanery's life.

We are pleased to share that this bid has been successful, and work is now moving into the planning and implementation stage. This work is rooted in the vision of “Growing Younger and More Diverse”—recognising both the context of Luton and the opportunity before us. The Deanery has been exploring how our churches can better engage with children, young people, and the rich cultural diversity of our town.

This includes developing new ways of working together, sharing resources, and exploring missional roles across the Deanery, particularly in areas such as youth ministry, intercultural engagement, and community outreach.

There is also a growing desire to strengthen relationships between parishes, encouraging mutual support and a deeper sense of shared mission across Luton. .We continue to pray for wisdom as this next phase develops, and that together we may see new disciples made and our churches strengthened in mission and unity.

Revd Josias de Souza Vicar St Francis Acting -Co-Area dean Luton Deanery

With thanks to Rev Josias de Souza for sharing his report above.

Steve Dolby – Synod representative

Hands of Mercy insert for St. Thomas’ AGM Report 2025 (written in 2026)

We are really grateful to St. Thomas’ Church for all your support for Hands of Mercy. Through your help, we are restoring hope to some of the poorest families in the Philippines. We do this through practical programmes of support, e.g. in education and feeding, whilst sharing about God’s love.

Where we work and our programmes
We operate in nine urban poor communities, eight in Mandaluyong City, Metro Manila and one in Baguio, Banguet (about 155 miles north of Manila). Through our supporters, we provide a number of compassion programmes with our most supported programmes being the Family Support Programme (FSP), the Child Sponsorship Programme (CSP) and the Supplementary Feeding Programme (SFP).

How your support changes lives
Sponsors provide life-saving food to a family each month (FSP) or help a child to break the cycle of poverty by sponsoring their education (CSP). Other supporters enable children to eat a nutritious meal four days a week or give a gift to wherever it is needed the most (which can be for medicine, surgery, disabled therapy or home repairs).

Living conditions in the squatter communities are very difficult. Families try to survive on barely a few pounds a day, not always knowing whether they'll have enough for the next meal. They face the constant threat of ill-health, battling with intense heat and the risk of flooding through typhoons. Your support makes a real practical difference to families and children living in these conditions and helps to restore hope, dignity and purpose.

We started in 1997, with a sponsor for just one child, and we have grown and expanded since then, with hundreds of sponsors over the years investing in the lives of children and families. More than 95% of the money we raise goes directly to the Philippines (we keep our admin costs in the UK really low)!

The impact that you make comes through from what our beneficiaries say:

"For me, Hands of Mercy is truly God's way of reaching out to people in need. It is not just a programme – it is a living proof of His love and compassion. Hands of Mercy has been a great blessing to families like ours who struggle financially. There was a time when I felt hopeless because I did not know how I could support my children's education. I worried everyday about their future. But through the Child Sponsorship Programme, my child with special needs was given a sponsor until he finishes high school. It was a huge relief for our family." Remy, Hands of Mercy beneficiary and team member

"The Child Sponsorship Programme has helped me a lot in my studies since I was in elementary school and until my college now. It has been a bridge for me to fulfil my dreams little by little. That's why I am grateful for this programme of Hands of Mercy because many young people are being helped and given the hope and a future." Jerome, Hands of Mercy beneficiary

Hands of Mercy has also started its own water filtering business in recent years, called Icthus. We are delighted that we have been able to build a good customer base and through this, Icthus provides jobs to people in the squatter communities as well as sponsors two children through the Child Sponsorship Programme.

Thank you again St. Thomas' for your care, love and support. We couldn't do this without you!

Find out more
If you would like to find out more about Hands of Mercy, we have a quarterly prayer diary (email or post) where you can learn more about what's happening in Hands of Mercy and receive prayer topics each month (see the contact details below).

You can also get involved with sponsoring a child, family or the work generally. If you would like to get involved, it would be great to hear from you! Denise, our administrator, is on-hand with more information and she can be contacted via info@handsofmercyph.org or 07467 127023.

Thank you again St. Thomas'. "Pagpalain ka ng diyos" (God bless you) for the year ahead!

Samantha,

Chair, Hands of Mercy International

Children receiving gifts at a Hands of Mercy Christmas Party

Some of the children sponsored through the Child Sponsorship Programme

Home Groups

St Thomas' Home Group which comprises a small friendly bunch of people who meet weekly in a home blend bible studies, prayer and fellowship. A great trust has developed over the years and helps to encourage growth in spirituality and dependence on prayer and mutual understanding and support.

New members are always welcome and don't have to make a long term commitment. We suggest giving us a try for a term and then make a decision. There will never be any judgement.

We do hope you'll give it a go.

Ian Marshall

Messenger Magazine

Gail and I produce the Messenger magazine on a monthly basis. We take it in turns each month. We deliver approximately 60 copies around the Parish to our housebound or less able church members. There are usually a number placed in church too. Please feel free to pick up a copy, if you wish. We have to get them printed externally at a cost, so although we do not have a price tag on the magazine, we appreciate any donations towards this expense. We do get favourable comments about the magazine and we hope you enjoy reading it. We would be delighted if anyone would like to contribute, with an article of any sort. We can also print advertisements, at a small cost. Please let us know what you think of the magazine and of anyways we could improve it. Thanks you.

Linda Clitheroe and Gail Sexton

Parish Nurse

I have served since 2019 and over this last year I was given long service award ,I have established more groups, meeting the needs of st Thomas Church and wider community working also with SBC where i run a health hub once a month on a Thursday
Im now in partnership with Equality care and their local prescriber
My groups running are Well being coffee morning
Alzheimers support
Twin group
Cancer support
Twin group
Friendship cafe
Also my clinic on a Wednesday
All are running successfully

Debbie Newbound Parish nurse

Pastoral Care Report

Director of Pastoral Care Report – ACGM 2026

Introduction

Over the past year, I have had the privilege of serving both our church family and the wider community as Director of Pastoral Care at St Thomas Church. It has been a year marked by connection, compassion, and the quiet but profound work of walking alongside others in times of need.

Summary of the Year

I am deeply grateful for the generosity, kindness, and prayerful support I have received throughout this ministry. Pastoral care is never a solitary task—it is something we share together as the body of Christ.

I would like to express my sincere thanks to Rev David Alexander, Rev Anne Abok, Debbie Newbound, Natasha Cole, Guy Clark, Neil Rolls, the PCC, and every member of our church family for your encouragement, trust, and practical support.

Working closely with the Vicar and the Parish Nurse, we have been able to respond to the needs within our church community while also extending care to families, friends, neighbours, and those in the wider community. It has been encouraging to see how this ministry continues to grow both within and beyond our church walls.

I would also like to gently remind everyone that confidentiality remains central to pastoral care. In line with GDPR and safeguarding responsibilities, personal details cannot be shared. Any necessary information is only communicated with the Vicar or relevant professionals directly involved in providing appropriate care and support.

Looking Forward

As I look ahead to the coming year, I am grateful for the opportunity to continue serving in this role. The ministry of presence remains at the heart of pastoral care through home communion, home visiting, hospital and hospice visiting, and community chaplaincy.

At the heart of pastoral care is what is often called the *ministry of presence*. This is the simple yet profound calling to be with people—to accompany them in their joys, their uncertainties, their suffering, and their everyday lives.

It is not primarily about having the right words or answers. Rather, it is about offering attentive presence: listening without judgement, sitting in silence when needed, and bearing witness to another person's story with compassion and care. In a world that often feels hurried and distracted, this kind of presence becomes a powerful expression of God's love.

The ministry of presence takes many forms within our church and community. It is seen in home communion, where we bring not only the sacrament but also fellowship and connection to those who are unable to attend church. It is found in home visits, where a listening ear and a shared moment can ease loneliness or anxiety. It continues in hospital and hospice visiting, where simply being alongside someone—sometimes in silence—can offer comfort and reassurance in times of vulnerability.

It also extends into our wider community through chaplaincy, where we meet people where they are, often beyond the familiar spaces of church life. Here, presence becomes a quiet but steady witness to God's compassion, offered without expectation and received in trust.

At its core, this ministry reflects the way of Christ, who walked alongside people, met them in their need, and revealed God's love through presence as much as through words. As we continue to grow in this calling, we do so together—supporting one another as a church family, and seeking to be a compassionate and faithful presence in the lives of others.

I look forward to continuing to work alongside Rev David Alexander, Rev Anne Abok, Debbie Newbound, Steve Dolby, Natasha Cole, and others, as together we seek to support and care for those entrusted to us.

Conclusion

It is a privilege to share in this ministry with you all. I look forward with hope to all that we will continue to share together in the year ahead, trusting in God's guidance as we serve one another and our community with compassion and grace.

David Newbound
Director or Pastoral Care

Safeguarding Report

Safeguarding in church covers several areas. Firstly DBS clearance required for all who work with our children's groups, PCC, Pastoral worker and Parish Nurse. DBS checks have to be completed every three years, so we need to make sure these are kept up to date. Secondly, we all have training requirements, so the safeguarding team oversee all of this too. Thirdly, we try to make sure the whole church is aware of Church of England Safeguarding codes of practice, and that the correct signage is displayed. We also revisit all of the Policies annually for the PCC to approve. We have regular meetings to discuss the above matters and matters arising, and safeguarding awareness is a regular item on our PCC agenda.

Lastly, and perhaps most importantly we are available to everyone, should they have a safeguarding or potential safeguarding concern. To keep us all safe, we ask that any concerns, no matter how trivial they may seem, are reported to one of us. We will deal with any concerns confidentially and meeting the correct procedure as required by St Albans Diocese and the Church of England.

Linda Clitheroe, Parish Safeguarding Officer

Revd David Alexander, Vicar

Stewardship Report

The year 2025 has been a difficult year, which has affected all of us in various ways. Consequently, I wish to thank everyone who has faithfully been committed to supporting our Church during the financial year (2025).

As at 31st. December, 2025 the membership of the Scheme was 64. (couples count as one). A net increase of 5 from the previous year. An encouraging sign.

As you can appreciate, with increased running costs year on year, regular stewardship giving and donations are very important. This is because St. Thomas's costs exceed its income for the 7th. year in succession. Legacy monies, which should be put aside to maintain the fabric of the Church and for emergencies, are being used to make up the deficit. The deficits for the previous THREE years have been over £30,000 each year. Eventually, this source will run out.

However, stewardship is not only about money, it is also about giving time and practical help to St. Thomas's Church. There is always a need for Sunday Club helpers, refreshment volunteers, and also cleaners, litter pickers and people to carry out odd jobs, etc. The list is endless. If you are in a position to help, please talk to the Administrator in the Parish Office.

Lastly, I would ask that you take this opportunity to pray and reflect on your giving. If you would like to join the Stewardship Scheme and make regular donations please ask me, the Treasurer or the Parish Administrator for details. Finally, I would ask all of you to consider making a legacy in your will for St. Thomas's Church.

Remember: THE LORD LOVES A CHEERFUL GIVER.

Leslie Sims

Stewardship Secretary

Sunday Club Review

St Thomas's Sunday Club continues to meet every Sunday. The first Sunday of each month we meet and worship together in church as part of the all-age service, every other Sunday we meet in the hall. While in the hall the children get the opportunity talk, worship and grow in a child friendly safe space exploring their own faith and sharing with other members of the church's youth whilst completing activities and crafts to enhance their learning.

We have a solid core of 15 – 20 children and regular attendance of 6-8 children each week. The children have taken part in 3 community events this year where they have given their time to the church, Sunday Club and the wider community during the nativity, the tree festival and the Easter breakfast.

Both the tree festival and the Easter breakfast events have helped to raise some funds to enable us to keep supporting the children, all other funding for Sunday club activities is donated directly by the leadership team.

In addition to the 2 fundraising, community giving events the Sunday club leaders have organised the parish BBQ and the Epiphany party.

The parish BBQ was a great success and was well attended by not only the children but the church family as a whole, great food, fun, games, a scavenger hunt and a wonderful opportunity for the church family to come together.

The Epiphany party was another great success where the children and their parents were encouraged to bring a friend and join us for a fun afternoon. Held in January, a chance to relax and enjoy time together after the busy Christmas period.

I would like to finish this year's report with some thanks.

Thanks to the whole church for your support, the smiles and encouragement you show each week when the children choose to share with you all what we have been doing. Thanks for the kindness you show, making sure that the children know church is a safe space where they can feel comfortable and that they are truly part of the whole church family.

Thanks to our helpers, Barbara, Linda C, Lorraine, Linda W, Amanda, Ian and a special welcome to our newest helper Alice, you are all amazing and make it all possible. As always if anyone would like to join our team of helpers we are always in need of more support.

Thanks to the children, who every week get out of bed, leave the phones and tablets at home to join us, participate, share their thoughts, experiences, you are all the real stars without you there would not be a Sunday club at all.

The Sunday Club Leaders Sara, Ruth & Karen

Treasurer's Annual Report

Financial Review

Incoming and outgoing resources

Total receipts were £105,369 and are detailed in the Financial Report.

The planned giving, including the Gift Day, through envelopes and banker's orders increased by £41. It was good to see the use of Gift Aid through the Parish Giving Scheme which avoids bank charges on cash/envelope donations. Our total voluntary income including tax recovered, but excluding legacies, increased by 6%.

The PCC was grateful to receive a legacy of £17,166 from the estate of David White and £2,500 from the Estate of Hazel Alcock.

Sharing the ministry costs of the Diocese of St Albans

The largest expenditure of the PCC was the sum of £63,635 paid to the diocese for our share of all churches' Parish Ministry Costs. This year the contribution from St Thomas's increased by 0.2% on the previous year and the church is meeting 100% of these costs.

The total relates directly to the housing, support, stipend and pension costs of the clergy of this parish, training of new ordinands, a contribution to national church funds and, shared costs of the Christian family throughout the whole diocese, including assistance towards the upkeep of churches less able to manage than ourselves.

Staff costs

The PCC pays for the Administrator who deals with the running of the Church Office and Director of Pastoral Care.

Trustee payments and expenses

The PCC also supported the clergy by paying annual costs towards travel, hospitality, telephone, postage and broadband amounting to £5,213.

One other trustee received £477 for telephone, insurance and travelling bills.

The Director of Pastoral Care received payments of £503 for telephone and travelling bills and is related to or connected to, the trustees.

Office costs

The PCC also approved the purchase of a replacement projector, costing £638 and a replacement printer costing £246

Money in reserve

It is PCC policy to invest temporarily surplus general funds with Barclays Bank, returning proportionately these funds to our current account, as they are needed, to pay day-to-day bills. This year £84,947 was invested temporarily on 31st December.

Future uncertainties

The deficit for the year is a concern, but we hope to increase regular giving via a Stewardship campaign to ensure we are in a strong position to meet regular commitments. It

is important to ensure that as the day-to-day costs rise, the growth in income is sustained through renewed giving pledges, to strengthen our underlying financial position. This will enable further improvements to be made to the fabric of our Church.

Gift Days regularly take place to emphasis God's generosity to the congregation and encourage the congregation to respond to that generosity in their giving through time, talents and money, as they are able.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to express thanks to the people who help with the handling of the Church Cash and Accounting; Deborah Bachini who helps count and record the Collections at each Service; Les Sims who deals with the envelope giving and gift aid return; and Godfrey Laws who has operated the Church PAYE scheme and who performed the Independent Examination of our 2025 Accounts.

Neil Rolls
(Hon. Treasurer St Thomas' PCC) 31 May 2026

Comments and Questions for the AGM or PCC or Vicar.

Any Comment:

Any Question:

Diocese of St Albans

Parish of St Thomas Stopsley

Seeking to share God's love

Minutes of the Annual Church Meeting held on Sunday 18th May 2025

At 11.30am in the Church

Present:

David Alexander (Vicar and Chairman)

Neil Rolls (Treasurer)

And 38 other parishioners.

2024.1 Welcome and Prayers

The Vicar opened the meeting by welcoming all and explaining the need to use microphones if anyone wished to speak – there was a handheld microphone that could be passed around. He then opened the meeting with a couple of verses from Romans 1, followed by prayer.

2024.2 Election of Secretary for the Meeting

Rosemary Stipta was proposed as secretary and elected unanimously.

2024.3 Apologies

Apologies were received from Jane Alexander, Lorraine Parsons Pinnock and Kerri Green.

2024.4 Minutes of the previous Annual General Meeting on Sunday 12th May 2024

were duly agreed.

2024.5 Matters Arising from the Minutes

There were no matters arising from the minutes.

MEETING OF THE PARISHIONERS OF STOPSLEY

2024.6 Election of Churchwardens

Natasha Cole was nominated by Steve Dolby and seconded by Deborah Bachini. No other nominations so Natasha was duly elected. David also took this opportunity to thank Deborah Bachini who is retiring from her post as Church Administrator and will be very much missed. Her replacement is Guy Clark. Deborah was presented with a bouquet and gift vouchers. Deborah thanked everyone. Also David thanked Maggie Green for all she does in the kitchen for us and Debbie Newbound echoed the thanks as Maggie was presented with flowers. Natasha also presented David with flowers for Jane with our grateful thanks.

ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING

2024.7 Vicar's Report !

The Vicar opened by asking people to turn to their neighbour (in twos or threes) and talk of what you think are important ways we should think about in our life at St Thomas's and how we can improve. He thanked lots of people including Jane, Steve Dolby, David Newbound, Natasha. David said we do need to be thinking over the current year about our finances and how we can improve that situation. He also thanked Linda Clitheroe as our Safeguarding Officer and urged everyone to be very aware of safeguarding issues. He said we were looking forward to welcoming Anne Abok as our Curate soon. Finally David mentioned a typo in the report and said the electoral roll figure should actually be 111, not as printed.

2024.8 PCC Report

The PCC report has been circulated and those present were encouraged to read it at their leisure.

2024.9 Finance Matters

David handed over to Neil Rolls who presented the financial report along with some illustrative slides. David then thanked Neil for all his hard work. Amanda mentioned EasyFundraising and was thanked for this. Acceptance of the accounts was proposed and

agreed unanimously. Godfrey Laws proposed as independent auditor - all agreed. Les Sims was thanked for all his stewardship help.

2024.10 Annual Reports

These were circulated before the meeting., all encouraged to read through

2024.11 Elections for PCC and Deanery Synod

Steve Dolby and Christine Younger are members of Deanery Synod, still one vacancy if anyone would like to volunteer.

People finishing their time on PCC this year are Rosemary Stipta, Mary Godfrey and Ian Marshall. David reminded that one of the rulings is that when someone gets to the end of their period, they should take a break for one year.

PCC elections for this year:

2 years – Mary Godfrey, proposed by Steve Dolby, seconded by Christine Younger

3 years – Julie Bailey, proposed by Deborah Bachini, seconded by John Kingham

3 years – Bev Rolls, proposed by Doris Collum, seconded by Les Sims

3 years – Amanda Heffernan, proposed by Barbara Edlin, seconded by Michael Knight

2 years – Clive Wheeler, proposed by Rosemary Stipta, seconded by David Stipta

1 year – Richard Garwood, proposed by Deborah Bachini, seconded by Karen Ritchie

1 year – Ian Marshall proposed by Steve Dolby, seconded by Amanda Heffernan

All of these are elected unopposed. The next PCC is on 9th June and all the above are invited to attend.

2024.12 Any Other Business

John K – thanks to David Alexander, Neil Rolls and Les Sims for all their hard work.

2024.13 Date of Next PCC Meeting

Monday 9th June.

David Alexander thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting in prayer.

AGENDA

Stopsley Parish Church ACM 2026
31 May 2026, After 10:30am Service in the Church

1) Welcome and Prayer

2) Election of Secretary for the Meeting

3) Apologies

4) Minutes of the previous Annual Church Meeting

MEETING OF PARISHIONERS OF STOPSLEY

Open to members of the Church family and residents of the parish (only Church electoral roll members and parish residents on local government electoral roll may vote).

5) Election of Churchwardens

Election of 2 Churchwardens

ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING open to members of the Church family (only Church electoral roll members may vote)

6) Vicar's Report

7) PCC Report

8) Finance, including

a) Election of: Independent Examiner for the accounts.

b) Financial Report & Independently Examined Accounts for previous year.

c) Stewardship Report – report in Annual Report, posted on Public Folder

9) Safeguarding

10) Annual Reports

11) Election of Parochial Church Councillors and Deanery Synod Representatives

a) Deanery Synod Elected Representatives

b) Parochial Church Councillors

(N.B Election of Sidesmen/women or Welcomers is now the responsibility of the PCC)

12) Any Other Business

13) Date of next PCC meeting

14) Closing Prayer

Independent Examiner's Report to the PCC of St Thomas' Church, Stopsley, Luton

This report on the accounts of the PCC for the year ended 31 December 2025, which are set out on pages 2 to 7 is in respect of an examination carried out under Regulation 3(3) of the Church Accounting Regulations 2006 and under section 145 of the Charities Act 2011(the 2011Act).

Respective responsibilities of trustees end examiner

As the members of the PCC you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts, you consider that the audit requirement of Regulation 3(3) of the Church Accounting Regulations 2006 and under section 144(2) of the Charities Act 2011 (the 2011 Act) do not apply and that an independent examination is needed. It is my responsibility to issue this report on those accounts in accordance with the terms of Regulation 25 of the Church Accounting Regulations 2006 and Regulation 7 of the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 1995.

Basis of Independent examiners report

My examination was carried out in accordance with the general Directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from 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 no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair view' and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

Independent examiner's statement

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

1. Which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements

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

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

Signed: H. Ashmore

Date: 12th May 2026

Howard Ashmore FCA
Godfrey Laws & Co Ltd
Chartered Accountants & Registered Auditors
65Knowl Piece
Wilbury Way
HITCHIN
Hertfordshire
SG4 0TY

St Thomas' P.C.C. Stopsley, Luton
Statement of Financial Activities
For the year ended 31st December 2025

Incoming Resources (all unrestricted)	**Note**	2025	As restated 2024
		£	£
Incoming resources from donors	2(a)	81,669	59,408
Other voluntary incoming resources	2(b)	19,060	14,072
Income from charitable & ancillary trading	2(c)	353	277
Interest income		1,105	843
Other ordinary incoming resources	2(d)	3,182	7,014
Total Non-Designated Incoming resources		105,369	81,614
Resources Used			
Grants	3(a)	624	550
Activities directly relating to the work of the Church	3(b)	109,599	115,478
Publicity, Church management & admin.	3(c)	1,531	936
		111,754	116,964
Net Annual Surplus / (Deficit)		(6,385)	(35,350)

St Thomas' P.C.C. Stopsley, Luton
Balance Sheet as at 31st December 2025

	Note	2025 £	As restated 2024 £
Fixed Assets	5	1,174	1,024
Current Assets			
Debtors	6	9,458	7,077
Cash at Bank and In Hand	7	94,245	105,696
		103,703	112,773
Liabilities: Amounts due within one year	8	5,584	8,096
Net current assets		98,119	104,677
Total assets less current liabilities		99,293	105,701
Funds			
General Account	9	0	0
Legacy Funds	10	90,179	103,356
Parish Nurse	9	6,791	301
Sunday Club	9	549	270
Choir	9	699	699
Youth Project	9	1,075	1,075
		99,293	105,701

TREASURER'S STATEMENT

I have prepared the financial statements on pages 2 to 7 for the year ended 31 December 2025

Signed : N Rolls

Treasurer : Neil Rolls Date: 11 May 2026

APPROVED by the Church Meeting held on 11 May 2026 and signed on its behalf by:

Signed : D C A

Reverend David Alexander (Chairman) Date: 11 May 2026

St Thomas' P.C.C. Stopsley, Luton
Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year ended 31 December 2025

1. Accounting Policies

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the Church Accounting Regulations 2006 together with applicable accounting standards and the Charities SORP.

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention except for the valuation of investment assets, which are shown at market value.

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. Funds designated for a particular purpose by the PCC are also unrestricted.

The accounts include all transactions, assets and liabilities for which the PCC is responsible in law. They do not include the accounts of church groups that owe their main affiliation to another body nor those that are informal gatherings of Church members.

Incoming Resources
Voluntary income and capital sources
Collections are recognised when received by or on behalf of the PCC.

Planned giving receivable under covenant is recognised only when received.

Income tax recoverable on covenants or 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 and the amount due,

Income from investments
Interest is accounted for when received.
Resources Used
Activities directly relating to the work of the Church

Fixed Assets
Consecrated land and buildings and movable church furnishings

Consecrated and beneficed property is excluded from the accounts by s.96 (2)(a) of the Charities Act 1993.

No value is placed on movable church furnishings held by the churchwardens on special trust for the PCC and which require a faculty for disposal since the PCC considers this to be inalienable property.

St Thomas' P.C.C. Stopsley, Luton

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year ended 31st December 2025

Equipment

Office Equipment and sound equipment is depreciated on the straight line basis at a rate of 33.3% per annum.

Individual items of Equipment with a purchase price of £250 or less are written off when the asset is acquired.

Current Assets

Amounts owing to the PCC at 31 December are shown as debtors less provision for amounts that may prove uncollectible.

2. Incoming resources (all unrestricted)	**Note**	2025	As restated 2024
		£	£
2(a) Incoming from donors			
Planned Giving		40,072	41,249
Gift Day		3,023	1,805
Income Tax recoverable		11,676	9,793
Collections (open plate) at all Services		4,233	3,781
Collections (credit card) at all Services		2,998	1,643
Legacies		19,666	1,137
		81,669	59,408
2(b) Other voluntary incoming resources			
Coffee mornings, Lunches & Teas		1,925	1,019
Hire of and Donations for use of hall		3,417	4,002
Social Events		1,692	1,282
Miscellaneous Donations & Receipts		1,922	3,934
Parish Nursing Donations & Receipts		10,104	3,835
		19,060	14,072
2(c) Income from charitable and ancillary trading			
Magazine Subscriptions		353	277
Magazine Adverts		0	0
		353	277
2(d) Other ordinary income resources			
Wedding and funeral fees & receipts		3,182	7,014

St Thomas' P.C.C. Stopsley, Luton

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year ended 31st December 2025

	2025	As restated 2024
3 Resources Used	£	£
3(a) Grants to Charities		
World Relief	508	0
World Mission	0	0
UK Social Concern/Relief	116	550
UK Church Mission	0	0
	624	550
3(b) Activities directly relating to the work of the Church		
Ministry: Parish Share	63,635	63,525
Clergy Expenses	5,213	4,453
Pastoral Worker	6,318	5,877
Pastoral Discretionary Expenditure	503	173
Church Office Wages	10,160	9,738
Church: Running Expenses	12,697	12,163
Routine Maintenance	2,307	5,698
Major Repairs	0	3,304
Service Costs	2,180	2,315
Parish Nursing Costs	3,312	3,533
Depreciation	735	984
Telephone Charges	2,154	2,294
Miscellaneous	385	1,421
	109,599	115,478
3(c) Publicity, Church Management & Administration		
Stationery & printing (incl. magazine)	1,176	881
Independent Examiner's fee	300	0
Miscellaneous	55	55
	1,531	936

4. Prior Year Adjustment

The comparative figures for 2024 have been restated to reflect a prior year adjustment. This adjustment consists of two components:

Reclassification: A balance of **£1,150**, previously included within Other Creditors, has been reclassified as Funds Held to more accurately reflect the nature of the balance.

Correction of Omission: An unrecorded liability of **£120** relating to 2024 printing costs has been recognised.

The cumulative effect of these adjustments is a decrease in Other Creditors of **£1,150**, an increase in Funds Held of **£1,270**, and a increase in the 2024 reported deficit of **£120**.

St Thomas' P.C.C. Stopsley, Luton

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year ended 31st December 2025

5. Fixed Assets

Cost/Valuation	Sound Equipment	Office Equipment	Total
At 1 January 2025	10,233	8,886	19,119
Additions during year	638	246	884
At 31 December 2025	10,871	9,132	20,004
Depreciation			
At 1 January 2025	10,233	7,862	18,095
Charge for year	35	700	735
At 31 December 2025	10,268	8,561	18,830
Net Book Value			
At 31 December 2025	603	571	1,174
At 31 December 2024	0	1,024	1,024

6. Debtors

	2025 £	As restated 2024 £
Income Tax recoverable	6,839	4,586
Other Debtors	2,619	2,491
	9,458	7,077

7. Cash at Bank and In Hand

Cash on deposit	84,947	80,843
Cash at Bank	9,247	24,837
Cash in Hand	51	16
	94,245	105,696

8. Liabilities: Amounts due within one year

Donations	0	0
Other Creditors & Accruals	5,584	8,096
	5,584	8,096

9. Funds

	As restated At 1 January 2025	Surplus / (Deficit) for the year	At 31 December 2025
General Account	0	0	0
Legacy Funds (Unresticted)	103,356	(13,177)	90,179
Parish Nurse	301	6,490	6,791
Sunday Club	270	279	549
Choir	699	0	699
Youth Project	1,075	0	1,075
Total	105,701	(6,408)	99,293

10. Legacy Funds

	2025 £	2024 £
Jim Gabriel legacy	66,126	98,969
Barbara Peters legacy	3,000	3,000
William Biggs legacy	250	250
Josie Cumberland legacy	1,137	1,137
Hazel Alcock legacy	2,500	0
David White legacy	17,166	0
	90,179	103,356

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For the year ended 31st December 2025

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St Thomas' P.C.C. Stopsley, Luton
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St Thomas' P.C.C. Stopsley, Luton

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Social Events		1,692	1,282
Miscellaneous Donations & Receipts		1,922	3,934
Parish Nursing Donations & Receipts		10,104	3,835
		19,060	14,072
2(c) Income from charitable and ancillary trading			
Magazine Subscriptions		353	277
Magazine Adverts		0	0
		353	277
2(d) Other ordinary income resources			
Wedding and funeral fees & receipts		3,182	7,014

St Thomas' P.C.C. Stopsley, Luton

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year ended 31st December 2025

	2025	As restated 2024
3 Resources Used	£	£
3(a) Grants to Charities		
World Relief	508	0
World Mission	0	0
UK Social Concern/Relief	116	550
UK Church Mission	0	0
	624	550
3(b) Activities directly relating to the work of the Church		
Ministry: Parish Share	63,635	63,525
Clergy Expenses	5,213	4,453
Pastoral Worker	6,318	5,877
Pastoral Discretionary Expenditure	503	173
Church Office Wages	10,160	9,738
Church: Running Expenses	12,697	12,163
Routine Maintenance	2,307	5,698
Major Repairs	0	3,304
Service Costs	2,180	2,315
Parish Nursing Costs	3,312	3,533
Depreciation	735	984
Telephone Charges	2,154	2,294
Miscellaneous	385	1,421
	109,599	115,478
3(c) Publicity, Church Management & Administration		
Stationery & printing (incl. magazine)	1,176	881
Independent Examiner's fee	300	0
Miscellaneous	55	55
	1,531	936

4. Prior Year Adjustment

The comparative figures for 2024 have been restated to reflect a prior year adjustment. This adjustment consists of two components:

Reclassification: A balance of **£1,150**, previously included within Other Creditors, has been reclassified as Funds Held to more accurately reflect the nature of the balance.

Correction of Omission: An unrecorded liability of **£120** relating to 2024 printing costs has been recognised.

The cumulative effect of these adjustments is a decrease in Other Creditors of **£1,150**, an increase in Funds Held of **£1,270**, and a increase in the 2024 reported deficit of **£120**.

St Thomas' P.C.C. Stopsley, Luton

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year ended 31st December 2025

5. Fixed Assets

Cost/Valuation	Sound Equipment	Office Equipment	Total
At 1 January 2025	10,233	8,886	19,119
Additions during year	638	246	884
At 31 December 2025	10,871	9,132	20,004
Depreciation			
At 1 January 2025	10,233	7,862	18,095
Charge for year	35	700	735
At 31 December 2025	10,268	8,561	18,830
Net Book Value			
At 31 December 2025	603	571	1,174
At 31 December 2024	0	1,024	1,024

6. Debtors

	2025 £	As restated 2024 £
Income Tax recoverable	6,839	4,586
Other Debtors	2,619	2,491
	9,458	7,077

7. Cash at Bank and In Hand

Cash on deposit	84,947	80,843
Cash at Bank	9,247	24,837
Cash in Hand	51	16
	94,245	105,696

8. Liabilities: Amounts due within one year

Donations	0	0
Other Creditors & Accruals	5,584	8,096
	5,584	8,096

9. Funds

	As restated At 1 January 2025	Surplus / (Deficit) for the year	At 31 December 2025
General Account	0	0	0
Legacy Funds (Unresticted)	103,356	(13,177)	90,179
Parish Nurse	301	6,490	6,791
Sunday Club	270	279	549
Choir	699	0	699
Youth Project	1,075	0	1,075
Total	105,701	(6,408)	99,293

10. Legacy Funds

	2025 £	2024 £
Jim Gabriel legacy	66,126	98,969
Barbara Peters legacy	3,000	3,000
William Biggs legacy	250	250
Josie Cumberland legacy	1,137	1,137
Hazel Alcock legacy	2,500	0
David White legacy	17,166	0
	90,179	103,356

THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF ST THOMAS' STOPSLEY

England & Wales - Charity number 1175152

Accounts

St Thomas's, Stopsley
Seeking to Share God's Love

Annual Reports
For Annual Church Meeting
2025

Welcome!

Welcome to our Reports for the Annual Church Meeting 2025. It is wonderful to have you as part of our Church Family, and thank you for reading through these reports and (hopefully) attending our APCM this year. If you have any queries or comments please raise them at the meeting, or mention them privately if you prefer to me or one of the Wardens of Church Council (PCC) members. There is also a slip at the end of this document.

As we meet together it is important to honour one another in the life of our church family and especially all those who do so much to care for members and to reach out to our community, and beyond, with the food news of Jesus. We are truly called to seek to share God's love with everyone!

Let us be praying … that together we might be the Church God wants us to be, and the Church that Stopsley needs.

Welcome, indeed.

David Alexander (Vicar)

St Thomas's, Stopsley

Parish Profile & Mission Action Plan

Mission Statement: ***Seeking to Share God's Love.***

- We seek to be a ***Mission-orientated*** evangelistic church, intent on sharing God's love with all in our local community, and beyond.
- We aim to reach out in ***love*** to all we can, witnessing for Christ through word and action.
- We wish to be a ***welcoming community*** in all we do.
- We offer a wide range of worship styles, including ***established*** services and ***Fresh Expressions*** for those presently unchurched and newcomers.
- We are aware of our need to be prayerful, seeking the power of the ***Holy Spirit*****.**
- We value being taught from the ***Scriptures***, desiring that they are expounded in a relevant and inspirational way.
- We endeavour to be a ***pastoral*** church, caring for the Church family and any others we can.
- We are a ***servant*** church seeking to serve people in our community and town, and further afield, in practical and caring ways in the name of Jesus.
- We prize our history and are ***forward-looking*** in faith to what God will do through us in the future.
- We are a ***friendly*** church, valuing fellowship, eating together, homegroups and hospitality.

SOME PARISH DETAILS

Population : 10,000 approx. (This figure gives some idea of the 'pastoral area' for our church, rather than exact count of the population).

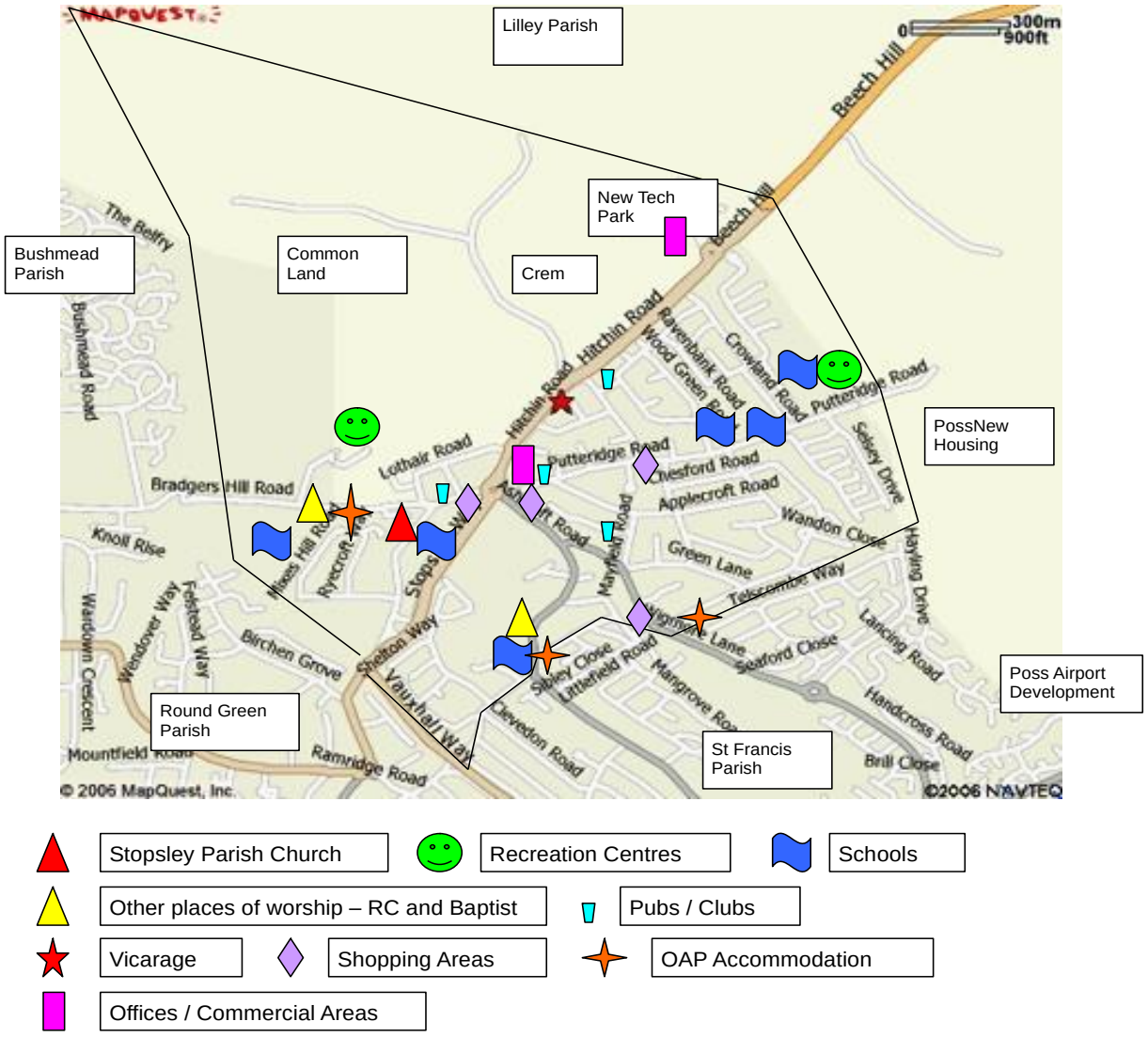
Location : North East area of Luton, at the boundary with Herts. The parish includes the wards of Stopsley and Putteridge. The busy A505 from Luton to Hitchin runs through the parish and separates the church geographically from much of the rest of the parish.

Type[s] of housing : Mainly owner occupied, with some rented accommodation, and pockets of housing association or council property.

Community facilities : Two high schools, two primary schools, one special needs school, and a large sports complex with Olympic swimming and diving facilities.

History of the community : In 1862, when the church was built, Stopsley was a village. Over the years since then Luton has gradually swallowed it up and it is now a suburb of the town. Some of the major employers of people in the community over the past 100 years have closed or declined in size, but employment remains fairly high. The airport and the car industry are major employers.

Parish boundaries: No longer quite the same natural cohesive community that it once was but boundaries mainly make sense except confusing boundary on Ramridge Estate with St. Francis.



PARTNERSHIP IN WORSHIP, MISSION & MINISTRY

We are active participants in the Luton Deanery in working together in mission to our town of Luton.

In the early 1990's we planted Christchurch, Bushmead, a thriving church largely within what was the much larger former parish of Stopsley.

Other Christian Churches : we have a good friendly relationship with Stopsley Baptist Church and Ramridge Baptist Church with whom we have co-operated on various events and projects. SBC has a much bigger congregation, and with its better facilities and style of worship it attracts younger people and people from a wider area. We have different styles of worship but complement one another in our evangelistic task. We have friendly relations with Sacred Heart (RC). Ministers are involved in local and town wide fraternals, and we also participate in a local evangelical hub for prayer and mission, and a similar but larger grouping for the whole town.

Annual Parish Report on 2024 (Prepared for AGM 2025)
by Stopsley (St Thomas) Parish Church Council (PCC)
Charity Number: 1175152

Background – What is the PCC?

Stopsley Parish Church P.C.C. has the responsibility of co-operating with the incumbent, the Reverend David Alexander, in promoting in the ecclesiastical parish of Stopsley the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical. Our Parish Mission Statement is as follows: **Seeking to share God's love with everyone.**

Membership – Who is on the PCC?

Members of the P.C.C are either ex officio or elected by the Annual Church Meeting (properly known as the Annual Parochial Church Meeting) in accordance with the Church Representation Rules.

During 2024 (after the 2024 AGM) the following served as members of the P. C. C:

Ex-officio Members

1. David Alexander (Vicar, Chairman)
2. Churchwarden – Natasha Cole
3. Churchwarden – vacant

Elected Lay Representatives (We are entitled to 12 elected representatives)

(The rules state: 6 reps if up to 50 on the Electoral roll
9 reps if up to 100 on the Electoral roll
12 reps if up to 200 on the Electoral roll
15 reps if over 200 on the Electoral roll)

	Elected	Year Elected	Term of Office	Term Ends
1	Rosemary Stipta	2022	3yr	2025
2	Mary Godfrey	2024	1yr	2025
3	Ian Marshall	2024	1yr	2025
4	Vacant	-	-	2025
5	Linda Clitheroe	2023	3yr	2026
6	John Kingham	2024	2yr	2026
7	Vacant	-	-	2026
8	Vacant	-	-	2026
9	Deborah Bachini	2024	3yr	2027
10	Kerri Green	2024	3yr	2027
11	Debbie Newbound	2024	3yr	2027
12	Neil Rolls	2024	3yr	2027

Elected Representatives on Deanery Synod** (automatically also serve on the PCC)

1	Christine Younger	2023	3yr	2026
2	Steve Dolby	2023	3yr	2026
3	Vacant	-	-	2026

*** We have between 100-199 names on our electoral roll and so are entitled to 3 Elected Deanery Synod Representatives.*
NB Clergy of the church also serve on the Deanery Synod

Co-opted PCC Member(s)
Nil

Office came to end at APCM 2024
PCC Members:
John Alexander*, Deborah Bachini*^, David Newbound*, Neil Rolls*^
*(Names marked * were office holders and so eligible for re-election.*
^Stood again and re-elected)
Deanery Synod Members : Christine Younger^, Steve Dolby^

Elections at 2025 AGM
We are very appreciative of the significant contributions of the PCC members coming to the end of their period of office. Under the present rules in place for our PCC, elected members who have served for 3 years, apart from 'office holders'*, are not eligible for re-election until 12 months after the end of their term of office.
Served for 3 years:
Rosemary Stipta
Served for 2 years, and coming to end of period of office. Eligible to stand for 1 year:
0
Served for 1 year, and coming to end of period of office. Eligible to stand for 2 years:
Mary Godfrey, Ian Marshall.
*(Any names marked * are eligible for re-election as they are office holders)*

There will be elections for the following positions:

4 PCC member(s)	to serve for 3 years to 2028
0 PCC member(s)	to serve for 2 years to 2027
2 PCC member(s)	to serve for 1 year to 2026
1 Deanery Synod member(s)	to serve to 2026

Committees - Standing Committee
The Standing Committee is the only committee required by law, and is our only official committee. It has power to transact the business of the P.C.C between its meetings, subject to any directions given by the council. In the past we also have had a number of 'Action Church Teams' (ACTs) that organise activities, or discuss matters, as directed by the P.C.C. and Vicar.

PCC Electoral Roll Report
There are 131 parishioners now on the Church Electoral Roll. This represents no change from the previous year's ACM Electoral Roll. There have been new members, and others have left the roll - changes due to new church attendees, parishioners moving, changing church, death or people who live outside the parish and no longer regularly attend St Thomas's.

PCC Review of the Year

This past year has been yet another year of recovery since the covid pandemic, which hit all churches badly, along with other institutions and charities. We recognise that we need to plan ahead, and have reviewed our Mission Action Plan during 2024.

We want to stress the importance of all being welcomed into a safe place, and the crucial role of safeguarding. We have worked hard to complete all the training provided by the diocese and national authorities, and all proper procedures and governance. We place a very high priority on excellence in this area and are working hard to constantly improve this aspect of our church's life. If anyone has any safeguarding concerns they should speak urgently to our Safeguarding Officer Linda Clitheroe, or the Vicar David Alexander, and we are delighted to welcome Julie Bailey to this team.

It has been a joy to receive the ministry of Steve Dolby, our Lay Reader. We are very grateful for him and all his hard work in the services at Church, and also in the Deanery.

We are thankful for the wonderful pastoral support offered by David Newbound as Pastoral Worker and Debbie Newbound as Parish Nurse. This work has expanded in various ways, including the Well Being Coffee Mornings and the Open Church meetings.

We are also very grateful for Deborah Bachini, our Administrator. Deborah has made the difficult decision to retire from her role, and we wish her and Steve well. We are glad she will still be around and be available to support our work. We are delighted to have appointed Guy Clark as the new Administrator and to welcome him.

We are delighted that Anne Abok will join us as Curate in June 2025. Anne was a member of our Church when she was selected for ordination by the Church of England. We were informed that it is 'never' possible for ordinands to return to their sending church, despite this being desired by both parties. However, Anne has proved to be the exception, in response to many prayers! We look forward to her 3 years of training amongst us.

We have continued to livestream our Daily Prayers, now from the church building, as well as to those who can join us via Facebook. We invite people to join us in the building if they can. As well as many church members, we have been joined by others, both locally and around the country and elsewhere in the world. We also livestream all our services from the church building. We are grateful to all who make this possible, especially John Pinnock and Rosemary Stipta. We have also worked hard at producing a weekly email to keep people in touch via a mailing list.

A priority continues to be care for, and support of one another, and for those we can in our local community. Thank you for all the ways in which each person has contributed to this.

The Sunday Club continues to blossom and everyone at the 10am Service enjoys the children sharing what they have been learning each week. Thank you to the children and to their leaders for all their creative hard work.

In 2024 we started the Wednesday Evening Gathering when people can join us for a meal, some worship, and to choose one of three streams: Christianity Explored, Bible Explored and Spirituality Explored.

During the year we have, as a church family, enjoyed many wonderful services and activities. We have also made many attempts to reach out to our community, not least in many acts of service and kindness shown by individual members. Another key part of our outreach has been our chaplaincy work in the community, working together with Stopsley Baptist Church in this.

The 'homegroup' and the Christianity Explored groups, and the Wednesday Gathering nurture fellowship and spiritual growth. This is a significant part of our church life and very important for future growth.

We continue to seek to give a warm welcome to visitors to the Church. Much effort and preparation is given to provide services that develop further an atmosphere of welcome. We particularly organised special events to welcome people over Christmas, Easter, Remembrance and throughout the year. We have enjoyed social activities that enhance our welcome to people.

Baptism policy for children offers a choice between a 'Thanksgiving Service' to families who want to have a celebration service in Church but who do not intend coming to Church regularly, and Baptism for those families willing to undertake preparation to make the commitment involved in that service (please see the vicar if you are interested in this). Thanksgivings are generally held after the usual services and Baptisms are held during the main Sunday Service. We also provide an informal detailed preparation for weddings. The weddings themselves appeared to be thoroughly enjoyed by the couples and their guests. Although these have diminished in number over the years, as they have elsewhere, these continue to be an excellent opportunity to provide a good witness for the Church, alongside our funeral ministry.

Thanks are due to John Alexander, our Director of Music, who plays our church organ, and has provided music recordings for when he is unavailable. We are grateful to all who have helped with the maintenance of the Church and Churchyard, especially Ian Clitheroe, and those who clean our Church, and to the flower arrangers. Their hard work enhances our worship.

The witness of individuals in their community, work and leisure environments remain vital for our evangelistic mission. We have also been keen to support the World-wide Church, particularly focussed through our links with 'Hands of Mercy' in the Philippines. Our Church has been open for prayer and visitors during weekday mornings. We served the community in caring for bereaved people at the time of funerals and welcome them to an annual commemoration service, as well as other services.

Communications within the Church are enhanced through the website and 'A Church Near You' advertising of events and our weekly email newssheet, the details of which are also projected onto the Church screen. Communications with the wider parish through our magazine is greatly appreciated by large numbers inside and outside of the Church family. Our thanks to the editorial team for all their hard work in producing our magazine.

We have continued to run our Stewardship Scheme. We are grateful to everyone who responds to stewardship initiatives, and all the Finance Team, our Treasurer, Neil Rolls, and our Stewardship Secretary, Les Sims, and the skilled help of Sarah Vyvyan. Full details of the finances are provided in the relevant reports and the presentation at the AGM.

We wish to thank many, both Church members and others, who have contributed to the ongoing work of the Church in the last year. We are also very appreciative of the sacrificial work of our Churchwarden, Natasha. The PCC wishes to thank all those who contributed to

the services: as sanctuary assistants, servers, sidesmen/women, readers and intercessors, not forgetting all who provided welcome refreshments after the morning service and on other important occasions, and also to those who have helped provide such excellent food at various events and meetings.

We are grateful for God's faithfulness in the past, and the present and look forward to the future with confident hope in God as we share His love together.

David Alexander, Vicar. On behalf of the P.C.C

Warden's Report

It's been a year of riding the roller coaster that is church warden life! The highs - up ladders dusting, cleaning, sorting the loft, drone flying and retrieving random items from the church roof. The lows (in height terms) - on my knees, weeding and tidying the church yard and crawling through small gaps behind the back of the organ. To the thrills of life events; weddings, baptisms, coffee mornings, Sunday club breakfast and for the music which uplifts me every week. To finally the spills - the down pours, the mopping up and carpet cleaning, to the tears we have shed together (both in laughter and sorrow). There's never a dull moment. To all that have supported me and the church this year, THANK YOU!

Administrators report

The Parish Office continues to be busy, overseeing the maintenance of the building and arrangements for weekly services, burial of ashes, baptisms, funerals, weddings, and for clubs and groups. There has been a lot going on following the ingress of water from the roof in October, but that is now all dry, cleaned up and repaired. Also we had the Quinquennial Inspection in November and await the report.

The office is the first point of contact for many who are contacting the church for the first time, for dropping off and picking up and many other reasons. We try to give a warm welcome and to be accessible.

My thanks go to the many volunteers helping to keep the church clean and tidy and running smoothly; a small team of people are giving help with cleaning, IT, flower arranging, silver cleaning, food bank collections, banking, shopping, tea making and many other behind the scenes jobs. It is all much appreciated, and if anyone has an hour or two to assist please do contact me in the office for details. I am also very grateful for the support of David our vicar

Although I still very much enjoy my work here I feel it is time to join my husband who has been retired for several years already. We're looking forward to lots more camping trips this summer. I wish Guy, the new administrator, well as he settles in to the role – it's a very rewarding job.

Deborah Bachini

Deanery Synod Report

Luton deanery Synod met four times during 2024. The “Growing younger and more diverse” bid for resources to boost our mission featured strongly in all our gatherings in 2024. This promises the possibility of strengthening the good work that is already underway across the deanery.

Elections to the Diocesan Synod took place in our summer meeting. Those elected were as follows

From the laity: David Dallinger, Janna Bond, Sandra Millar, Linda Logan

From the clergy: Mike Jones, Josias de Souza, Liz Hughes, Chris Burrows, Anne Crosby, David Kesterton

As David Kesterton became more involved with supporting Stephen Moore (Programme Manager) in the consultation work for the bid, two assistant Area Deans were commissioned to share in the deanery leadership. Revd Josias De Souza and Revd Anne Crosby took on this role in September.

The other deanery officers are

Lay Chair Peter Adams : Vice Lay Chair Steven Dolby: Treasurer David Dallinger: Secretary Vacant

Thanks also go to Winnie Kinnimouth for minute taking and Lesley Dumigan for administrative support. Thanks to Josias for hosting a great deanery BBQ on 20th July. Look out for the date of the next one in 2025.
The year’s meetings and main topics were as follows:

19th February – St. Thomas’s Church Stopsley
We had a presentation on the work of NOAH and heard about the work of parish nurse attached to St Thomas’s.

3rd June – St. Christopher’s Church Round Green
We were challenged about the call towards being a carbon neutral church with input from Tom Abrahams the diocesan officer responsible. We also heard from LBC about their scheme to encourage collaborative approach in this area.

7th October – St. Mary’s Church town centre.
A presentation on the Neighbourhood hubs model was given by Marek Lubelski (Head of social justice and community safety LBC) together with Fr Luke Larner.

25th November – St. Hugh's Church Lewsey

The main focus was on engaging with the themes of the growing younger and more diverse bid. The Year of spiritual renewal and wellbeing was introduced with encouragement for us to book ourselves onto the various opportunities that are being offered.

Despite our divergent views on some of the current issues in the church, Luton deanery continues to be a strong and supportive grouping of churches and parishes across the town and neighbouring villages.

David Kesterton February 2025

With thanks to David Kesterton for sharing his report above.

Steve Dolby – Synod representative

Hands of Mercy

Some of the living conditions in the Philippines

A child receiving a Christmas gift through the Child Sponsorship Programme (CSP)

Thank you to St. Thomas' Church for all your support of Hands of Mercy over the years. Many of you have heard of us – but don't let that stop you reading on if you have! If you haven't, we are a Christian charity restoring hope to some of the poorest families in the Philippines. We do this through the local church – partnering with churches like St. Thomas' – and also individual Christians and groups.

Where we work and our programmes

We operate in nine urban poor communities, eight in Mandaluyong City, Metro Manila and one in Baguio, Banguet (about 155 miles north of Manila). Through our supporters, we provide various compassion programmes, the main ones being the Family Support

Programme (FSP), the Child Sponsorship Programme (CSP) and the Supplementary Feeding Programme (SFP).

How your support changes lives

For about 67p a day (£20 a month) sponsors literally provide life-saving food to a family each month (FSP) or help a child to break the cycle of poverty by sponsoring their education (CSP). Other supporters enable children to eat at least one meal four days a week (SFP) or give a gift to wherever it is needed the most (which can be medicine, surgery, disabled therapy or home repairs).

Most importantly, the support of churches like St. Thomas' invests in the lives of children and families who are very precious to Jesus but who face desperate hardship and poverty. Some families try to survive on a mere few pounds each day through basic work. Others scavenge for a living, including children who might only be 7-8 years old, picking through rubbish in the baking hot sun, trying to get just enough money to provide a meal that day. There's no 'day off' or NHS support – if someone gets sick or is so tired that they can't work or scavenge, they don't eat. It's a heartbreaking situation but we CAN make a difference by extending God's love and practical support. The Bible says, "…whoever is kind to the needy honours God" (Proverbs 14:31) and that couldn't be more true!

We've been operating since 1997, starting with a sponsor for just one child to now having over 100 sponsors on board supporting children to get an education each year!

In the last few years, through God's intervention, we've also been able to start a water filtering business called Icthus which has provided jobs to people in the squatter communities and generated enough surplus to sponsor two children! Our prayer is that this will continue to grow – we would love to be able to sponsor more children through Icthus.

We work REALLY hard to keep our UK costs low (typically 3% or less) so that everything else goes to the Philippines. Those who invest their sponsorship know where their money goes and how it's making an impact.

One of the CSP children said: "I can say that I am blessed because not every child has a chance like this. I am grateful because God gives us kind people to support [us]…"

Thank you again St. Thomas' for your care, love and support. We couldn't do this without you!

Find out more

If you would like to find out more about Hands of Mercy, we have a quarterly prayer diary (email or post) where you can learn more about what's happening in Hands of Mercy and receive prayer topics each month (see the contact details below).

Alternatively, you might consider if you could give 67p a day (or £20 a month) to sponsor a child or a family, or to make a practical difference to those who are struggling to survive.

If you would like to do any of these things, it would be great to hear from you! Denise, our wonderful administrator (and one of our trustees) is on-hand with more information and she can be contacted via info@handsofmercyph.org or 07467 127023.

Thank you again St. Thomas'. Until next year – "Pagpalain ka ng diyos" (God bless you)!

From Samantha,

God bless you,

Samantha, Keith, David, Sarah, Michael and Denise (administrator)

UK Trustees, Hands of Mercy International

Home Groups

Our Home Group has been running now for several years. We are a very warm, welcoming and friendly group comprising of approximately nine members that meets weekly on Thursday evenings in our home. We kick off at 8pm with refreshments while we catch up on the week's news and follow on with a bible study and discussion and close with prayers aiming to finish no later than 10pm.

No one is obliged to join in with the discussions or prayers but most of us do. We have lots of fun and are always happy for newcomers to see for themselves what we get up to. We usually suggest that people try us out for say six weeks to get a fuller picture and to see if it's for them or not. Ian.Marshall125@gmail.com 07968131997

If you are interested, please have a word with either Ruth or me or a member of the group. You could, if you prefer, leave a message with the church office and I'll get back to you. One *word of warning, I try not to tell too many jokes, but sometimes I can't help myself.*

Ian Marshall

Messenger Magazine

The Messenger is a monthly magazine produced initially for housebound and others who have not been able to return to church since Covid. It has reports and photos of events, items of interest and church dates plus much more.
There is no set charge for the magazine, we ask if recipients are able to offer a donation towards printing costs. There is a regular delivery round and the leftover magazines are put in church for any members of the congregation to take.

Linda Clitheroe

Parish Nurse

I have been the Parish Nurse at St Thomas's Church for four years now. We have just reaccredited for another four years. I am now a full time volunteer as a Parish Nurse since relocating from the L and D Hospital where I worked for 34 years. My role as Parish Nurse at St Thomas's Church covers from the very young to very elderly. As far as youth is concerned along with the club leaders, I have a responsibility to the young people to look after their wellbeing, checking in with them, showing interest in what they are doing and getting involved where I can.

I run a twin group for the very young babies and support mum and baby within the first year. I also work with teenagers in my role with life choices and changes. My role as Parish Nurse is to walk beside everyone in all aspects of their lives. Other groups are Cancer Support Group which is run once a month supporting people with cancer, had cancer, or looking after someone with cancer.

I facilitate an Alzheimer's Support Group. We have a Wellbeing Coffee Morning once a month where we enjoy a catch up, sometimes have speakers, but generally checking in on every one. We have recently started Open Church, Monday and Tuesday 10:30 to 12:30, open to all in the community. My work is supported by grants which are applied for each year with a great deal of work from Steve Dolby.

For more information on my role please email me on Debbie.newbound@gmail.com

Debbie Newbound

Pastoral Care Report

Over the past year, I have had the privilege of serving this church and community as the Director of Pastoral Care. I would like to extend my heartfelt thanks to everyone for their generosity, compassion, love and prayerful support. It has been a challenging time, especially with the difficulties faced by my own family and the loss of our mum in June. During my period of grieving, I felt the need to withdraw slightly from much of my usual pastoral activities to avoid projecting my grief onto those I am called to engage with.

I am grateful for the ongoing supervision from Vicar David and the lead chaplain for Stopsley Community Chaplaincy as well as the unwavering support of the church family. I also gladly agreed to cover for the vicar during the second half of his sabbatical last year, which required some of my time and energy to be dedicated to preparing services and other commitments while the vicar was away.

Pastoral work is a collaborative effort, and I am thankful for the ongoing support and encouragement from David Alexander, Debbie Newbound, Steve Dolby, Deborah Bachini, Neil Rolls, the PCC and every member of the church family here at St Thomas.

Working together with the Vicar and the Parish Nurse we have been able to meet the needs of the church family, to reach out to support their families, friends and neighbours, as well as extending our work on behalf of the church family and within the wider community.

I think this also gives me the opportunity to remind members of the church who approach me asking for details concerning others, that because of GDPR (General Data Protection Regulations) and Privacy and Confidentiality under Safeguarding Regulations that I will never share information with anyone apart from the vicar and other professionals working to assist me with particular individuals or situations.

I look forward to being part of the ongoing Pastoral Care for both the church family and the wider community over the next 12 months.

David Newbound
Director or Pastoral Care

Safeguarding Report

The MORE safeguarding is discussed, the LESS likely a serious incident will occur!
Our aim is to make everyone more AWARE or what safeguarding entails for us as a church.
At St Thomas's we promote a SAFER CHURCH policy and we make sure that all safeguarding policies are updated, at least, annually.
All those who work with young people have been DBS cleared and have completed the relevant training.
As you will understand, the need for safeguarding is very relevant in churches, especially in the light of some high profile cases recently.
We, at St. Thomas's, take safeguarding very seriously, and will be inviting the new PCC members to a workshop and we will share this work with congregations.

Linda Clitheroe
Safeguarding Officer

Social and Fundraising Team

Thanks go to those that have arranged any events this year which have brought in funds to St Thomas's. The Pancake evening in February, the Ploughman's Lunch and afternoon tea in September at the Bike 'n' Hike event, sponsorship for the Bike 'n' Hike, and the Stopsley Christmas Market. Sharing meals and coffee mornings have also brought in some much needed income.
If anyone would like to organise a fundraising event please do contact the PCC or Parish Office.

Stewardship Report

The year 2024 has been a difficult year, which has affected all of us in various ways. Consequently, I wish to thank everyone who has faithfully been committed to supporting our Church during the financial year (2024).

As at 31st. December, 2024 the membership of the Scheme was 59. (couples count as one). A net loss of 10 from the previous year.

As you can appreciate, with increased running costs year on year, regular stewardship giving and donations are very important. This is because St. Thomas's costs exceed its income for the SIXTH year in succession. Legacy monies, which should be put aside to

maintain the fabric of the Church and for emergencies, are being used to make up the deficit. The deficits for the last THREE years have been over £30,000 each year. Eventually, this source will run out.

However, stewardship is not only about money, it is also about giving time and practical help to St. Thomas's Church. There is always a need for Sunday Club helpers, refreshment volunteers, and also cleaners, litter pickers and people to carry out odd jobs, etc. The list is endless. If you are in a position to help, please talk to the Administrator in the Parish Office.

Lastly, I would ask that you take this opportunity to pray and reflect on your giving. If you would like to join the Stewardship Scheme and make regular donations please ask me, the Treasurer or the Parish Administrator for details. Finally, I would ask all of you to consider leaving St. Thomas's Church a legacy in your will.

Remember: THE LORD LOVES A CHEERFUL GIVER.

Leslie Sims - Stewardship Secretary

Sunday Club Review

The usual pattern for Sunday Club is to meet in the Church Hall during the 10am service, except the First Sunday of each month when we join the rest of the congregation for the All-Age Service when some of the children often do the readings and lead the prayers. During the 3 academic terms, the topics we looked at this year included 'God's Love', 'The Joys of Obeying God' and 'God Provides'. During the school summer holidays we show videos and hand out snacks, which is always popular.
We try hard to do some activities outside of the Sunday sessions. (This is not always easy with leaders working full-time and shift work).
The year started with what is fast becoming a tradition, an Epiphany party. A successful event with all the youngsters encouraged to bring a friend along. We are supported and helped by parents, grandparents and adult friends to make this a fun and happy event.
We organised an Easter Breakfast on Easter Day – another successful regular event, with the congregation being invited to join us for a cooked breakfast (and of course Hot Cross Buns) on Easter morning.
The summer came and with it a Summer Picnic which took a slight change with a sports event in Stopsley 'Castle Park'. The weather behaved itself and enabled us to have a fun-afternoon with wider family members and various races with both adults and children joining in.
The Scarecrow Festival gave us the opportunity to join with the local community in raising some money for charity in a fun-way creating a Harvest Supper Scene (complete with various games for passers- by) in the Churchyard. We were all thrilled to win one of the prizes and a cup which is proudly displayed in the Church Hall.

Unfortunately, we were unable to arrange for the children to serve the wider community this Christmas but are hoping to manage it again in Year 2025.
This year we were delighted to welcome Becca Rutherford as a leader and are looking forward to working with and learning from her.
After several years loyal service Ian Marshall has decided to step down from Sunday Club and we would like to thank him for the time and effort he has put in to sharing his faith and belief with the youngsters.
We would be delighted if any members (male or female) of the congregation would like to join us – particularly as 'helpers' to support whoever is leading the section each week. We would also be delighted to welcome more youngsters to our friendly happy group. Numbers have dropped this year but with prayer and publicity we hope this can be turned around. We would be pleased if the whole Family of St Thomas would join us in praying for growth and remembering that Word of mouth is the best and most effective publicity.
We are also pleased to be able to say that in recent years we have been totally self-funding (raising our own funds through the Easter Breakfast and Christmas Market teas).

Ruth Marshall

Treasurer's Annual Report Year ended 31st December 2024

Financial Review

Incoming and outgoing resources

Total receipts were £80,344 and are detailed in the Financial Report.

The planned giving, including the Gift Day, though envelopes and banker's orders decreased by 4%. It was good to see the use of Gift Aid through the Parish Giving Scheme which avoids bank charges on cash/envelope donations. Our total voluntary income including tax recovered, but excluding legacies increased by 6%.

The PCC was grateful to receive a legacy of £1,137 from the estate of Josie Cumberland.

Sharing the ministry costs of the Diocese of St Albans

The largest expenditure of the PCC was the sum of £63,525 paid to the diocese for our share of all churches' Parish Ministry Costs. This year the contribution from St Thomas's increased by 0.5% on the previous year and the church is meeting 100% of these costs.

The total relates directly to the housing, support, stipend and pension costs of the clergy of this parish, training of new ordinands, a contribution to national church funds and, shared costs of the Christian family throughout the whole diocese, including assistance towards the upkeep of churches less able to manage than ourselves.

Staff costs

The PCC pays for the Administrator who deals with the running of the Church Office and Director of Pastoral Care.

Trustee payments and expenses

The PCC also supported the clergy by paying annual costs towards travel, hospitality, telephone, postage and broadband amounting to a little over £4,453.

One other trustee received £434 for telephone and travelling bills.

There were no payments to persons related to or connected to, the trustees.

Office costs

The PCC also approved the purchase of a replacement intruder system, costing £1,220 and a replacement shredder costing £123

Money in reserve

It is PCC policy to invest temporarily surplus general funds with Barclays Bank, returning proportionately these funds to our current account, as they are needed, to pay day-to-day bills. This year £80,843 was invested temporarily at 31st December.

Future uncertainties

The deficit for the year is a concern, but we hope to increase regular giving via a Stewardship campaign to ensure we are in a strong position to meet regular commitments. It is important to ensure that as the day-to-day costs rise, the growth in income is sustained through renewed giving pledges, to strengthen our underlying financial position. This will enable further improvements to be made to the fabric of our Church.

Gift Days regularly take place to emphasis God's generosity to the congregation and encourage the congregation to respond to that generosity in their giving through time, talents and money, as they are able.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to express thanks to the people who help with the handling of the Church Cash and Accounting; Deborah Bachini who helps count and record the Collections at each Service; Les Sims who deals with the envelope giving and gift aid return; Godfrey Laws who has operated the Church PAYE scheme and Natasha Wilcox, who performed the Independent Examination of our 2024 Accounts.

Neil Rolls

(Hon. Treasurer St Thomas' PCC) 18 May 2025

Comments and Questions for the AGM or PCC or Vicar.

Any Comment:

Any Question:

St Thomas' P.C.C. Stopsley, Luton
Statement of Financial Activities
For the year ended 31st December 2024

Incoming Resources (all unrestricted)

	Note	2024	2023
		£	£
Incoming resources from donors	2(a)	59,408	62,753
Other voluntary incoming resources	2(b)	12,802	9,538
Income from charitable & ancillary trading	2(c)	277	291
Interest income		843	0
Other ordinary incoming resources	2(d)	7,014	5,115
Total Non-Designated Incoming resources		80,344	77,697
Resources Used			
Grants	3(a)	550	(210)
Activities directly relating to the work of the Church	3(b)	115,478	104,380
Publicity, Church management & admin.	3(c)	816	1,114
		116,844	105,284
Net Annual Surplus / (Deficit)		(36,500)	(27,587)

St Thomas' P.C.C. Stopsley, Luton
Balance Sheet as at 31st December 2024

	Note	2024 £	2023 £
Fixed Assets	4	1,024	788
Current Assets			
Debtors	5	7,077	5,437
Cash at Bank and In Hand	6	105,696	144,676
		112,773	150,113
Liabilities: Amounts due within one year	7	9,246	9,850
Net current assets		103,527	140,263
Total assets less current liabilities		104,551	141,051
Funds			
General Account	8	0	0
Legacy Funds	9	103,476	139,976
Youth Project	8	1,075	1,075
		104,551	141,051

TREASURER'S STATEMENT

I have prepared the financial statements on pages 2 to 7 for the year ended 31 December 2024

Signed : N Rolls

Treasurer : Neil Rolls Date: 28 April 2025

APPROVED by the Church Meeting held on 28 April 2025 and signed on its behalf by:

Signed : VICAR

Reverend David Alexander (Chairman) Date: 28 April 2025

St Thomas' P.C.C. Stopsley, Luton
Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year ended 31 December 2024

1. Accounting Policies

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the Church Accounting Regulations 2006 together with applicable accounting standards and the Charities SORP.

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention except for the valuation of investment assets, which are shown at market value.

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. Funds designated for a particular purpose by the PCC are also unrestricted.

The accounts include all transactions, assets and liabilities for which the PCC is responsible in law. They do not include the accounts of church groups that owe their main affiliation to another body nor those that are informal gatherings of Church members.

Incoming Resources
Voluntary income and capital sources
Collections are recognised when received by or on behalf of the PCC.

Planned giving receivable under covenant is recognised only when received.

Income tax recoverable on covenants or 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 and the amount due,

Income from investments
Interest is accounted for when received.
Resources Used
Activities directly relating to the work of the Church

Fixed Assets
Consecrated land and buildings and movable church furnishings
Consecrated and beneficed property is excluded from the accounts by s.96 (2)(a) of the Charities Act 1993.

No value is placed on movable church furnishings held by the churchwardens on special trust for the PCC and which require a faculty for disposal since the PCC considers this to be inalienable property.

St Thomas' P.C.C. Stopsley, Luton

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year ended 31st December 2024

Equipment

Office Equipment and sound equipment is depreciated on the straight line basis at a rate of 33.3% per annum.

Individual items of Equipment with a purchase price of £250 or less are written off when the asset is acquired.

Current Assets

Amounts owing to the PCC at 31 December are shown as debtors less provision for amounts that may prove uncollectible.

2. Incoming resources (all unrestricted)

	Note	2024	2023
		£	£
2(a) Incoming from donors			
Planned Giving		41,249	44,370
Gift Day		1,805	480
Income Tax recoverable		9,793	9,981
Collections (open plate) at all Services		3,781	3,980
Collections (credit card) at all Services		1,643	692
Legacies		1,137	3,250
		59,408	62,753
2(b) Other voluntary incoming resources			
Coffee mornings, Lunches & Teas		1,019	1,001
Hire of and Donations for use of hall		4,002	1,900
Social Events		1,282	1,668
Miscellaneous Donations & Receipts		2,966	2,065
Parish Nursing Donations & Receipts		3,533	2,904
		12,802	9,538
2(c) Income from charitable and ancillary trading			
Magazine Subscriptions		277	291
Magazine Adverts		0	0
		277	291
2(d) Other ordinary income resources			
Wedding and funeral fees & receipts		7,014	5,115

St Thomas' P.C.C. Stopsley, Luton

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year ended 31st December 2024

	2024	2023
3 Resources Used	£	£
3(a) Grants to Charities		
World Relief	0	532
World Mission	0	0
UK Social Concern/Relief	550	248
UK Church Mission	0	(990)
	550	(210)
3(b) Activities directly relating to the work of the Church		
Ministry: Parish Share	63,525	63,230
Clergy Expenses	4,453	5,098
Pastoral Worker	5,877	5,352
Pastoral Discretionary Expenditure	173	42
Church Office Wages	9,738	8,871
Church: Running Expenses	12,163	7,060
Routine Maintenance	5,698	4,246
Major Repairs	3,304	1,327
Service Costs	2,315	2,500
Parish Nursing Costs	3,533	2,926
Depreciation	984	689
Telephone Charges	2,294	2,058
Miscellaneous	1,421	981
	115,478	104,380
3(c) Publicity, Church Management & Administration		
Stationery & printing (incl. magazine)	761	1,284
Independent Examiner's fee	0	(240)
Miscellaneous	55	70
	816	1,114

St Thomas' P.C.C. Stopsley, Luton

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year ended 31st December 2024

4. Fixed Assets

	Sound Equipment	Office Equipment	Total
Cost/Valuation			
At 1 January 2024	10,233	7,666	17,899
Additions during year	0	1,220	1,220
At 31 December 2024	10,233	8,886	19,119
Depreciation			
At 1 January 2024	10,233	6,878	17,111
Charge for year	0	984	984
At 31 December 2024	10,233	7,862	18,095
Net Book Value			
At 31 December 2024	0	1,024	1,024
At 31 December 2023	0	788	788

5. Debtors

	2024 £	2023 £
Income Tax recoverable	4,586	4,401
Other Debtors	2,491	1,036
	7,077	5,437

6. Cash at Bank and In Hand

Cash on deposit	80,843	0
Cash at Bank	24,837	114,608
Cash in Hand	16	68
	105,696	114,676

7. Liabilities: Amounts due within one year

Donations	0	934
Other Creditors & Accruals	9,246	8,916
	9,246	9,850

8. Funds

	General Account	Legacy Funds (Unresticted)	Youth Project	Total
At 1 January 2024	0	139,976	1,075	141,051
Surplus/(Deficit) for the year	0	(36,500)	0	(36,500)
At 31 December 2024	0	103,476	1,075	104,551

9. Legacy Funds

	2024 £	2023 £
Jim Gabriel	99,089	136,726
Barbara Peters	3,000	3,000
William Biggs	250	250
Josie Cumberland	1,137	0
	103,476	139,976

Independent Examiner's Report to the PCC of St Thomas' Church, Stopsley, Luton

This report on the accounts of the PCC for the year ended 31 December 2024, which are set out on pages 2 to 7 is in respect of an examination carried out under Regulation 3(3) of the Church Accounting Regulations 2006 and under section 145 of the Charities Act 2011(the 2011Act).

Respective responsibilities of trustees end examiner

As the members of the PCC you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts, you consider that the audit requirement of Regulation 3(3) of the Church Accounting Regulations 2006 and under section 144(2) of the Charities Act 2011 (the 2011 Act) do not apply and that an independent examination is needed. It is my responsibility to issue this report on those accounts in accordance with the terms of Regulation 25 of the Church Accounting Regulations 2006 and Regulation 7 of the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 1995.

Basis of Independent examiners report

My examination was carried out in accordance with the general Directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from 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 no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair view' and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

Independent examiner's statement

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

1. Which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements
- To keep accounting records in accordance with section 130 of the 2011 Act; and
- To prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the 2011 Act have not been met; or

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

Signed:

Date: 2 May 2025

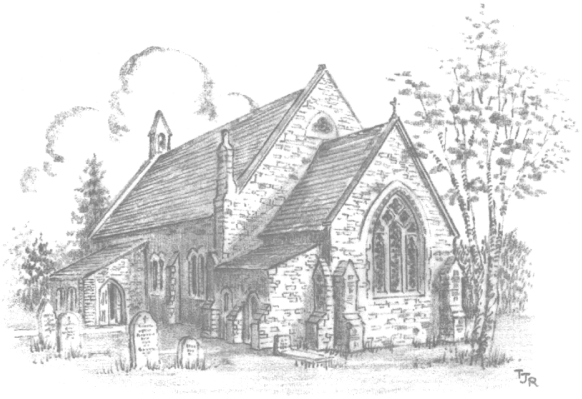
Natasha Wilcox
1 Furze Close
Luton
LU2 7UB

THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF ST THOMAS' STOPSLEY

England & Wales - Charity number 1175152

Accounts

St Thomas's, Stopsley
Seeking to Share God's Love



Annual Reports
For Annual Church Meeting
2024

Welcome!

Welcome to our Reports for the Annual Church Meeting 2024. It is wonderful to have you as part of our Church Family, and thank you for reading through these reports and (hopefully) attending our ACM this year. If you have any queries or comments please raise them at the meeting, or mention them privately if you prefer to me or one of the Wardens of Church Council (PCC) members. There is also a slip at the end of this document.

As we meet together it is important to honour one another in the life of our church family and especially all those who do so much to care for members and to reach out to our community, and beyond, with the food news of Jesus. We are truly called to seek to share God's love with everyone!

Let us be praying … that together we might be the Church God wants us to be, and the Church that Stopsley needs.

Welcome, indeed.

David Alexander (Vicar)

St Thomas's, Stopsley

Parish Profile & Mission Action Plan

Mission Statement: ***Seeking to Share God's Love.***

- We seek to be a ***Mission-orientated*** evangelistic church, intent on sharing God's love with all in our local community, and beyond.
- We aim to reach out in ***love*** to all we can, witnessing for Christ through word and action.
- We wish to be a ***welcoming community*** in all we do.
- We offer a wide range of worship styles, including ***established*** services and ***Fresh Expressions*** for those presently unchurched and newcomers.
- We are aware of our need to be prayerful, seeking the power of the ***Holy Spirit*****.**
- We value being taught from the ***Scriptures***, desiring that they are expounded in a relevant and inspirational way.
- We endeavour to be a ***pastoral*** church, caring for the Church family and any others we can.
- We are a ***servant*** church seeking to serve people in our community and town, and further afield, in practical and caring ways in the name of Jesus.
- We prize our history and are ***forward-looking*** in faith to what God will do through us in the future.
- We are a ***friendly*** church, valuing fellowship, eating together, homegroups and hospitality.

SOME PARISH DETAILS

Population : 10,000 approx. (This figure gives some idea of the 'pastoral area' for our church, rather than exact count of the population).

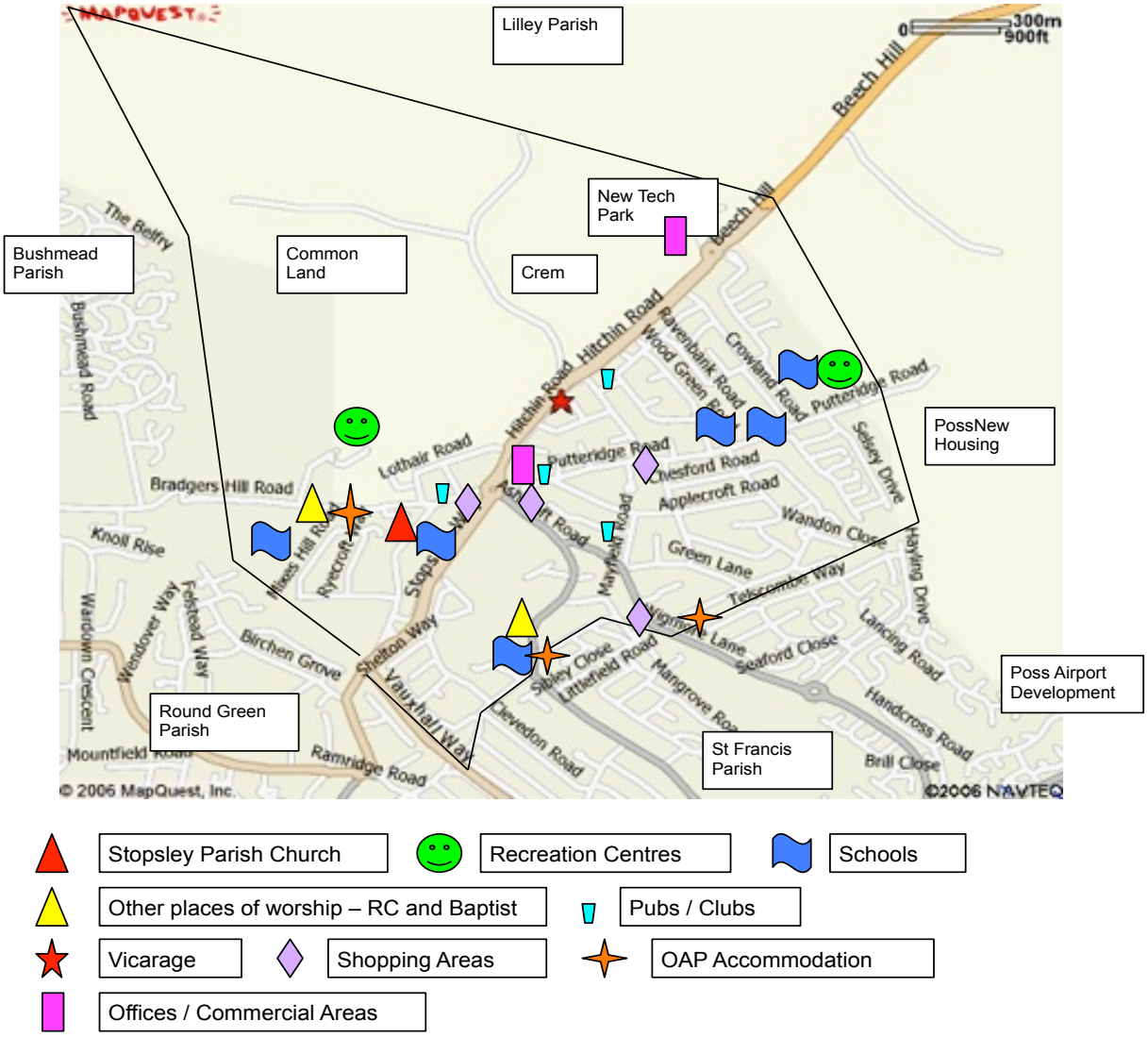
Location : North East area of Luton, at the boundary with Herts. The parish includes the wards of Stopsley and Putteridge. The busy A505 from Luton to Hitchin runs through the parish and separates the church geographically from much of the rest of the parish.

Type[s] of housing : Mainly owner occupied, with some rented accommodation, and pockets of housing association or council property.

Community facilities : Two high schools, two primary schools, one special needs school, and a large sports complex with Olympic swimming and diving facilities.

History of the community : In 1862, when the church was built, Stopsley was a village. Over the years since then Luton has gradually swallowed it up and it is now a suburb of the town. Some of the major employers of people in the community over the past 100 years have closed or declined in size, but employment remains fairly high. The airport and the car industry are major employers.

Parish boundaries: No longer quite the same natural cohesive community that it once was but boundaries mainly make sense except confusing boundary on Ramridge Estate with St. Francis.



PARTNERSHIP IN WORSHIP, MISSION & MINISTRY

We are active participants in the Luton Deanery in working together in mission to our town of Luton.

In the early 1990's we planted Christchurch, Bushmead, a thriving church largely within what was the much larger former parish of Stopsley.

Other Christian Churches : we have a good friendly relationship with Stopsley Baptist Church and Ramridge Baptist Church with whom we have co-operated on various events and projects. SBC has a much bigger congregation, and with its better facilities and style of worship it attracts younger people and people from a wider area. We have different styles of worship but complement one another in our evangelistic task. We have friendly relations with Sacred Heart (RC). Ministers are involved in local and town wide fraternals, and we also participate in a local evangelical hub for prayer and mission, and a similar but larger grouping for the whole town.

Annual Parish Report on 2023 (Prepared for AGM 2024)
by Stopsley (St Thomas) Parish Church Council (PCC)
Charity Number: 1175152

Background – What is the PCC?

Stopsley Parish Church P.C.C. has the responsibility of co-operating with the incumbent, the Reverend David Alexander, in promoting in the ecclesiastical parish of Stopsley the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical. Our Parish Mission Statement is as follows: **Seeking to share God's love with everyone.**

Membership – Who is on the PCC?

Members of the P.C.C are either ex officio or elected by the Annual Church Meeting (properly known as the Annual Parochial Church Meeting) in accordance with the Church Representation Rules.

During 2023 (after the 2023 AGM) the following served as members of the P. C. C:

Ex-officio Members

1. David Alexander (Vicar, Chairman)
2. Churchwarden – vacant
3. Churchwarden – vacant

Elected Lay Representatives (We are entitled to 12 elected representatives)

(The rules state: 6 reps if up to 50 on the Electoral roll
9 reps if up to 100 on the Electoral roll
12 reps if up to 200 on the Electoral roll
15 reps if over 200 on the Electoral roll)

	Elected	Year Elected	Term of Office	Term Ends
1	John Alexander*	2021	3yr	2024
2	Deborah Bachini	2021	3yr	2024
3	David Newbound	2021	3yr	2024
4	Neil Rolls	2021	3yr	2024
5	Rosemary Stipta	2022	3yr	2025
6	Vacant	2022	3yr	2025
7	Vacant	2022	3yr	2025
8	Vacant	2022	3yr	2025
9	Linda Clitheroe	2023	3yr	2026
10	Vacant	2023	3yr	2026
11	Vacant	2023	3yr	2026
12	Vacant	2023	3yr	2026

* John Alexander stepped back from membership of the PCC in December – understandably with the birth of Ishmael – congratulations John and Donna!

***Elected Representatives on Deanery Synod** (automatically also serve on the PCC)*

1 Christine Younger	2023	3yr	2026
2 Steve Dolby	2023	3yr	2026
3 Vacant	2023	3yr	2026

*** We have between 100-199 names on our electoral roll and so are entitled to 3 Elected Deanery Synod Representatives.*
NB Clergy of the church also serve on the Deanery Synod

Co-opted PCC Member(s)
Nil

Office came to end at APCM 2023
PCC Members:
Linda Clitheroe*, Ian Marshall, Charlotte Zhivago, Louise Winter
*(Names marked * were office holders and so eligible for re-election)*
Deanery Synod Members : Christine Younger, Steve Dolby *(both re-elected)*

Elections at 2024 AGM
We are very appreciative of the significant contributions of the PCC members coming to the end of their period of office. Under the present rules in place for our PCC, elected members who have served for 3 years, apart from 'office holders'*, are not eligible for re-election until 12 months after the end of their term of office.
John Alexander*, Deborah Bachini*, David Newbound*, Neil Rolls*
*(Any names marked * are eligible for re-election as they are office holders)*
There will be elections for the following positions:

4 PCC member(s)	to serve for 3 years to 2027
3 PCC member(s)	to serve for 2 years to 2026
3 PCC member(s)	to serve for 1 year to 2025
1 Deanery Synod member(s)	to serve to 2026

Committees - Standing Committee
The Standing Committee is the only committee required by law, and is our only official committee. It has power to transact the business of the P.C.C between its meetings, subject to any directions given by the council. In the past we also have had a number of 'Action Church Teams' (ACTs) that organise activities, or discuss matters, as directed by the P.C.C. and Vicar.

PCC Electoral Roll Report
There are 131 parishioners now on the Church Electoral Roll. This represents a change of +6 from the previous year's ACM Electoral Roll. There have been new members, and others have left the roll - changes due to new church attendees, parishioners moving, changing church, death or people who live outside the parish and no longer regularly attend St Thomas's.

PCC Review of the Year
This past year has been another year of recovery since the covid pandemic. We are now at a stage when we need to plan ahead, and we are starting a review of our Mission Action Plan during 2024.

We are thankful for the wonderful pastoral support offered by David Newbound as Pastoral Worker, Debbie Newbound as Parish Nurse and Deborah Bachini as Administrator.

A highlight of the year was the licensing of Steve Dolby as our Lay Reader. This was a lovely occasion and we are very grateful for Steve and all his hard work in training, and in the services at Church, and in the Deanery.

We have continued to livestream a daily 'Prayer and Share' to those who could join us via Facebook. As well as many church members, we have been joined by others, both locally and around the country and elsewhere in the world. We also livestream all our services from the church building. We are grateful to all who have made this possible, especially John Pinnock and Rosemary Stipta. We have also worked hard at producing a weekly email to keep people in touch via a mailing list.

The main focus of the last year has been attempting to care for and support one another, and for those we can in our local community. Thank you for all the ways in which each person has contributed to this.

The Sunday Club continues to blossom and everyone at the 10am Service enjoys the children sharing what they have been learning each week. Thank you to the children and to their leaders for all their creative hard work.

We are grateful for God's faithfulness in the past, and the present and look forward to the future with confident hope in God as we share His love together.

David Alexander, Vicar. On behalf of the P.C.C

Warden's Report

At the moment we do not have an elected Church Warden.

Administrators report

The Parish Office continues to be a hive of activity, overseeing the maintenance of the building and arrangements for weekly services, burial of ashes, baptisms, funerals, weddings, and for clubs and groups.

The office is the front line for many people contacting the church for the first time, for dropping off and picking up and many other reasons. We try to give a warm welcome and to be accessible.

My thanks go to the many volunteers helping to keep the church clean and tidy and running smoothly; a small team of people are giving help with cleaning, IT, flower arranging, silver cleaning, food bank collections, banking, shopping, tea making and many other behind the scenes jobs. It is all much appreciated, and if anyone has an hour or two to assist please do contact me in the office for details.

The office has become more lively with the addition of Debbie our Parish Nurse being here more days a week now. We've all got our little space with our heads down getting our work done ☺.

I still very much enjoy my work here and am grateful for the support of David our vicar.

Deborah Bachini

Church Flowers Report

It is lovely to see fresh flowers in churches. At St Thomas's, at the moment, we seem unable to keep up this tradition due to lack of funds and also a team who can make it happen. It is not only the art of arranging the flowers, which is only a part of the job, but also the planning and purchasing, the sorting and arranging and clearing up. But also the regular job of watering and maintaining the arrangements. At the moment we have fresh flowers at times, if a monetary donation is given. Silk flowers are used at other times.
If anyone is interesting in leading a Flower Arranging Team, it would be great to hear from you.

Linda Clitheroe

Deanery Synod Report

The Luton deanery Synod met four times in 2023. Most, but not all, of our 14 parishes were represented but we know there are those who struggle to get representation.

In February we had a presentation from Engage worship which introduced us to some of the new materials they have produced. Azalea gave a presentation on their work in the town in our June session. In October we heard from the diocesan adviser on Parish Giving with a particular emphasis on how we can make use of digital giving. We were also given the opportunity to input to the Cathedrals listening exercise which is reviewing its life and work. At our final meeting of the year in November we had a presentation from the University chaplaincy team and heard about the newly funded project work on the theme of growing younger and more diverse which will be coming to Luton during 2024.

During the year we also held a quiet day jointly with Dunstable deanery and took part in an evening pilgrimage to the Abbey. Wenlock school which has been a "deanery school" moved to be under the diocesan Multi Academy Trust ahead of the autumn term. At the end of August we had a deanery Barbeque. The questions and concerns raised by the living in love and faith process were shared on a number of occasions by some of our parishes and we also set up a mechanism for those who wish to explore these blessings to be able to do so.

We try and create a varied programme of topics for our meetings and avoid having a "meeting for a meetings sake". There will be new opportunities for mission in the years ahead with the aid of new funding so I do encourage parishes to fill vacancies if at all possible and represent the diversity of the Church of England in our town and surrounding villages.

With thanks to David Kesterton for sharing his report above.

Steve Dolby – Synod representative

Hands of Mercy

A small boy sat clutching his lunch. ‘Shall I keep it for myself or give it to the man who can do anything’, he thought? ‘I will give it to Him’, he decided, and via a man called Andrew, he gave his loaves and fishes to Jesus. That act made a difference to 5,000 men plus women and children.

All of the donations that Hands of Mercy receives, makes a real difference to men, women and children living in the squatter communities in the Philippines. This includes through feeding and educating children, repairing and building houses, providing medical care (there’s no NHS in the Philippines) and/or providing food to struggling families. We are so grateful for the support from St. Thomas’ that has helped to impact the lives of over 400 people in the Philippines in 2023.

We are a small charity and our income each year is less than some charities CEOs receive per annum! However, each donation we receive is significant. None of our officers receive any payment. Our only expense is a small amount for administration (postage, phone and bank charges). We are thankful that in 2023, we were able to give more than 97.5% of the money we received directly to the Philippines (we have been able to maintain this kind of ratio for many years now). Every pound counts!

The Mercy Community Churches were born out of the Hands of Mercy and grew in response to people in the communities being impacted by God’s love and wanting to come together to worship him in the squatter communities. Sally, our HOM Philippines Director, recently said, “the church is growing and positively impacting many people.” We praise God for this.

As a Christian charity, we may be compact but like the small boy, together via your gifts to Jesus, we are making a difference.

Our latest project is for the long-term future of Hands of Mercy. After 18 years, Sally and Joey will sometime, in the future, need to step back from the everyday running of Hands of Mercy. This change needs wisdom and importantly, for Sally to identify her successor and work alongside him or her for a period of time prior to handing over the reins. Over the next

two years, we are getting ready for this change. Our aim is to raise £25,000 to hold in reserve to give financial support to the new worker in their early years.

For this new project we ask for your prayers. We are certain that the Lord will provide our needs and that there will be a small boy somewhere with the provision.

Thank you as a church family for your love, prayers and support over the many years for Hands of Mercy.

God bless you,

Samantha, Keith, David, Sarah, Michael and Denise (administrator)

UK Trustees, Hands of Mercy International

Home Groups

Our Home Group has been meeting for a long time now: we try to meet weekly and usually follow the standard termly periods. We meet in our home and are always open to new members joining us. We meet on a Thursday simply because Thursdays were the most popular evening of the week. We start at 8pm and after a short social time, while we have a coffee or tea and a treat, we start a time of bible study which usually lasts about an hour and a bit. We usually have a theme such as a book from the new or old testament or a particular issue. We then spend the last part in prayer and attempt to end by ten o clock at the latest. Over the years we have developed a trust and openness in meetings where everyone is able to speak openly and in confidence knowing that whatever is discussed that evening is always kept within our four walls. This is not because we're trying to be secretive but to enable open and honest communication. There is a great sense of affection and friendship and it's great that new members fit in easily and are made very welcome. It's probably fair to say that each of us is at a different stage in our journey with God but we all have a great respect for each other and accept that we are simply at different stages of that journey. No one is forced to stay but, anyone who is interested in trying us out, should commit to a term to get an accurate impression of what it's about and then decide whether or not it is for them. I can't imagine life without being part of a home group and hope that anyone who belongs feels the same. Give us a go and see for yourself.

Ian Marshall

Lunch Club

I am delighted to report that as ever the Lent Lunches were well supported. We met each Wednesday during Lent and shared a simple meal and good conversation. People donated generously as always. The money raised this year, after deductions, will be going towards the cost of the new boiler.

God bless,

David Newbound.

Men's Breakfasts

There were no Men's breakfasts in the last year.

Ian Marshall

Messenger Magazine

The Messenger is a monthly magazine produced initially for housebound and others who have not been able to return to church since Covid. It has reports and photos of events, items of interest and church dates plus much more.
There is no set charge for the magazine, we ask if recipients are able to offer a donation towards printing costs. There is a regular delivery round and the leftover magazines are put in church for any members of the congregation to take.

Linda Clitheroe

Parish Nurse

Hello all, well an exciting new venture! I have retired from the Luton and Dunstable after 34 years as nurse there, and am now enjoying Parish Nurse ministry here at St Thomas Church. We have been running for 4 years now and have just had a wellbeing health check and had outstanding results for which I thank those who support me and the church family and the wider community. We still have our exciting groups:

- Twin group
- Alzheimers group
- Wellbeing coffee morning
- Cancer support group

We also this year will have a health fair in July which will be the first at St Thomas church and wider community, it is in its early stages of planning. We are also planning a Parentcraft group which is in very early stages. I have clinic days two days a week, by appointment
The Parish Nurse service is going from strength to strength and I thank the Lord for his strength, love and support

Debbie Newbound

Pastoral Care Report

We have had an exciting year. There have been some developments. The Parish Nurse, Debbie has increased her hours as Parish Nurse since she retired, after 34 years, from the Luton and Dunstable Hospital. Debbie has been working as our Parish Nurse for 4 years now.

The Pastoral Care Team continues as ever to seek to support practically and spiritually the need of the church family and engage with the wider community. We continue to assist people with the challenges of social isolation and the cost of living crisis, while also sharing their joys and sorrows, and celebration and sadness of their daily lives.

We signpost to a variety of other agencies for additional support and we are engaged with Luton Wellbeing, a number of GP surgeries, the L&D hospital, Social Prescription Programme across Luton, Social Services and Luton Community Chaplaincy.

A number of our long serving members of our church have been called home this year, Arthur Devlin, Phyl Luck, Hazel Alcock and David White.

As ever I would like to thank you all for your ongoing support as we seek to be a church without walls, engaging pastorally, practically, prayerfully in both the church and the community.

Myself and my team look forward to the next twelve months. God Bless.

David Newbound
Director or Pastoral Care

Safeguarding Report

Safeguarding at St Thomas is regarded as a priority. We are a caring church with an attitude of concern for our young people and vulnerable adults. Our Safeguarding Policy is updated annually and complies with Diocesan and Church of England guidance.
Since Judi Kingham 'retired' as a safeguarding officer, I have worked with Vicar David. I am now pleased to report that Julie Bailey has been voted by the PCC, to work with me on the Safeguarding Team.
We ensure that all Sunday Club leaders have DBS clearance, plus any others who work with children or vulnerable adults. We also encourage them all to undertake the appropriate training.

Linda Clitheroe
Safeguarding Officer

Social and Fundraising Team

There have been no Social events or fundraising in the last year. If anyone would like to organise a social event please do speak to the vicar or the Parish Office.

Stewardship Report

The year 2023, is a year most people have seen a further increase in the cost of living, strikes, longer hospital waiting lists, etc. With this difficult situation, which has affected all of us in some way, I wish to thank everyone who has faithfully been committed to supporting our Church during the financial year (2023).

As at 31st. December, 2023 the membership of the Scheme was 69. (couples count as one). A net increase of 7 from the previous year.

As you can appreciate, with increased running costs year on year, regular stewardship giving and donations are more important than ever. This is because St. Thomas's costs exceed its income for the FIFTH year in succession. Legacy monies, which should be put aside to maintain the fabric of the Church and for emergencies are being used to make up the deficit. Eventually, this source will run out.

However, stewardship is not only about money, it is also about giving time and practical help to St. Thomas's Church. There is always a need for Sunday Club helpers, refreshment volunteers, and also cleaners, litter pickers and people to carry out odd jobs, etc. The list is endless. If you are in a position to help, please talk to the Administrator in the Parish Office.

Finally, I would ask that you take this opportunity to pray and reflect on your giving. If you would like to join the Stewardship Scheme and make regular donations please ask me, the Treasurer or the Parish Administrator for details.

Leslie Sims - Stewardship Secretary

Sunday Club Review

St Thomas Church Sunday Club

St Thomas Sunday Club is currently going from strength to strength. We are now at almost pre-covid numbers with several families joining us on a weekly basis.

This is an amazing testament to the commitment of our young members and the Leaders alike.

We, as a leadership team see Sunday Club as a vocation, where we support and nurture the youngest members of our church family and help them in their own spiritual journey as they grow and mature into adult members of our church. It is important to us that, although we move into the hall where we can be noisy and messy, we always remain part of the St Ts family and the children are encouraged to come into church and share with the adults what we have been doing. It's particularly nice when we discover that the sermon and the Sunday club activities have aligned, something which happens more often than you would think.

The ages of our regular children range from 2 years to 10 years, with occasional visits from children either side of this range. This is probably our biggest challenge, as finding stories and activities which are suitable for this vast age range (and would remain suitable as our older children mature into teenagers and young adults) is difficult to say the least. To meet this challenge we would love to re-split the group, as we did pre-covid, into an older and younger group enabling us to meet the needs of the all the children in our care. Unfortunately, we are currently not in a position to do this as we do not have enough leaders but with prayer and hope we are confident God will deliver and this will be achievable in the near future.

Throughout the past year we have been looking at what God does for us and each week we talk and pray about how God is there in our everyday lives, and how he has always been there, through the different stories we look at. Topics have included 'God Loves Us', 'God Protects Us', 'God Provides for Us,' 'God encourages Us', and 'Our trust in God'. We feel having overarching topics like this is working well and has given new life and focus into our Sunday morning.

We have also planned group events such as the picnic and Epiphany party, which have been outside of our Sunday mornings and enjoyed by the children and their families, and hope to continue to plan further outings and events over the coming year. In addition, we have also taken part in some community and wider church family events, such as the Christmas market and Easter Breakfast, where the children donate their time to support us. This coming year we hope to again take part in these events, as well as the Stopsley Scarecrow festival.

We would like to finish by thanking all the Leaders, Helpers, Parents and of course the children for the support and commitment that makes St Ts Sunday club possible.

Sara Hillyard

Treasurer's Annual Report Year ended 31st December 2023

This has been a challenging financial year for our Church. Our total income excluding legacies increased by 4% from 2022, but with total expenditure also increasing by a similar percentage, and no major legacies, there was a loss in the year of £27,587

We were very fortunate to have received a large Legacy from the Estate of Jim Gabriel during 2022 which enabled us to avoid having to make some very difficult decisions regarding the level of our outgoings in 2023.

I am sure that 2024 will again be a challenging year. The costs of our energy has increased substantially following the ending of a fixed rate deal, resulting in a likely £10,000 increase year on year, and with the age of the building it is unlikely that we will not incur some level of expenditure to maintain it in a good condition.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to express thanks to the people who help with the handling of the Church Cash and Accounting; Deborah Bachini who helps count and record the Collections at each Service; Les Sims who deals with the envelope giving and gift aid return; Godfrey Laws who has operated the Church PAYE scheme and Natasha Wilcox, who performed the Independent Examination of our 2023 Accounts.

Neil Rolls
(Hon. Treasurer St Thomas' PCC) *12 May 2024*

Comments and Questions for the AGM or PCC or Vicar.

Any Comment:

Any Question:

Independent Examiner's Report to the PCC of St Thomas' Church, Stopsley, Luton

This report on the accounts of the PCC for the year ended 31 December 2023, which are set out on pages 2 to 7 is in respect of an examination carried out under Regulation 3(3) of the Church Accounting Regulations 2006 and under section 145 of the Charities Act 2011(the 2011Act).

Respective responsibilities of trustees end examiner

As the members of the PCC you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts, you consider that the audit requirement of Regulation 3(3) of the Church Accounting Regulations 2006 and under section 144(2) of the Charities Act 2011 (the 2011 Act) do not apply and that an independent examination is needed. It is my responsibility to issue this report on those accounts in accordance with the terms of Regulation 25 of the Church Accounting Regulations 2006 and Regulation 7 of the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 1995.

Basis of Independent examiners report

My examination was carried out in accordance with the general Directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from 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 no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair view' and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

Independent examiner's statement

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

1. Which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements
- To keep accounting records in accordance with section 130 of the 2011 Act; and
- To prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the 2011 Act have not been met; or

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

Signed:

Date: 6 May 2024

Natasha Wilcox
1 Furze Close
Luton
LU2 7UB

St Thomas' P.C.C. Stopsley, Luton
Statement of Financial Activities
For the year ended 31st December 2023

Incoming Resources (all unrestricted)

	Note	2023 £	2022 £
Incoming resources from donors	2(a)	62,753	220,294
Other voluntary incoming resources	2(b)	9,538	9,974
Income from charitable & ancillary trading	2(c)	291	191
Other ordinary incoming resources	2(d)	5,115	2,822
Total Non-Designated Incoming resources		77,697	233,281
Resources Used			
Grants	3(a)	(210)	1,774
Activities directly relating to the work of the Church	3(b)	104,380	98,178
Publicity, Church management & admin.	3(c)	1,114	1,632
		105,284	101,584
Net Annual Surplus / (Deficit)		(27,587)	131,697

St Thomas' P.C.C. Stopsley, Luton
Balance Sheet as at 31st December 2023

	Note	2023 £	2022 £
Fixed Assets	4	788	1,477
Current Assets			
Debtors	5	5,437	4,223
Bank Accounts		144,608	171,587
Cash		68	23
		150,113	175,833
Liabilities: Amounts due within one year	6	9,850	8,672
Net current assets		140,263	167,161
Total assets less current liabilities		141,051	168,638
Funds			
General Account	7	0	0
Legacy Funds	8	139,976	167,563
Youth Project		1,075	1,075
		141,051	168,638

TREASURER'S STATEMENT

I have prepared the financial statements on pages 2 to 7 for the year ended 31 December 2023

Signed : N Rolls

Treasurer : Neil Rolls Date: 29 April 2024

APPROVED by the Church Meeting held on 29 April 2024 and signed on its behalf by:

Signed :

Reverend David Alexander (Chairman) Date: 29 April 2024

St Thomas' P.C.C. Stopsley, Luton
Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year ended 31 December 2023

1. Accounting Policies

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the Church Accounting Regulations 2006 together with applicable accounting standards and the Charities SORP.

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention except for the valuation of investment assets, which are shown at market value.

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. Funds designated for a particular purpose by the PCC are also unrestricted.

The accounts include all transactions, assets and liabilities for which the PCC is responsible in law. They do not include the accounts of church groups that owe their main affiliation to another body nor those that are informal gatherings of Church members.

Incoming Resources
Voluntary income and capital sources
Collections are recognised when received by or on behalf of the PCC.
Planned giving receivable under covenant is recognised only when received.
Income tax recoverable on covenants or 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 and the amount due,

Income from investments
Interest is accounted for when received.
Resources Used
Activities directly relating to the work of the Church

Fixed Assets
Consecrated land and buildings and movable church furnishings
Consecrated and beneficed property is excluded from the accounts by s.96 (2)(a) of the Charities Act 1993.

No value is placed on movable church furnishings held by the churchwardens on special trust for the PCC and which require a faculty for disposal since the PCC considers this to be inalienable property.

St Thomas' P.C.C. Stopsley, Luton

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year ended 31st December 2023

Equipment

Office Equipment and sound equipment is depreciated on the straight line basis at a rate of 33.3% per annum.

Churchyard Maintenance Equipment is depreciated on the reducing balance basis at a rate of 30% per annum.

Individual items of Equipment with a purchase price of £250 or less are written off when the asset is acquired.

Current Assets

Amounts owing to the PCC at 31 December are shown as debtors less provision for amounts that may prove uncollectible.

2. Incoming resources (all unrestricted)

	Note	2023	2022
		£	£
2(a) Incoming from donors			
Planned Giving		44,370	43,562
Gift Day		480	2,355
Income Tax recoverable		9,981	9,418
Collections (open plate) at all Services		3,980	2,668
Collections (credit card) at all Services		692	468
Legacies		3,250	161,823
		62,753	220,294
2(b) Other voluntary incoming resources			
Coffee mornings, Lunches & Teas		1,001	699
Hire of and Donations for use of hall		1,900	1,100
Social Events		1,668	1,285
Miscellaneous Donations & Receipts		2,065	3,004
Parish Nursing Donations & Receipts		2,904	3,886
		9,538	9,974
2(c) Income from charitable and ancillary trading			
Magazine Subscriptions		291	191
Magazine Adverts		0	0
		291	191
2(d) Other ordinary income resources			
Wedding and funeral fees & receipts		5,115	2,822

St Thomas' P.C.C. Stopsley, Luton
Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year ended 31st December 2023

3 Resources Used	2023 £	2022 £
3(a) Grants to Charities		
World Relief	532	1,042
World Mission	0	0
UK Social Concern/Relief	248	192
UK Church Mission	(990)	540
	(210)	1,774
3(b) Activities directly relating to the work of the Church		
Ministry: Parish Share	63,230	62,268
Clergy Expenses	5,098	3,724
Pastoral Worker	5,352	4,914
Pastoral Discretionary Expenditure	42	0
Church Office Wages	8,871	8,139
Church: Running Expenses	7,060	7,067
Routine Maintenance	4,246	4,516
Major Repairs	1,327	0
Service Costs	2,500	2,491
Parish Nursing	2,926	1,985
Depreciation	689	798
Telephone Charges	2,058	1,530
Miscellaneous	981	746
	104,380	98,178
3(c) Publicity, Church Management & Administration		
Stationery & printing (incl. magazine)	1,284	1,462
Independent Examiner's fee	(240)	120
Miscellaneous	70	50
	1,114	1,632

St Thomas' P.C.C. Stopsley, Luton

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year ended 31st December 2023

4. Fixed Assets

	Sound Equipment	Office Equipment	Total
Cost/Valuation			
At 1 January 2023	10,233	7,666	17,899
Additions during year	0	0	0
At 31 December 2023	10,233	7,666	17,899
Depreciation			
At 1 January 2023	10,233	6,189	16,422
Charge for year	0	689	689
At 31 December 2023	10,233	6,878	17,111
Net Book Value			
At 31 December 2023	0	788	788
At 31 December 2022	0	1,477	1,477

5. Debtors

	2023 £	2022 £
Income Tax recoverable	4,401	3,958
Other Debtors	1,036	265
	5,437	4,223

6. Liabilities: Amounts due within one year

Donations	934	990
Other Creditors & Accruals	8,916	7,682
	9,850	8,672

7. Funds

	General Account	Legacy Funds (Unresticted)	Youth Project	Total
At 1 January 2023	0	167,563	1,075	168,638
Surplus/(Deficit) for the year	0	(27,587)	0	(27,587)
At 31 December 2023	0	139,976	1,075	141,051

8. Legacy Funds

	2023 £	2022 £
Josie Cumberland	0	5,740
Jim Gabriel	136,726	161,823
Barbara Peters	3,000	0
William Biggs	250	0
	139,976	167,563

Independent Examiner's Report to the PCC of St Thomas' Church, Stopsley, Luton

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Signed:

Date: 6 May 2024

Natasha Wilcox
1 Furze Close
Luton
LU2 7UB

THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF ST THOMAS' STOPSLEY

England & Wales - Charity number 1175152

Accounts

St Thomas's, Stopsley
Seeking to Share God's Love

Annual Reports
For Annual Church Meeting
2023

Welcome!

Welcome to our Reports for the Annual Church Meeting 2023. It is wonderful to have you as part of our Church Family, and thank you for reading through these reports and (hopefully) attending our ACM this year. If you have any queries or comments please raise them at the meeting, or mention them privately, if you prefer, to me or one of the Church Council (PCC) members.

As we meet together it is important to honour one another in the life of our church family and especially all those who do so much to care for members and to reach out to our community, and beyond, with the good news of Jesus. We are truly called to seek to share God's love with everyone!

Let us be praying … that together we might be the Church God wants us to be, and the Church that Stopsley needs.

Welcome, indeed.

David Alexander (Vicar)

St Thomas's, Stopsley

Parish Profile & Mission Action Plan

Mission Statement: ***Seeking to Share God's Love.***

- We seek to be a ***Mission-orientated*** evangelistic church, intent on sharing God's love with all in our local community, and beyond.
- We aim to reach out in ***love*** to all we can, witnessing for Christ through word and action.
- We wish to be a ***welcoming community*** in all we do.
- We offer a wide range of worship styles, including ***established*** services and ***Fresh Expressions*** for those presently unchurched and newcomers.
- We are aware of our need to be prayerful, seeking the power of the ***Holy Spirit*****.**
- We value being taught from the ***Scriptures***, desiring that they are expounded in a relevant and inspirational way.
- We endeavour to be a ***pastoral*** church, caring for the Church family and any others we can.
- We are a ***servant*** church seeking to serve people in our community and town, and further afield, in practical and caring ways in the name of Jesus.
- We prize our history and are ***forward-looking*** in faith to what God will do through us in the future.
- We are a ***friendly*** church, valuing fellowship, eating together, homegroups and hospitality.

SOME PARISH DETAILS

Population : 10,000 approx. (This figure gives some idea of the 'pastoral area' for our church, rather than exact count of the population).

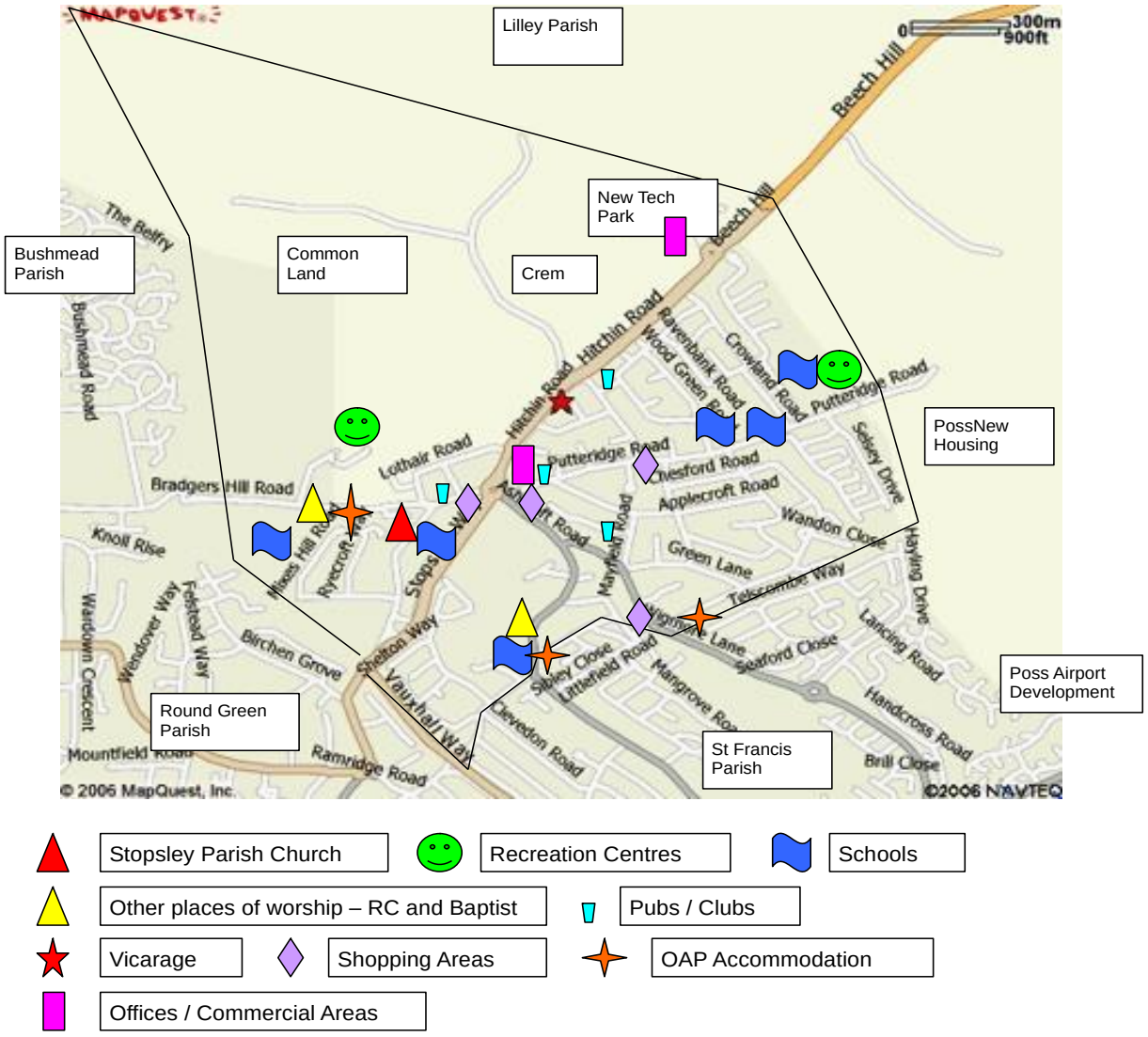
Location : North East area of Luton, at the boundary with Herts. The parish includes the wards of Stopsley and Putteridge. The busy A505 from Luton to Hitchin runs through the parish and separates the church geographically from much of the rest of the parish.

Type[s] of housing : Mainly owner occupied, with some rented accommodation, and pockets of housing association or council property.

Community facilities : Two high schools, two primary schools, one special needs school, and a large sports complex with Olympic swimming and diving facilities.

History of the community : In 1862, when the church was built, Stopsley was a village. Over the years since then Luton has gradually swallowed it up and it is now a suburb of the town. Some of the major employers of people in the community over the past 100 years have closed or declined in size, but employment remains fairly high. The airport and the car industry are major employers.

Parish boundaries: No longer quite the same natural cohesive community that it once was but boundaries mainly make sense except confusing boundary on Ramridge Estate with St. Francis.



PARTNERSHIP IN WORSHIP, MISSION & MINISTRY

We are active participants in the Luton Deanery in working together in mission to our town of Luton.

In the early 1990's we planted Christchurch, Bushmead, a thriving church largely within what was the much larger former parish of Stopsley.

Other Christian Churches : we have a good friendly relationship with Stopsley Baptist Church and Ramridge Baptist Church with whom we have co-operated on various events and projects. SBC has a much bigger congregation, and with its better facilities and style of worship it attracts younger people and people from a wider area. We have different styles of worship but complement one another in our evangelistic task. We have friendly relations with Sacred Heart (RC). Ministers are involved in local and town wide fraternals, and we also participate in a local evangelical hub for prayer and mission, and a similar but larger grouping for the whole town.

Annual Parish Report 2022 (Prepared for AGM 2023)

by Stopsley (St Thomas) Parish Church Council (PCC)

Background – What is the PCC?

Stopsley Parish Church P.C.C. has the responsibility of co-operating with the incumbent, the Reverend David Alexander, in promoting in the ecclesiastical parish of Stopsley the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical. Our Parish Mission Statement is as follows: **Seeking to share God's love with everyone.**

Membership – Who is on the PCC?

Members of the P.C.C are either ex officio or elected by the Annual Church Meeting (properly known as the Annual Parochial Church Meeting) in accordance with the Church Representation Rules.

During 2022 (after the 2022 AGM) the following served as members of the P. C. C:

Ex-officio Members

1. David Alexander (Vicar, Chairman)

Churchwardens - Vacant

., and

Elected Lay Representatives We are entitled to 12 elected representatives:

(The rules state: 6 reps if up to 50 on the Electoral roll
9 reps if up to 100 on the Electoral roll
12 reps if up to 200 on the Electoral roll
15 reps if over 200 on the Electoral roll)

	Elected	Year Elected	Term of Office	Term Ends
1	Linda Clitheroe	2021	2yr	2023
2	Ian Marshall	2021	2yr	2023
3	Charlotte Zhivago	2021	2yr	2023
4	Louise Winter	2021	2yr	2023
5	John Alexander	2021	3yr	2024
6	Deborah Bachini	2021	3yr	2024
7	David Newbound	2021	3yr	2024
8	Neil Rolls	2021	3yr	2024
9	Rosemary Stipta	2022	3yr	2025
10	Vacant	2022	3yr	2025
11	Vacant	2022	3yr	2025
12	Vacant	2022	3yr	2025

Elected Representatives on Deanery Synod** who automatically also serve on the PCC

1 Christine Younger	2020	3yr	2023
2 Steve Dolby	2020	3yr	2023
3 Vacant	2020	3yr	2023

** We have between 100-199 names on our electoral roll and so are entitled to 3 Elected Deanery Synod Representatives.

NB The clergy of the church also serve on the Deanery Synod

Co-opted

None

Office came to end at APCM 2022

PCC Members: Julie Bailey, John Kingham, Stewart Leary, Stella Marshall

Deanery Synod Members : Continue in office till 2023

Elections at 2023 AGM

We are very appreciative of the significant contributions of the PCC members coming to the end of their period of office. Under the present rules in place for our PCC, elected members who have served for 3 years, apart from 'office holders'*, are not eligible for re-election until 12 months after the end of their term of office.

Linda Clitheroe *
Ian Marshall
Charlotte Zhivago
Louise Winter

* *Eligible for re-election as an Office Holder*

We are also grateful for those who have represented us on the Deanery Synod. They, or others are eligible to stand again.

Christine Younger
Steve Dolby

There will be elections for the following positions:

4 PCC member(s)	to serve for 3 years to 2026
3 PCC member(s)	to serve for 2 years to 2025
0 PCC member(s)	to serve for 1 year to 2024
3 Deanery Synod member(s)	to serve to 2026

Committees

Standing Committee

The Standing Committee is the only committee required by law, and is our only official committee. It has power to transact the business of the P.C.C between its meetings, subject to any directions given by the council.

Electoral Roll

There are 126 parishioners now on the Church Electoral Roll. This represents a change of minus 8 from the previous year's ACM Electoral Roll. These changes are due to parishioners moving, changing church, death or people who live outside the parish and no longer regularly attend St Thomas's.

Review of the Year

This past year continues to be, like the previous two, very different from the normal life of our church. 2022 saw a gradual opening up of services and activities, but really we still have some way to go yet. We are grateful to all members of the church family, and those who have associated themselves with us, in keeping in touch with one another and seeking to support each other, practically and spiritually. There have been many phone calls, emails and messages – and much prayer for each other. Thank you to you all.

We are also especially thankful for the wonderful pastoral support offered by David Newbound as Pastoral Worker, Debbie Newbound as Parish Nurse and Deborah Bachini, who, in addition to keeping the Church Office operating, helped in ringing members of the church to offer support. At services we continued to be very careful to keep one another safe.

We have continued to livestream a daily 'Prayer and Share' to those who could join us via Facebook Live, and those who connected later via Facebook, Google Public Folder, YouTube and the website. As well as many church members, we have been joined by others, both locally and around the country and the world. We also livestream all our services from the church building. We are grateful to all who have made this possible, especially John Pinnock and Rosemary Stipta. We have also worked hard at producing a weekly email to keep people in touch via a mailing list.

The main focus of the last year has been attempting to care for and support one another, and for those we could in our local community, during this time of challenge. Thank you for all the ways in which each person has contributed to this.

During the year we celebrated our 160th birthday as a parish. We are grateful for God's faithfulness in the past, and the present and look forward to the future with confident hope in God as we share His love together.

David Alexander, Vicar. On behalf of the P.C.C

Warden's Report

At the moment we do not have an elected Church Warden.

Administrators report

The Parish Office has had another busy year. It's been good to see the back of working at home and to be in the office properly, seeing the church being used again for weekly services, baptisms, funerals and weddings, for clubs and groups. The office has returned to being the front line for many people contacting the church for the first time, for dropping off and picking up and many other reasons. We try to give a warm welcome and to be accessible. The work is varied, interesting and enjoyable.

My thanks go to the many volunteers helping to keep the church clean and tidy and running smoothly; a small team of people are giving help with cleaning, IT, flower arranging, silver cleaning, food bank collections, shopping, tea making and many other behind the scenes jobs. It is all much appreciated, and if anyone has an hour or two to assist please do contact me in the office for details.

Deborah Bachini

Church Flowers Report

We have done a mix of silk and real flower arrangements again this year. We have used good quality, realistic silk flowers so that they do not need attention, ie regular watering and arranging. The reason for this is that we are still looking for extra helpers to do flower arranging and also due to the cost of real flowers.

I would like to thank Ian, Mary and Christine for their help at Easter, also to Emily, Ronnie, Ryley and Victoria for making the Easter Garden.

If anyone would like to have a go at flower arrangements, I would be happy to give tips and advice. Please ask. Thank you

Linda Clitheroe

Deanery Synod Report

The Luton Deanery Synod met four times in 2022. In February we had a presentation from Rachel Johnson the Diocesan Environmental Officer. Rachel gave a detailed presentation as all parishes are encouraged to join with the national and diocesan Church of England targets of reaching net zero by 2030. The emphasis is on the management of church buildings, church land and local community participation.

At our June meeting we considered Mission and ways we could collaborate more effectively. The members reflected on 3 things that we would like to do that we are not already doing. After a short presentation of these, we were encouraged to speak to others with similar ideas so that we could share and support one another.

In October we had an informative presentation by Jessica Rowlands on the Luton community chaplaincy and heard about their plans to deliver more locally focussed chaplaincy in different neighbourhoods of the town.

The November meeting included a presentation from Rev Jairo Nyaongo on the work of the diocesan racial Justice group and an invitation for parishes to take part in a survey on attitudes to those of different racial backgrounds.

During the year, the governance of Wenlock School was passed over to the diocesan Multi Academy Trust. The ethos of the school remains Christian, but it will be managed by different means. A new local governing body will also be appointed. A group that had been constituted to look at the structure of the Luton deanery met twice and an assessment was begun of the strengths and needs of our parishes.

A big thankyou to all those who represent our parishes on deanery Synod. Elections for members of Synod take place at this year's APCM and it would be good to have a full take up of places for this triennium.

David Kesterton Area Dean

With thanks to David Kesterton for sharing his report above.

Steve Dolby

Care Team

The Care Team continues to meet regularly once a month, to prayerfully and practically support the church and wider community. I am grateful for the faithfulness of the members of the care team, who are a great support to both myself and Debbie, the Parish Nurse, and vicar David. Also to our community as a whole, as they practically work as members of the body of Christ in this place.

David Newbound

Hands of Mercy

2022 marked the 25th anniversary of Hands of Mercy. What an incredible milestone! 25 years ago, the work started when one street child met David Gunn and took him to her family living in Florante Street, one of the squatter communities in Manila. David galvanised support to help their situation and Hands of Mercy was born. The contact quickly developed into reaching a whole community and over the years has spread to nine communities, impacting many thousands of lives.

The prayers, support and gifts of supporters from St. Thomas' has been invaluable. In 2022, 50 families were sponsored through the Family Support Programme, 200 children were fed through the Supplementary Feeding Programme (9,600 meals) and 217 children and teenagers were helped with their education through the Child Sponsorship Programme. Your faithful support and prayers helped to make this possible – on behalf of everyone in the Philippines, THANK YOU!

There are some challenges ahead as we face 2023 – food prices have risen considerably and pesos (the Filipino currency) don't go as far as they used to. This is a global issue but sadly, price rises affect those living in poverty the most. If you feel motivated or prompted to help further – either through sponsoring a child or family or helping wherever it's needed the most – we would love to hear from you. Please get in contact with the Hands of Mercy UK office – info@handsofmercyph.org or call Denise, our administrator, on 07467 127023.

Thank you again for being part of the Hands of Mercy story and we look forward to the next 25 years and beyond!

God bless you,

Samantha Graham, Chair, and the UK Trustees, Hands of Mercy International

Samantha Graham, Chair, and the UK Trustees, Hands of Mercy International

Home Group

Our home group meets weekly on Thursday evenings in the comfort of our lounge. Usually, there are 7 or 8 of us and we have been meeting regularly now for a number of years apart from when we had to pause the meetings to comply with lockdown regulations.

The objectives of our home group are to try and get to know God better and to try to learn more about his plans for us all, both as individuals and as a community, through studying the bible, praying and learning from each other; to grow closer together in friendship and trust and to support each other through the ups and downs of life.

When studying the bible we, during one term followed the Sunday sermon series, during another we looked at various short books alternating weekly between the Old and the New Testament. We decide together what we would like to look at. However we are not always as studious as this sounds, we have many laughs and definitely value each others' friendships and respect each others' opinions. We ensure that we have at least one meeting a term that is a social, when we share a meal together.

If anyone would like to know more then please do not hesitate to talk with either Ruth, me or any member of the group, or come and join us for a couple of weeks. You would be very welcome, – no commitment necessary.

Ian Marshall

Lunch Club

I am delighted that this year we have been able to resume the Lent lunches. I am also very grateful to Maggie and her daughter Kerri and to Jean, who have worked tirelessly behind the scenes to make these little lunches the success they are. All money raised this year will be going to the Turkish and Syrian people after the recent earthquake.

God bless

David Newbound

Parish Nurse

My Parish Nurse role has been in operation now for 4 years and is going from strength to strength, thanks be to God

I have an Alzheimers group that runs every 3rd Wednesday (see news letter for details). Also a twins group which runs every month and just recently I have started the St Thomas Parish Nurse cancer support group for those suffering from cancer and those supporting them. This group is supported by Macmillian in which a grant was given, this group happens on the last Friday of the month, see The Messenger for details

Mr Steve Dolby has been paramount in obtaining grants for my ministry which is paramount to its continuation.

My plan for the future is that in Jan 2024 I will begin full time parish nurse ministry at the church with much more plans for wellbeing and health promotion. My wellbeing coffee morning has been a great success with 40 plus people attending.

I would like to thank my husband David (Director of Pastoral Care) for his ongoing love and support, to Steve Dolby for his continued hard work as my fundraiser and accessing Grants etc and generally supporting all I do. Also Deborah and Neil for their ongoing support.

And last but not least David and Jane for prayers support and love and the love of the St Thomas's church family

I am available at the moment for one to one appointments and chats on a Wednesday 10am to 4pm, please contact me and during my wellbeing coffee morning I am available for personal chats and blood pressure checks also

Many thanks for your ongoing support and look forward to ongoing service with you

Debbie Newbound

Pastoral Care Report

Over the last 12 months, I've had the privilege to accompany people from the church community and the wider community in their personal journeys, to listen to their stories, to share their hopes and fears, to walk with them in their daily lives. For all that has been given, and for all that has been received, thank you, but above all thanks and praise to God. Much of these interactions and conversations take place quietly and remain hidden. But what a privilege it is to share in your stories, your hopes and your heart aches, and to accompany you on your spiritual and life journeys. May God bless us all. David.

David Newbound
Director or Pastoral Care

Safeguarding

Judi Kingham has decided to stand down from the Team after many years service. Hopefully we will be able to announce a successor for Judi at the AGM.

The safeguarding team manage the applications for DBS police checks for anyone who works with children or vulnerable adults in the church. We also try to ensure that the church is a safe place. The Church safeguarding policy complies to the guidelines laid down by St Albans Diocese and Church of England.

Linda Clitheroe
Safeguarding Officer

Stewardship Report

The year 2022 is another year most people wish to forget. It has been a year of an increase in the cost of living, strikes, working from home, job losses and bereavements. With this difficult situation, which has affected all of us in some way, I wish to thank everyone who has faithfully been committed to supporting our Church this financial year (2022).

As at 31st. December, 2022 the membership of the Scheme was 62. (couples count as one). A net reduction of 4 from the previous year.

As you can appreciate, with increased running costs year on year, regular stewardship giving and donations are more important than ever. This is because St. Thomas's costs exceed its income for the fourth year in succession. Legacy monies, which should be put aside to maintain the fabric of the Church are being used to make up the deficit,

However, stewardship is not only about money, it is also about giving time and practical help to St. Thomas's Church. There is always a need for Sunday Club helpers, refreshment volunteers, and also cleaners, litter pickers and people to carry out odd jobs, etc. The list is endless. If you are in a position to help, please talk to the Administrator in the Parish Office.

Finally, I would ask that you take this opportunity to pray and reflect on your giving. If you would like to join the Stewardship Scheme and make regular donations please ask me, the Treasurer or the Parish Administrator for details.

Leslie Sims - Stewardship Secretary

Sunday Club Review

St Thomas Church Sunday Club

Our first full year back to 'normality' and what a wonderful year it has been. We have a lovely group of regular children now and often visiting children with often more than 10 who all enjoy activities during our Sunday morning service.

Throughout the year we have met each week and looked at both the New and Old Testament. On the first Sunday of each month, we have joined the 'grown ups' in church for the all age service and the rest of the month we have met in the hall we growing in our journey with Jesus and God through prayer, discussions, activities, games, stories and crafts.

As well as our regular meeting we have had some wonderful events, our Easter party was a great success, we shared a picnic in the park with friends, family and our church family as a whole where the children competed in the crazy golf and enjoyed the scavenger hunt. We won the judges prize in the Stopsley scarecrow festival, the Christmas market and the children shared our wonderful nativity in church in December and finished off the year with the epiphany party.

As a team we feel we are in a positive place, we have support from helpers who join us for a session or 2 a term and are invaluable to the success of Sunday club and imperative to us being able to continue.

We would like to take this opportunity to invite any members of the congregation to come in and see what we do, lend a hand and possibly join our team of helpers.

Looking forwards we are hoping for more outings, more parties, more activities and more fun enjoying our spiritual journey together.
In partnership with Stopsley Baptist Church around 100 people, including our Sunday Club members and Parishioners, attended a Light Party on 31st October, which was held at Haverings. The children enjoyed games, crafts, food and a bonfire and much fun was had by all. Thanks to Angela, Richard and Jo White for all their work for the event.

Sara Hillyard

Treasurer's Annual Report Year ended 31st December 2022

Once again this has been a challenging financial year for our Church. While our total income excluding legacies increased by 10% from 2021, total expenditure also increased by 5%, mainly due to increased services following the lifting of Covid restrictions

We were very fortunate to have received a large Legacy from the Estate of Jim Gabriel which has enabled us to continue our activities at a similar level to past years without having to make some very difficult financial decisions. In the absence of this legacy, we would have reported a deficit of £30,126 which is obviously not sustainable.

I am sure that 2023 will again be a challenging year. The Parish Share has further increased by £1,038 to £63,268 and with the age of the building it is unlikely that we will not incur some level of expenditure to maintain it in a good condition. We also will be exposed to the full impact of increased electric and gas prices as our existing contracts expire.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to express thanks to the people who help with the handling of the Church Cash and Accounting:
Deborah Bachini who helps count and record the Collections at each Service;
Les Sims who deals with the envelope giving and gift aid return; and
Sarah Vyvyan who has operated the Church PAYE scheme.
We are also very appreciative of Natasha Wilcox, who at extremely short notice carried out the Independent Examination of our 2022 Accounts.

Neil Rolls
(Hon. Treasurer St Thomas' PCC) *15 May 2023*

Independent Examiner's Report to the PCC of St Thomas' Church, Stopsley, Luton

This report on the accounts of the PCC for the year ended 31 December 2022, which are set out on pages 2 to 7 is in respect of an examination carried out under Regulation 3(3) of the Church Accounting Regulations 2006 and under section 145 of the Charities Act 2011(the 2011Act).

Respective responsibilities of trustees end examiner

As the members of the PCC you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts, you consider that the audit requirement of Regulation 3(3) of the Church Accounting Regulations 2006 and under section 144(2) of the Charities Act 2011 (the 2011 Act) do not apply and that an independent examination is needed. It is my responsibility to issue this report on those accounts in accordance with the terms of Regulation 25 of the Church Accounting Regulations 2006 and Regulation 7 of the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 1995.

Basis of Independent examiners report

My examination was carried out in accordance with the general Directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from 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 no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair view' and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

Independent examiner's statement

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

1. Which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements
- To keep accounting records in accordance with section 130 of the 2011 Act; and
- To prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the 2011 Act have not been met; or

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

Signed: N. Wilcox

Date: 21 May 2023

Natasha Wilcox
1 Furze Close
Luton
LU2 7UB

St Thomas' P.C.C. Stopsley, Luton
Statement of Financial Activities
For the year ended 31st December 2022

Incoming Resources (all unrestricted)

	Note	2022	2021
		£	£
Incoming resources from donors	2(a)	220,294	71,538
Other voluntary incoming resources	2(b)	9,974	3,507
Income from charitable & ancillary trading	2(c)	191	40
Other ordinary incoming resources	2(d)	2,822	3,509
Total Non-Designated Incoming resources		233,281	78,595
Resources Used			
Grants	3(a)	1,774	826
Activities directly relating to the work of the Church	3(b)	98,178	95,631
Publicity, Church management & admin.	3(c)	1,632	456
		101,584	96,913
Net Annual Surplus / (Deficit)		131,697	(18,318)

St Thomas' P.C.C. Stopsley, Luton
Balance Sheet as at 31st December 2022

	Note	2022 £	2021 £
Fixed Assets	4	1,477	1,253
Current Assets			
Debtors	5	4,223	3,511
Bank Accounts		171,587	42,826
Cash		23	47
		175,833	46,384
Liabilities: Amounts due within one year	6	8,672	10,696
Net current assets		167,161	35,688
Total assets less current liabilities		168,638	36,941
Funds			
General Account	7	0	0
Legacy Funds	8	167,563	35,866
Youth Project		1,075	1,075
		168,638	36,941

TREASURER'S STATEMENT

I have prepared the financial statements on pages 2 to 7 for the year ended 31 December 2022

Signed : N Rolls

Treasurer : Neil Rolls Date: 21 May 2023

APPROVED by the Church Meeting held on 21 May 2023 and signed on its behalf by:

Signed :

Reverend David Alexander (Chairman) Date: 21 May 2023

St Thomas' P.C.C. Stopsley, Luton
Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year ended 31 December 2022

1. Accounting Policies

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the Church Accounting Regulations 2006 together with applicable accounting standards and the Charities SORP.

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention except for the valuation of investment assets, which are shown at market value.

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. Funds designated for a particular purpose by the PCC are also unrestricted.

The accounts include all transactions, assets and liabilities for which the PCC is responsible in law. They do not include the accounts of church groups that owe their main affiliation to another body nor those that are informal gatherings of Church members.

Incoming Resources
Voluntary income and capital sources
Collections are recognised when received by or on behalf of the PCC.
Planned giving receivable under covenant is recognised only when received.
Income tax recoverable on covenants or 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 and the amount due,

Income from investments
Interest is accounted for when received.
Resources Used
Activities directly relating to the work of the Church

Fixed Assets
Consecrated land and buildings and movable church furnishings
Consecrated and beneficed property is excluded from the accounts by s.96 (2)(a) of the Charities Act 1993.

No value is placed on movable church furnishings held by the churchwardens on special trust for the PCC and which require a faculty for disposal since the PCC considers this to be inalienable property.

St Thomas' P.C.C. Stopsley, Luton

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year ended 31st December 2022

Equipment

Office Equipment and sound equipment is depreciated on the straight line basis at a rate of 33.3% per annum.

Churchyard Maintenance Equipment is depreciated on the reducing balance basis at a rate of 30% per annum.

Individual items of Equipment with a purchase price of £250 or less are written off when the asset is acquired.

Current Assets

Amounts owing to the PCC at 31 December are shown as debtors less provision for amounts that may prove uncollectible.

2. Incoming resources (all unrestricted)

	Note	2022	2021
		£	£
2(a) Incoming from donors			
Planned Giving		43,562	46,005
Gift Day		2,355	0
Income Tax recoverable		9,418	10,031
Collections (open plate) at all Services		2,668	1,580
Collections (credit card) at all Services		468	109
Legacies		161,823	13,813
		220,294	71,538
2(b) Other voluntary incoming resources			
Coffee mornings, Lunches & Teas		699	15
Hire of and Donations for use of hall		1,100	720
Social Events		1,285	0
Miscellaneous Donations & Receipts		3,004	1,366
Parish Nursing Donations & Receipts		3,886	1,406
		9,974	3,507
2(c) Income from charitable and ancillary trading			
Magazine Subscriptions		191	40
Magazine Adverts		0	0
		191	40
2(d) Other ordinary income resources			
Wedding and funeral fees & receipts		2,822	3,509

St Thomas' P.C.C. Stopsley, Luton

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year ended 31st December 2022

3 Resources Used	2022 £	2021 £
3(a) Grants to Charities		
World Relief	1,042	10
World Mission	0	0
UK Social Concern/Relief	192	16
UK Church Mission	540	800
	1,774	826
3(b) Activities directly relating to the work of the Church		
Ministry: Parish Share	62,268	62,469
Clergy Expenses	3,724	3,639
Pastoral Worker	4,914	4,680
Pastoral Discretionary Expenditure	0	0
Church Office Wages	8,139	6,783
Church: Running Expenses	7,067	7,474
Routine Maintenance	4,516	2,163
Major Repairs	0	2,400
Service Costs	2,491	1,766
Parish Nursing	1,985	1,023
Depreciation	798	1,198
Telephone Charges	1,530	1,824
Miscellaneous	746	212
	98,178	95,631
3(c) Publicity, Church Management & Administration		
Stationery & printing (incl. magazine)	1,462	1,006
Independent Examiner's fee	120	(600)
Miscellaneous	50	50
	1,632	456

St Thomas' P.C.C. Stopsley, Luton

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year ended 31st December 2022

4. Fixed Assets

	Sound Equipment	Office Equipment	Churchyard Equipment	Total
Cost/Valuation				
At 1 January 2022	10,233	6,644	1,540	18,417
Additions during year	0	1,022	0	1,022
Disposals	0	0	(1,540)	(1,540)
At 31 December 2022	10,233	7,666	0	17,899
Depreciation				
At 1 January 2022	10,233	5,391	1,540	17,164
Charge for year	0	798	0	798
Disposals	0	0	(1,540)	(1,540)
At 31 December 2022	10,233	6,189	0	16,422
Net Book Value				
At 31 December 2022	0	1,477	0	1,477
At 31 December 2021	0	1,253	0	1,253

5. Debtors

	2022 £	2021 £
Income Tax recoverable	3,958	3,246
Other Debtors	265	265
	4,223	3,511

6. Liabilities: Amounts due within one year

Donations	990	660
Other Creditors & Accruals	7,682	10,036
	8,672	10,696

7. Funds

	General Account	Legacy Funds (Unresticted)	Youth Project	Total
At 1 January 2022	0	35,866	1,075	36,941
Surplus/(Deficit) for the year	0	131,697	0	131,697
At 31 December 2022	0	167,563	1,075	168,638

8. Legacy Funds

	2022 £	2021 £
B Cox	0	22,079
John McBeath	0	5,000
Josie Cumberland	5,740	8,787
Jim Gabriel	161,823	0
	167,563	35,866

Independent Examiner's Report to the PCC of St Thomas' Church, Stopsley, Luton

This report on the accounts of the PCC for the year ended 31 December 2022, which are set out on pages 2 to 7 is in respect of an examination carried out under Regulation 3(3) of the Church Accounting Regulations 2006 and under section 145 of the Charities Act 2011(the 2011Act).

Respective responsibilities of trustees end examiner

As the members of the PCC you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts, you consider that the audit requirement of Regulation 3(3) of the Church Accounting Regulations 2006 and under section 144(2) of the Charities Act 2011 (the 2011 Act) do not apply and that an independent examination is needed. It is my responsibility to issue this report on those accounts in accordance with the terms of Regulation 25 of the Church Accounting Regulations 2006 and Regulation 7 of the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 1995.

Basis of Independent examiners report

My examination was carried out in accordance with the general Directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from 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 no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair view' and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

Independent examiner's statement

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

1. Which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements
- To keep accounting records in accordance with section 130 of the 2011 Act; and
- To prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the 2011 Act have not been met; or

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

Signed: N. Wilcox

Date: 21 May 2023

Natasha Wilcox
1 Furze Close
Luton
LU2 7UB

St Thomas' P.C.C. Stopsley, Luton
Statement of Financial Activities
For the year ended 31st December 2022

Incoming Resources (all unrestricted)

	Note	2022	2021
		£	£
Incoming resources from donors	2(a)	220,294	71,538
Other voluntary incoming resources	2(b)	9,974	3,507
Income from charitable & ancillary trading	2(c)	191	40
Other ordinary incoming resources	2(d)	2,822	3,509
Total Non-Designated Incoming resources		233,281	78,595
Resources Used			
Grants	3(a)	1,774	826
Activities directly relating to the work of the Church	3(b)	98,178	95,631
Publicity, Church management & admin.	3(c)	1,632	456
		101,584	96,913
Net Annual Surplus / (Deficit)		131,697	(18,318)

St Thomas' P.C.C. Stopsley, Luton
Balance Sheet as at 31st December 2022

	Note	2022 £	2021 £
Fixed Assets	4	1,477	1,253
Current Assets			
Debtors	5	4,223	3,511
Bank Accounts		171,587	42,826
Cash		23	47
		175,833	46,384
Liabilities: Amounts due within one year	6	8,672	10,696
Net current assets		167,161	35,688
Total assets less current liabilities		168,638	36,941
Funds			
General Account	7	0	0
Legacy Funds	8	167,563	35,866
Youth Project		1,075	1,075
		168,638	36,941

TREASURER'S STATEMENT

I have prepared the financial statements on pages 2 to 7 for the year ended 31 December 2022

Signed : N Rolls

Treasurer : Neil Rolls Date: 21 May 2023

APPROVED by the Church Meeting held on 21 May 2023 and signed on its behalf by:

Signed :

Reverend David Alexander (Chairman) Date: 21 May 2023

St Thomas' P.C.C. Stopsley, Luton
Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year ended 31 December 2022

1. Accounting Policies

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the Church Accounting Regulations 2006 together with applicable accounting standards and the Charities SORP.

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention except for the valuation of investment assets, which are shown at market value.

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. Funds designated for a particular purpose by the PCC are also unrestricted.

The accounts include all transactions, assets and liabilities for which the PCC is responsible in law. They do not include the accounts of church groups that owe their main affiliation to another body nor those that are informal gatherings of Church members.

Incoming Resources
Voluntary income and capital sources
Collections are recognised when received by or on behalf of the PCC.
Planned giving receivable under covenant is recognised only when received.
Income tax recoverable on covenants or 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 and the amount due,

Income from investments
Interest is accounted for when received.
Resources Used
Activities directly relating to the work of the Church

Fixed Assets
Consecrated land and buildings and movable church furnishings
Consecrated and beneficed property is excluded from the accounts by s.96 (2)(a) of the Charities Act 1993.

No value is placed on movable church furnishings held by the churchwardens on special trust for the PCC and which require a faculty for disposal since the PCC considers this to be inalienable property.

St Thomas' P.C.C. Stopsley, Luton

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year ended 31st December 2022

Equipment

Office Equipment and sound equipment is depreciated on the straight line basis at a rate of 33.3% per annum.

Churchyard Maintenance Equipment is depreciated on the reducing balance basis at a rate of 30% per annum.

Individual items of Equipment with a purchase price of £250 or less are written off when the asset is acquired.

Current Assets

Amounts owing to the PCC at 31 December are shown as debtors less provision for amounts that may prove uncollectible.

2. Incoming resources (all unrestricted)

	Note	2022	2021
		£	£
2(a) Incoming from donors			
Planned Giving		43,562	46,005
Gift Day		2,355	0
Income Tax recoverable		9,418	10,031
Collections (open plate) at all Services		2,668	1,580
Collections (credit card) at all Services		468	109
Legacies		161,823	13,813
		220,294	71,538
2(b) Other voluntary incoming resources			
Coffee mornings, Lunches & Teas		699	15
Hire of and Donations for use of hall		1,100	720
Social Events		1,285	0
Miscellaneous Donations & Receipts		3,004	1,366
Parish Nursing Donations & Receipts		3,886	1,406
		9,974	3,507
2(c) Income from charitable and ancillary trading			
Magazine Subscriptions		191	40
Magazine Adverts		0	0
		191	40
2(d) Other ordinary income resources			
Wedding and funeral fees & receipts		2,822	3,509

St Thomas' P.C.C. Stopsley, Luton

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year ended 31st December 2022

3 Resources Used	2022 £	2021 £
3(a) Grants to Charities		
World Relief	1,042	10
World Mission	0	0
UK Social Concern/Relief	192	16
UK Church Mission	540	800
	1,774	826
3(b) Activities directly relating to the work of the Church		
Ministry: Parish Share	62,268	62,469
Clergy Expenses	3,724	3,639
Pastoral Worker	4,914	4,680
Pastoral Discretionary Expenditure	0	0
Church Office Wages	8,139	6,783
Church: Running Expenses	7,067	7,474
Routine Maintenance	4,516	2,163
Major Repairs	0	2,400
Service Costs	2,491	1,766
Parish Nursing	1,985	1,023
Depreciation	798	1,198
Telephone Charges	1,530	1,824
Miscellaneous	746	212
	98,178	95,631
3(c) Publicity, Church Management & Administration		
Stationery & printing (incl. magazine)	1,462	1,006
Independent Examiner's fee	120	(600)
Miscellaneous	50	50
	1,632	456

St Thomas' P.C.C. Stopsley, Luton

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year ended 31st December 2022

4. Fixed Assets

	Sound Equipment	Office Equipment	Churchyard Equipment	Total
Cost/Valuation				
At 1 January 2022	10,233	6,644	1,540	18,417
Additions during year	0	1,022	0	1,022
Disposals	0	0	(1,540)	(1,540)
At 31 December 2022	10,233	7,666	0	17,899
Depreciation				
At 1 January 2022	10,233	5,391	1,540	17,164
Charge for year	0	798	0	798
Disposals	0	0	(1,540)	(1,540)
At 31 December 2022	10,233	6,189	0	16,422
Net Book Value				
At 31 December 2022	0	1,477	0	1,477
At 31 December 2021	0	1,253	0	1,253

5. Debtors

	2022 £	2021 £
Income Tax recoverable	3,958	3,246
Other Debtors	265	265
	4,223	3,511

6. Liabilities: Amounts due within one year

Donations	990	660
Other Creditors & Accruals	7,682	10,036
	8,672	10,696

7. Funds

	General Account	Legacy Funds (Unresticted)	Youth Project	Total
At 1 January 2022	0	35,866	1,075	36,941
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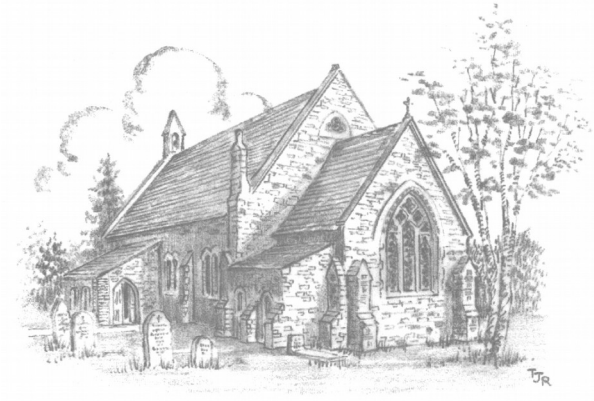
Jim Gabriel	161,823	0
	167,563	35,866

THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF ST THOMAS' STOPSLEY

England & Wales - Charity number 1175152

Accounts

St Thomas's, Stopsley
Seeking to Share God's Love



Annual Reports
For Annual Church Meeting
2022

Welcome to our Annual Report for 2022.
We invite you to our Annual Church Meeting on May 22 and also to read the reports below.

AGENDA
Stopsley Parish Church ACM 2022
22 May 2022, After 10am Service in the Church

- **Welcome and Prayer**
- **Election of Secretary for the Meeting**
- **Apologies**
- **Minutes of the previous Annual Church Meeting**

MEETING OF PARISHIONERS OF STOPSLEY
Open to members of the Church family and residents of the parish (only Church electoral roll members and parish residents on local government electoral roll may vote).

- **Election of Churchwardens**
  Election of 2 Churchwardens

ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING
open to members of the Church family (only Church electoral roll members may vote)

- **Vicar's Report**
- **PCC Report** (Report is part of our Annual Report, and has been posted on Public Folder and has a link from the weekly email)
- **Finance (Accounts are posted on Public Folder), including**
  - **Election of: Independent Examiner for the accounts.**
  - **Financial Report & Independently Examined Accounts for previous year.**
  - **Stewardship Report – report in Annual Report, posted on Public Folder**
- **Annual Reports** – parishioners are encouraged to read the Annual Report on the Public Folder in advance of the meeting.
- **Election of Parochial Church Councillors and Deanery Synod Representatives**
  - **Deanery Synod Elected Representatives**
  - **Parochial Church Councillors**

  (N.B Election of Sidesmen/women or Welcomers is now the responsibility of the PCC)
- **Any Other Business**
- **Date of next PCC meeting**
- **Closing Prayer**

St Thomas's, Stopsley

Parish Profile & Mission Action Plan

Mission Statement: *Seeking to Share God's Love.*

- We seek to be a ***Mission-orientated*** evangelistic church, intent on sharing God's love with all in our local community, and beyond.
- We aim to reach out in ***love*** to all we can, witnessing for Christ through word and action.
- We wish to be a ***welcoming community*** in all we do.
- We offer a wide range of worship styles, including ***established*** services and ***Fresh Expressions*** for those presently unchurched and newcomers.
- We are aware of our need to be prayerful, seeking the power of the ***Holy Spirit*.**
- We value being taught from the ***Scriptures***, desiring that they are expounded in a relevant and inspirational way.
- We endeavour to be a ***pastoral*** church, caring for the Church family and any others we can.
- We are a ***servant*** church seeking to serve people in our community and town, and further afield, in practical and caring ways in the name of Jesus.
- We prize our history and are ***forward-looking*** in faith to what God will do through us in the future.
- We are a ***friendly*** church, valuing fellowship, eating together, homegroups and hospitality.

SOME PARISH DETAILS

Population : 10,000 approx. (This figure gives some idea of the 'pastoral area' for our church, rather than exact count of the population).

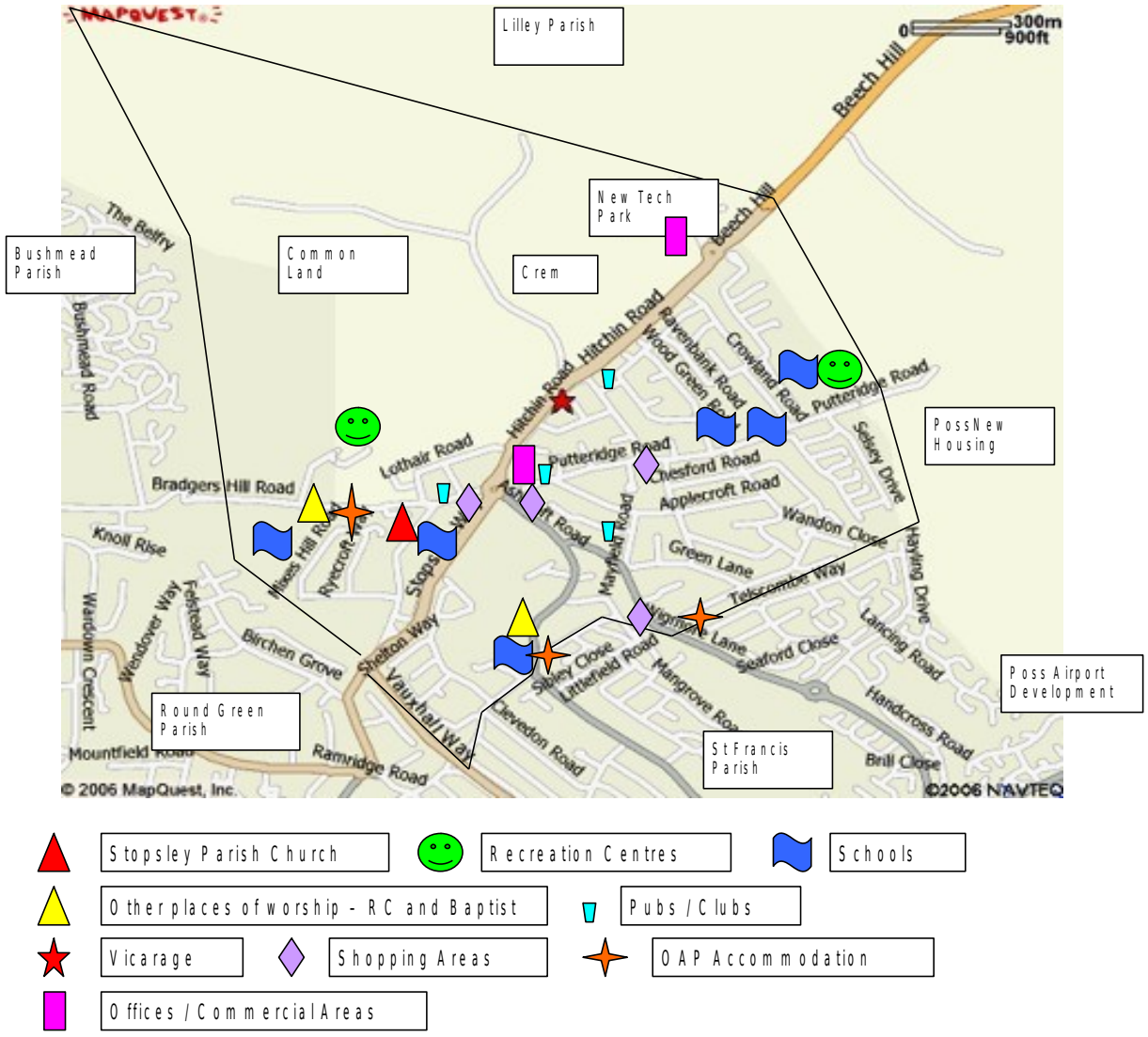
Location : North East area of Luton, at the boundary with Herts. The parish includes the wards of Stopsley and Putteridge. The busy A505 from Luton to Hitchin runs through the parish and separates the church geographically from much of the rest of the parish.

Type[s] of housing : Mainly owner occupied, with some rented accommodation, and pockets of housing association or council property.

Community facilities : Two high schools, two primary schools, one special needs school, and a large sports complex with Olympic swimming and diving facilities.

History of the community : In 1862, when the church was built, Stopsley was a village. Over the years since then Luton has gradually swallowed it up and it is now a suburb of the town. Some of the major employers of people in the community over the past 100 years have closed or declined in size, but employment remains fairly high. The airport and the car industry are major employers.

Parish boundaries: No longer quite the same natural cohesive community that it once was but boundaries mainly make sense except confusing boundary on Ramridge Estate with St. Francis.



PARTNERSHIP IN WORSHIP, MISSION & MINISTRY
We are active participants in the Luton Deanery in working together in mission to our town of Luton.

In the early 1990's we planted Christchurch, Bushmead, a thriving church largely within what was the much larger former parish of Stopsley.

Other Christian Churches : we have a good friendly relationship with Stopsley Baptist Church and Ramridge Baptist Church with whom we have co-operated on various events and projects. SBC has a much bigger congregation, and with its better facilities and style of worship it attracts younger people and people from a wider area. We have different styles of worship but complement one another in our evangelistic task. We have friendly relations with Sacred Heart (RC). Ministers are involved in local and town wide fraternals, and we also participate in a local evangelical hub for prayer and mission, and a similar but larger grouping for the whole town.

Annual Parish Report on 2021 (Prepared for AGM 2022)
by Stopsley (St Thomas) Parish Church Council (PCC)
Charity Number: 1175152

Background – What is the PCC?

Stopsley Parish Church P.C.C. has the responsibility of co-operating with the incumbent, the Reverend David Alexander, in promoting in the ecclesiastical parish of Stopsley the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical. Our Parish Mission Statement is as follows: **Seeking to share God's love with everyone.**

Membership – Who is on the PCC?

Members of the P.C.C are either ex officio or elected by the Annual Church Meeting (properly known as the Annual Parochial Church Meeting) in accordance with the Church Representation Rules.

During 2021 (after the 2021 AGM) the following served as members of the P. C. C:

Ex-officio Members

1. David Alexander (Vicar, Chairman)
2. Churchwarden – vacant
3. Churchwarden – vacant

Elected Lay Representatives (We are entitled to 12 elected representatives)
(The rules state: 6 reps if up to 50 on the Electoral roll
9 reps if up to 100 on the Electoral roll
12 reps if up to 200 on the Electoral roll
15 reps if over 200 on the Electoral roll)

	Elected	Year Elected	Term of Office	Term Ends
1	Julie Bailey	2019	3yr	2022
2	John Kingham	2019	3yr	2022
3	Stewart Leary	2019	3yr	2022
4	Stella Marshall	2019	3yr	2022
5	Linda Clitheroe	2021	2yr	2023
6	Ian Marshall	2021	2yr	2023
7	Charlotte Zhivago	2021	2yr	2023
8	Louise Winter	2021	2yr	2023
9	John Alexander	2021	3yr	2024
10	Deborah Bachini	2021	3yr	2024
11	David Newbound	2021	3yr	2024
12	Neil Rolls	2021	3yr	2024

***Elected Representatives on Deanery Synod** (automatically also serve on the PCC)*

1 Christine Younger	2021	2yr	2023
2 Steve Dolby	2021	2yr	2023
3 Vacant	2020	3yr	2023

*** We have between 100-199 names on our electoral roll and so are entitled to 3 Elected Deanery Synod Representatives.*

NB Clergy of the church also serve on the Deanery Synod

Co-opted PCC Member(s)

1 Rosemary Stipta	Co-opted	1yr	2022

Office came to end at APCM 2021

PCC Members: Karen Ritchie, Neil Rolls*, David Newbound* and John Alexander*

Deanery Synod Members : Nil

*(Any names marked * were office holders and so eligible for re-election)*

Elections at 2022 AGM

We are very appreciative of the significant contributions of the PCC members coming to the end of their period of office. Under the present rules in place for our PCC, elected members who have served for 3 years, apart from 'office holders'*, are not eligible for re-election until 12 months after the end of their term of office.

Julie Bailey, John Kingham, Stewart Leary, Stella Marshall

*(Any names marked * are eligible for re-election as they are office holders)*

There will be elections for the following positions:

4 PCC member(s)	to serve for 3 years to 2025
0 PCC member(s)	to serve for 2 years to 2024
0 PCC member(s)	to serve for 1 year to 2023
1 Deanery Synod member(s)**	to serve to 2023

** *NB Since 2020 Deanery Synod representatives can only serve for two successive 3 year terms (i.e. for a maximum of 6 years)*

Committees - Standing Committee

The Standing Committee is the only committee required by law, and is our only official committee. It has power to transact the business of the P.C.C between its meetings, subject to any directions given by the council. We also have had a number of 'Action Church Teams' (ACTs) that organise activities, or discuss matters, as directed by the P.C.C. and Vicar. These haven't been meeting during covid, but we are looking to restart them as appropriate.

PCC Electoral Roll Report

There are 132 parishioners now on the Church Electoral Roll. This represents a change of minus 2 from the previous year's ACM Electoral Roll. These changes are due to parishioners moving, changing church, death or people who live outside the parish and no longer regularly attend St Thomas's.

PCC Review of the Year

This past year has been, like the previous one, very different for the normal life of our church. The first half had very little organised activities due to the covid restrictions. The latter half of the year and into 2022 has seen a gradual opening up of services and some activities, but we have some way to go yet. We are grateful to all members of the church family, and those who have associated themselves with us, in keeping in touch with one another and seeking to support each other, practically and spiritually. There have been many phone calls, emails and messages – and much prayer for each other. Thank you to you all.

We are also especially thankful for the wonderful pastoral support offered by David Newbound as Pastoral Worker, Debbie Newbound as Parish Nurse and Deborah Bachini, who, in addition to keeping the Church Office operating as a connection point in difficult circumstances, has helped in ringing members of the church to offer support. When we have been able to meet for services we have been very careful to keep one another safe. Thank you to everyone who has worn face coverings and kept socially distant from those from different households. This has been a real challenge for us all as we longed to encourage one another.

Thank you also to those who have cleaned the church building before and after the services and operated the 'Track and Trace' system.

We have livestreamed a daily 'Prayer and Share' to those who could join us via Facebook Live, and those who connected later via Facebook, Google Public Folder, YouTube and the website. As well as many church members, we have been joined by others, both locally and around the country and the world. In addition, we held Coffee by Zoom until we could meet up with one another physically again. We also now livestream all our services since they restarted in the church building. We are grateful to all who have made this possible, especially John Pinnock and Rosemary Stipta, and for excellent advice from Andrew Pinnock.

During lockdown, and beyond, we have delivered letters and cards to all our church members and contacts, including a simple prayer sheet which people could use daily, even if they did not have access to social media. Church members have been involved in volunteering and delivering food and medicines to those in need. We have also worked hard at producing a weekly email to keep people in touch via a mailing list.

The main focus of the last year has been attempting to care for and support one another, and for those we could in our local community, during a time of great difficulty and challenge. Thank you for all the ways in which each person has risen to the challenge. We look forward to the future with confident hope in God as we share His love together.

David Alexander, Vicar. On behalf of the P.C.C

Warden's Report

At the moment we do not have an elected Churchwarden.

Administrators report
I have alternated between working from home and the office during the past year and my thanks go to David A and David N for supporting me to work very flexibly.

The office work has been very varied, but enjoyable, and each new day brings a different challenge or task to deal with. It's been wonderful to see the church building being used again for weekly services, baptisms, funerals and weddings, for clubs and groups and for people to be able to pop in to say hello when they come to empty the Foodbank box, clean the silver etc. We continue to wear masks and try to stagger our times in the office to maintain social distancing as much as possible. However using the building again means stepping up on the weekly cleaning and thanks go to all the volunteers who do much of this work.

Many thanks to David White and Frank Weedon for sorting all the plate money over the years and taking it to the bank. Both have now 'retired' from this role so the office has taken it on whilst in the pandemic, until a replacement can be found - and I echo the Stewardship Secretary's request for people to consider taking up the Parish Stewardship Scheme.

I am grateful that Linda continues to give advice when I need help from her vast store of knowledge, and also to John P when I get stuck once again with an IT problem! Although no longer Churchwarden, Ian has continued to give me much appreciated support.
Deborah Bachini

Church Flowers Report
We have been unable to have flowers in the church in the past year, but hope to resume after Easter. If anyone would like to give money towards flowers in the church, maybe in memory of someone special, please speak to the Parish office.
Linda Clitheroe

Deanery Synod Report
Luton deanery synod met Four times during the year, twice on zoom and twice in person. There was also a barbeque held at St Marys in July. External presentations were delivered on the theme of young people and children's work, and an "Asset based approach to church growth".

The new parish of St Augustine of Canterbury with Holy Trinity Biscot came into being in October with parts of the former Biscot parish now being brought into St Andrews Blenheim Crescent and Holy Cross Marsh Farm. Holy Trinity remains open and an active place of worship and mission as a chapel of ease under the responsibility of the vicar of St Augustines. St Matthews High Town ceased to be an Anglican place of worship with responsibility for the building temporarily residing with St Marys PCC before moving to the diocese. At the end of the year the Romanian Orthodox church were in the process of negotiating a lease on the building. St Matthews parish is now absorbed into St Marys parish.

The Bishop of Bedford requested a Luton Review group be restarted to consider the future structure and resourcing of the deanery. Work also began on revising the deanery MAP.

We welcomed Simon Curtis as curate at All Saints Caddington with St Johns Farley Hill and Revd Josias de Souza as vicar of St Francis. We said farewell to Revd Jo Burke – Associate Minister, All Saints with St Peters. Our longstanding deanery secretary Valerie Dallinger very sadly died in October. Church members from across the deanery were well represented at her funeral.

It was a challenging year for the town and the deanery. The challenges bring the opportunity to listen afresh to what God is saying to us and consider new patterns for our life together going forward.
With thanks to David Kesterton for sharing his report above. Steve Dolby

Care Team
The Care Team has not meet since just before the beginning of the Pandemic. This is under review by myself (David Newbound) and Vicar (David Alexander).
David Newbound

Hands of Mercy

2021 has been another challenging year for the Philippines because of Covid. Unlike the UK, the Philippines was in lockdown for all of 2021 and struggled with a slow vaccine rollout. Prices also rose and families struggled to find work, pay the bills and buy food.

Children continued to attend school online but many struggled with this and were desperate to go back to school.

It was a year of struggle in so many ways but the support of St. Thomas' and all of our supporters was invaluable. We can't overstate how vital this has been and how families and children have been able to survive the pandemic because of this.

As of the time of writing (March 2022), things are starting to look more hopeful. The vaccine rollout has sped up significantly and there's a strong hope that

children can return to school in September (providing they are vaccinated). We are now praying that the economy will pick up as this will be needed to create jobs and provide work for many families in the squatter communities.

Despite the hardships, there is hope, and we have seen God's hand and provision in 2021. We are really grateful for the part you have played in this and for all the fundraising efforts (especially the St. Thomas' virtual concerts and John Alexander's dab hand in this!)

Thank you again to everyone who has given, prayed and supported Hands of Mercy during 2021. A massive SALAMAT ('thank you' in Tagalog)!

God bless you,

Samantha Gr *ercy International*

Home Grou
Home groups tact the Parish Office for details. *Ia*

Lunch Club
Lunch Club h

Men's Breakfasts
There were no Men's breakfasts in the last year, but they will resume in the coming year. *Ian Marshall*

Morning Prayer
Morning Prayer has been replaced by the live-streamed Prayer and Share from the Vicarage each day at 10am, and afterwards put on the Google public folder

Parish Nurs
Through the paramount in supporting th ne, going through the maze of the l happening with themselves r on loved ones in hospital

One of the bi GP appointments and getting throu

In October 2021, along with Director of Pastoral Care, we held a coffee morning that was also livestreamed, about life after Covid. It looked at support and how we can help with anxiety and other issues that arose after the time of social isolation etc. We aim to do more with this in the coming year as people find this helpful and continue to do so.

This event and all our educational coffee mornings are open to the whole community whatever their background or faith as our motto of St Thomas church is " Sharing Gods Love with Everyone".

I had to take time off from the Parish and my NHS job in Nov and have just had surgery for ongoing hip bursitis which I am now recovering from. My plan is to be back in March where I have some new ideas for educational coffee mornings and health related bible study which will be fantastic. I am looking forward to seeing you all then. God bless you
Debbie Newbound

Pastoral Care Report
I have been in contact with people over the course of the Pandemic and as we take steps to discover a new normal, which is different for each person I speak with or have been blessed to visit or meet up with. Together under the guidance of God we are seeking a positive way forward, in God's strength and with his grace and provision.
Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God and also in me. (John 14:1)
These words powerfully moved me and enabled me to support others. They convey such tenderness and love. They comfort, encourage and enable us all. For the God and his Son who is the same yesterday, today and tomorrow will see us through. They also encourage us to not only stand firm but to grow and step out in faith. Thank you for the privilege of journeying with you. God bless
David Newbound , Director or Pastoral Care

Sacristan
I cannot begin to tell you what a delight it has been to return to regular services and to see the church beginning to meet again together as things gradually and safely begin to return to some kind of normal. Until recent events have prevented me I have supported the vicar and the church family by working behind the scenes to prepare for each service (alongside those who regularly clean church silver in preparation for services). In consultation with the vicar I am now intincting communion wafers with wine so that those who attend services and receive Home Communion can share in the symbolism of receiving the bread and wine together. God bless
David Newbound

Safeguarding
We have met with David Alexander during the past year. There has been no further training though we did have a meeting with the Diocesan Safeguarding Officer. We are

compliant with what is required of us and obviously are always available via telephone should anyone need to contact us.
Judi Kingham and Linda Clitheroe, Safeguarding Officers

Social and Fundraising Team
There have been no Social events or fundraising in the last year.
Sara, Ruth and the Social Team

Stewardship Report
The year 2021 is another year most people wish to forget and look forward to a brighter 2022. It has been a year of lockdowns, working from home, job losses and bereavements.

With this difficult situation, which has affected all of us in some way, I wish to thank everyone who has faithfully been committed to supporting our Church this financial year (2021). As you can appreciate, with increased running costs year on year, regular stewardship giving and donations are more important than ever.

However, stewardship is not only about money, it is also about giving time and practical help to St. Thomas's Church. In terms of giving your time and practical help there is a need for cleaners, Sunday Club helpers, litter pickers and people to carry out odd jobs, etc. The list is endless. With the ceasing of "lockdown" and, consequently, with regular services in our church (with social distancing, etc) the cleaning of the building, particularly after services, is of paramount importance. If you are in a position to help, please talk to the Parish Administrator at the Parish Office.

As at 31st. December, 2021 the membership of the Scheme was 66 (couples count as one). A net reduction of 9 from the previous year.

Finally, I would ask that you take this opportunity to pray and reflect on your giving. If you would like to join the Stewardship Scheme and make regular donations please ask me, the Treasurer or the Parish Administrator for details.
Leslie Sims - Stewardship Secretary

STUFF (St Thomas's Unbelievably Fabulous Fun)
There were no STUFF related meetings or activities this year.
Angela and Richard Scarlett-Marshall

Sunday Club Review
The Sunday Club are now meeting again on a Sunday morning in the hall.
Sara Hillyard

St Thomas' Volunteers Group
We were a group of 8 ladies and 2 gentlemen who ran the Coffee Mornings on the first Saturday of every month. The Coffee Mornings were very popular and well attended but sadly we could only hold three Coffee Mornings in January, February and March 2020 and only managed to raise £405 that year for the church. Then, due to the Coronavirus Pandemic, the churches were shut down and everywhere went into Lockdown. We were no longer able to meet together and so were unable to hold any more Coffee Mornings especially our Annual Charity Coffee Mornings.

Unfortunately, some of us are no longer able to carry on as the Volunteers Group and hope that there are some younger people in the church who could perhaps take over and help with Coffee Mornings in the future.
Georgina Cook

Diocese of St Albans - Parish of St Thomas Stopsley
Seeking to share God's love

Minutes of the Annual Church Meeting held on Sunday 23rd May 2021 At 11.15am in the Church

Present:
David Alexander (Vicar and Chairman)
David Newbound (Director of Pastoral Care); Debbie Newbound; Deborah Bachini, Neil Rolls, Bev Rolls, Karen and Alice Ritchie, John Pinnock, Rosemary Stipta, David Stipta, Ian and Ruth Marshall, Les and Geraldine Sims, Barbara Edlin, Stella Marshall, Peggy Seng, Louise, Christine Younger, John Kingham, Margaret, Natalie.

2021.1 Welcome and Prayers
The Vicar opened the meeting by welcoming all. He explained that the meeting was being livestreamed and on Zoom (which failed shortly afterwards!). He explained that if anyone wished to speak, David N would have a microphone on a boom and it must be used to speak. He suggested that those in the church raised their hand if they wished to speak. He apologised that the Zoom meeting had failed and said that as far as he knew the people who had tried to join on Zoom were now watching on livestream. He then opened the meeting with a prayer.

2021.2 Election of Secretary for the Meeting
Rosemary Stipta was proposed as secretary by Barbara Edlin, seconded by Deborah Bachini and elected unanimously.

2021.3 Apologies
Apologies were received from Jane Alexander.

2021.4 Minutes of the previous Annual General Meeting on Sunday 25th October 2020
These had been distributed with the AGM papers and had been checked by the PCC. Acceptance was proposed by Stella Marshall, seconded by David Newbound and accepted unanimously.

2021.5 Matters Arising from the Minutes
There were no matters arising from the minutes.

MEETING OF THE PARISHIONERS OF STOPSLEY

2021.6 Election of Churchwardens
The Vicar gave thanks to the Churchwarden, Ian Marshall, for all his hard work over the last year and indeed the last 7 years. He presented Ian with a card and some gifts. Ian thanked everyone and thanked especially Ruth Marshall for her support.

David A said that although he had had discussions with a number of people, he had received no nominations. He asked people not to panic, saying we had an

excellent PCC. He said that if necessary we could call an emergency meeting or we can elect next year

ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING

2021.7 Vicar's Report
The Vicar thanked the many people who make a wonderful contribution to the church's life, including David Newbound, Debbie Newbound, Deborah Bachini, Linda Clitheroe, Ian Clitheroe, Ian Marshall, PCC, John Alexander and choir, John Pinnock and music group, Tech Team – John Pinnock, Rosemary Stipta and Andy Pinnock, Neil Rolls, Sunday Club leaders, STUFF leaders, Les Sims.

2020.8 PCC Report
The PCC report has been circulated on the public folder and people were encouraged to read it at their leisure.

2021.9 Finance Matters including (a) Election of Independent Examiner; (b) Financial Report and (c) Stewardship

a) **Election of Independent Examiner** – it was proposed by the PCC that Godfrey Laws should be elected as Independent Examiners. This was now proposed by the PCC, seconded by Ian Marshall and supported unanimously.
b) **Financial Report** – Neil Rolls presented a slide show in support of this and went through each individual slide. There were no questions. Acceptance of the accounts was proposed by David Stipta, seconded by Karen Ritchie and agreed unanimously.
c) **Stewardship** – the report had been circulated on the public folder and David Alexander thanked all for continuing donations.

2021.9 Annual Reports – David Alexander explained that these, along with the other AGM papers, were on the public folder.

2021.10 Election of PCC and Deanery Synod
The Vicar said that the Deanery Synod representatives were one person down as we could have 3 people but only have 2 – Christine Younger and Steve Dolby. Both were happy to stand for reelection. Deanery Synod reps were automatically on the PCC. Christine was nominated by Ian Marshall, seconded by Linda Clitheroe. Steve was nominated by Deborah Bachini and seconded by Ruth Marshall. David declared both duly elected.

Election of PCC:
Nominations had been received as follows:

Name	Nominated by	Seconded by
David Newbound	Gill Palmer	Deborah Bachini
Neil Rolls	Ian Marshall	John Kingham
Deborah Bachini	Gill Palmer	David Newbound
John Alexander	David Stipta	John Kingham

Linda Clitheroe	Deborah Bachini	David Newbound
Louise Winter	Deborah Bachini	David Newbound
Charlotte Zhivago	Linda Clitheroe	John Kingham
Rosemary Stipta	Karen Ritchie	Louise Winter
Ian Marshall	Stella Marshall	Louise Winter

David A commented that all of those who had reached the end of their term of office were eligible to stand again. He then went on to explain that as we had 9 nominations for 8 places there would need to be a ballot. The 4 with the most votes would be elected for 3 years, the next 4 for 2 years and the 9th one could be co-opted by PCC if members chose to do so. David A explained how the secret ballot would work and said that the votes would be counted later as those on livestream were able to vote by texting Deborah or himself.

2021.11 Any Other Business – Christine Younger raised a query about Deanery Synod saying that Stewart Leary attended the meetings but was described as a Methodist representative, so she sought clarification. David A explained that Stewart had been co-opted by the Deanery Synod to liaise with the Methodist Church and in the same way Steve also represented the Catholic Church.

2020.12 Date of Next PCC Meeting

14th June 2021 – Rosemary tendered her apologies as she will be on holiday.

2021.13 Closing Prayers

David Alexander thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting in prayer.

The meeting closed at 12.35pm.

Comments and Questions for the AGM or PCC or Vicar.

Any Comment:

Any Question:

We are also looking for more volunteers to help with welcoming, pastoral visiting, readings in church, helping with the children at Sunday Club or other activities for children or young people, refreshments, cleaning, maintenance work, etc. Let us know how you

would like to help….

Independent Examiner's Report to the PCC of
St Thomas' Church, Stopsley, Luton

This report on the accounts of the PCC for the year ended 31 December 2021, which are set out on pages 2 to 7 is in respect of an examination carried out under Regulation 3(3) of the Church Accounting Regulations 2006 and under section 145 of the Charities Act 2011 (the 2011 Act).

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

As the members of the PCC you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts, you consider that the audit requirement of Regulation 3(3) of the Church Accounting Regulations 2006 and section under section 144(2) of the Charities Act 2011 (the 2011 Act) do not apply and that an independent examination is needed. It is my responsibility to issue this report on those accounts in accordance with the terms of Regulation 25 of the Church Accounting Regulations 2006 and Regulation 7 of the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 1995.

Basis of independent examiner's report

My examination was carried out in accordance with the General Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145 of the 2011 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.

Independent examiner's statement
In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

1 Which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements
- To keep accounting records in accordance with section 130 of the 2011 Act; and
- To prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and to comply with the requirements of the Act, as also contained in the Church Accounting Regulations 2006 have not been met; or

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

Signed:

Date: 27 JUNE 2022

Howard Ashmore
Godfrey Laws & Co. Ltd
Chartered Accountants
& Registered Auditors
69 Knowl Piece
Wilbury Way
HITCHIN
Hertfordshire
SG4 0TY

St Thomas' P.C.C. Stopsley, Luton
Statement of Financial Activities
For the year ended 31st December 2021

Incoming Resources (all unrestricted)

	Note	2021	2020
		£	£
Incoming resources from donors	2(a)	71,538	117,256
Other voluntary incoming resources	2(b)	3,507	6,076
Income from charitable & ancillary trading	2(c)	40	640
Other ordinary incoming resources	2(d)	3,509	4,297
Total Non-Designated Incoming resources		78,594	128,269
Resources Used			
Grants	3(a)	826	11,470
Activities directly relating to the work of the Church	3(b)	95,631	93,322
Publicity, Church management & admin.	3(c)	456	1,043
		96,913	105,835
Net Annual Surplus / (Deficit)		(18,319)	22,434

St Thomas' P.C.C. Stopsley, Luton
Balance Sheet as at 31st December 2021

	Note	2021 £	2020 £
Fixed Assets	4	1,253	1,407
Current Assets			
Debtors	5	3,511	2,996
Bank Accounts		42,826	57,149
Cash		47	119
		46,384	60,264
Liabilities: Amounts due within one year	6	10,696	6,411
Net current assets		35,688	53,853
Total assets less current liabilities		36,941	55,260
Funds			
General Account	7	0	0
Legacy Funds	8	35,866	54,185
Youth Project		1,075	1,075
		36,941	55,260

TREASURER'S STATEMENT

I have prepared the financial statements on pages 1 to 7 for the year ended 31 December 2021

Signed : N Rolls

Treasurer : Neil Rolls Date: 22 May 2022

APPROVED by the Church Meeting held on 22 May 2022 and signed on its behalf by:

Signed :

Reverend David Alexander (Chairman) Date: 22 May 2022

St Thomas' P.C.C. Stopsley, Luton
Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year ended 31 December 2021

1. Accounting Policies

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the Church Accounting Regulations 2006 together with applicable accounting standards and the Charities SORP.

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention except for the valuation of investment assets, which are shown at market value.

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. Funds designated for a particular purpose by the PCC are also unrestricted.

The accounts include all transactions, assets and liabilities for which the PCC is responsible in law. They do not include the accounts of church groups that owe their main affiliation to another body nor those that are informal gatherings of Church members.

Incoming Resources
Voluntary income and capital sources
Collections are recognised when received by or on behalf of the PCC.
Planned giving receivable under covenant is recognised only when received.
Income tax recoverable on covenants or 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 and the amount due,

Income from investments
Interest is accounted for when received.
Resources Used
Activities directly relating to the work of the Church

Fixed Assets
Consecrated land and buildings and movable church furnishings
Consecrated and beneficed property is excluded from the accounts by s.96 (2)(a) of the Charities Act 1993.

No value is placed on movable church furnishings held by the churchwardens on special trust for the PCC and which require a faculty for disposal since the PCC considers this to be inalienable property.

St Thomas' P.C.C. Stopsley, Luton

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year ended 31st December 2021

Equipment

Office Equipment and sound equipment is depreciated on the straight line basis at a rate of 33.3% per annum.

Churchyard Maintenance Equipment is depreciated on the reducing balance basis at a rate of 30% per annum.

Individual items of Equipment with a purchase price of £250 or less are written off when the asset is acquired.

Current Assets

Amounts owing to the PCC at 31 December are shown as debtors less provision for amounts that may prove uncollectible.

2. Incoming resources (all unrestricted)

	Note	2021	2020
		£	£
2(a) Incoming from donors			
Planned Giving		46,005	44,705
Gift Day		0	0
Income Tax recoverable		10,031	9,640
Collections (open plate) at all Services		1,580	938
Collections (credit card) at all Services		109	51
Legacies		13,813	61,921
		71,538	117,256
2(b) Other voluntary incoming resources			
Coffee mornings, Lunches & Teas		15	476
Hire of and Donations for use of hall		720	525
Social Events		0	0
Miscellaneous Donations & Receipts		1,366	4,096
Parish Nursing Donations & Receipts		1,406	980
		3,507	6,076
2(c) Income from charitable and ancillary trading			
Magazine Subscriptions		40	510
Magazine Adverts		0	130
		40	640
2(d) Other ordinary income resources			
Wedding and funeral fees & receipts		3,509	4,297

St Thomas' P.C.C. Stopsley, Luton

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year ended 31st December 2021

3 Resources Used	2021 £	2020 £
3(a) Grants to Charities		
World Relief	10	4,774
World Mission	0	145
UK Social Concern/Relief	16	4,841
UK Church Mission	800	1,710
	826	11,470
3(b) Activities directly relating to the work of the Church		
Ministry: Parish Share	62,469	63,806
Clergy Expenses	3,639	3,293
Pastoral Worker	4,680	4,680
Pastoral Discretionary Expenditure	0	268
Church Office Wages	6,783	6,460
Church: Running Expenses	7,474	5,213
Routine Maintenance	2,163	2,939
Major Repairs	2,400	0
Service Costs	1,766	2,205
Parish Nursing	1,023	980
Depreciation	1,198	1,354
Telephone Charges	1,824	1,855
Miscellaneous	212	270
	95,631	93,322
3(c) Publicity, Church Management & Administration		
Stationery & printing (incl. magazine)	1,006	845
Independent Examiner's fee	(600)	120
Miscellaneous	50	78
	456	1,043

St Thomas' P.C.C. Stopsley, Luton

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year ended 31st December 2021

4. Fixed Assets

	Sound Equipment	Office Equipment	Churchyard Equipment	Total
Cost/Valuation				
At 1 January 2021	10,233	5,600	1,540	17,373
Additions during year	0	1,044	0	1,044
At 31 December 2021	10,233	6,644	1,540	18,417
Depreciation				
At 1 January 2021	10,233	4,193	1,540	15,966
Charge for year	0	1,198	0	1,198
At 31 December 2021	10,233	5,391	1,540	17,164
Net Book Value				
At 31 December 2021	0	1,253	0	1,253
At 31 December 2020	0	1,407	0	1,407

5. Debtors

	2021 £	2020 £
Income Tax recoverable	3,246	2,996
Other Debtors	265	0
	3,511	2,996

6. Liabilities: Amounts due within one year

Donations	660	330
Other Creditors & Accruals	10,036	6,081
	10,696	6,411

7. Funds

	General Account	Legacy Funds (Unresticted)	Youth Project	Total
At 1 January 2021	0	54,185	1,075	55,260
Surplus/(Deficit) for the year	0	(18,319)	0	(18,319)
At 31 December 2021	0	35,866	1,075	36,941

8. Legacy Funds

	2021 £	2020 £
B Cox	22,079	53,685
Daphnie Elsie Ward	0	500
John McBeath	5,000	0
Josie Cumberland	8,787	0
	35,866	54,185

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For the year ended 31st December 2021

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St Thomas' P.C.C. Stopsley, Luton

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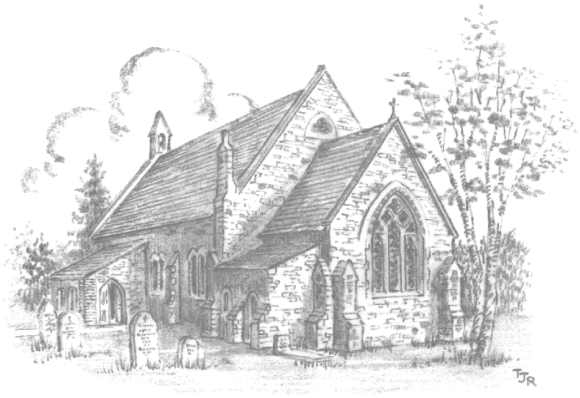
Josie Cumberland	8,787	0
	35,866	54,185

THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF ST THOMAS' STOPSLEY

England & Wales - Charity number 1175152

Accounts

St Thomas's, Stopsley
Seeking to Share God's Love



Annual Reports
For Annual Church Meeting
2021

Welcome!

Welcome to our Reports for the Annual Church Meeting 2021. It is wonderful to have you as part of our Church Family, whether you have been able to physically attend any services in the last year, or if you are part of our growing livestream and digital community, or it has unavoidably been a year of painful separation. Thank you for reading through these reports and (hopefully) attending our ACM this year – in person, or by Zoom, or on livestream. If you have any queries or comments please raise them at the meeting, or mention them privately, if you prefer, to me or to our Churchwarden or one of the Church Council (PCC) members. There is also a slip at the end of this document.

As we meet together it is important to honour one another in the life of our church family and especially all those who do so much to care for members and to reach out to our community, and beyond, with the good news of Jesus. We are truly called to seek to share God's love with everyone!

Let us be praying … that together we might be the Church God wants us to be, and the Church that Stopsley needs. And let's pray for one another as we seek to recover from this painful and difficult year

David Alexander (Vicar)

St Thomas's, Stopsley

Parish Profile & Mission Action Plan

Mission Statement: ***Seeking to Share God's Love.***

- We seek to be a ***Mission-orientated*** evangelistic church, intent on sharing God's love with all in our local community, and beyond.
- We aim to reach out in ***love*** to all we can, witnessing for Christ through word and action.
- We wish to be a ***welcoming community*** in all we do.
- We offer a wide range of worship styles, including ***established*** services and ***Fresh Expressions*** for those presently unchurched and newcomers.
- We are aware of our need to be prayerful, seeking the power of the ***Holy Spirit*****.**
- We value being taught from the ***Scriptures***, desiring that they are expounded in a relevant and inspirational way.
- We endeavour to be a ***pastoral*** church, caring for the Church family and any others we can.
- We are a ***servant*** church seeking to serve people in our community and town, and further afield, in practical and caring ways in the name of Jesus.
- We prize our history and are ***forward-looking*** in faith to what God will do through us in the future.
- We are a ***friendly*** church, valuing fellowship, eating together, homegroups and hospitality.

SOME PARISH DETAILS

Population : 10,000 approx. (This figure gives some idea of the 'pastoral area' for our church, rather than exact count of the population).

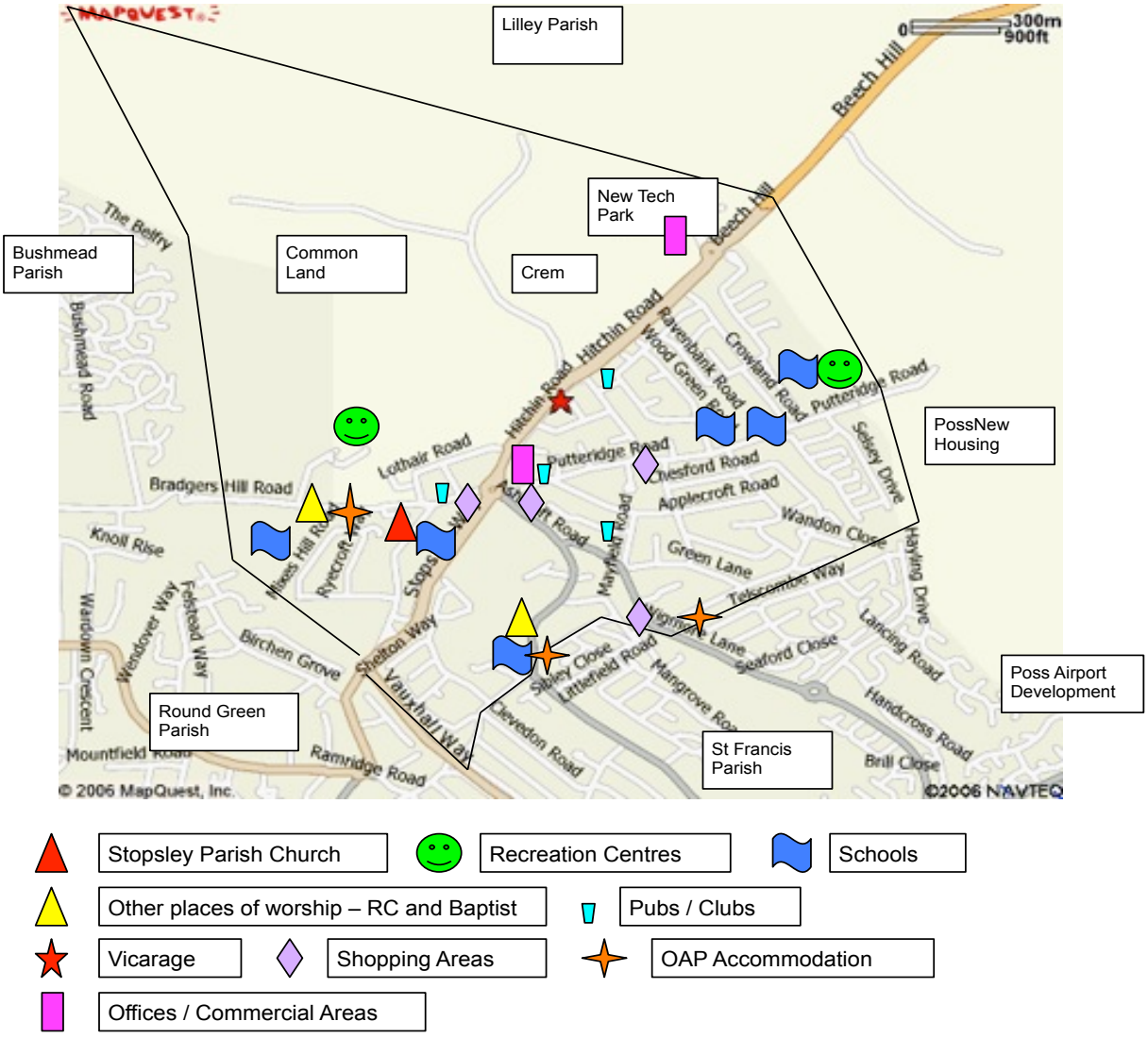
Location : North East area of Luton, at the boundary with Herts. The parish includes the wards of Stopsley and Putteridge. The busy A505 from Luton to Hitchin runs through the parish and separates the church geographically from much of the rest of the parish.

Type[s] of housing : Mainly owner occupied, with some rented accommodation, and pockets of housing association or council property.

Community facilities : Two high schools, two primary schools, one special needs school, and a large sports complex with Olympic swimming and diving facilities.

History of the community : In 1862, when the church was built, Stopsley was a village. Over the years since then Luton has gradually swallowed it up and it is now a suburb of the town. Some of the major employers of people in the community over the past 100 years have closed or declined in size, but employment remains fairly high. The airport and the car industry are major employers.

Parish boundaries: No longer quite the same natural cohesive community that it once was but boundaries mainly make sense except confusing boundary on Ramridge Estate with St. Francis.



PARTNERSHIP IN WORSHIP, MISSION & MINISTRY

We are active participants in the Luton Deanery in working together in mission to our town of Luton.

30 years ago we planted Christchurch, Bushmead, a thriving church largely within what was the much larger former parish of Stopsley.

Other Christian Churches : we have a good friendly relationship with Stopsley Baptist Church and Ramridge Baptist Church with whom we have co-operated on various events and projects. SBC has a much bigger congregation, and with its better facilities and style of worship it attracts younger people and people from a wider area. We have different styles of worship but complement one another in our evangelistic task. We have friendly relations with Sacred Heart (RC). Ministers are involved in local and town wide fraternals, and we also participate in a local evangelical hub for prayer and mission, and a similar but larger grouping for the whole town.

Annual Parish Report on 2020 (Prepared for AGM 2021)

by Stopsley (St Thomas) Parish Church Council (PCC)

Background – What is the PCC?

Stopsley Parish Church P.C.C. has the responsibility of co-operating with the incumbent, the Reverend David Alexander, in promoting in the ecclesiastical parish of Stopsley the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical. Our Parish Mission Statement is as follows: **Seeking to share God's love with everyone.**

Membership – Who is on the PCC?

Members of the P.C.C are either ex officio or elected by the Annual Church Meeting (properly known as the Annual Parochial Church Meeting) in accordance with the Church Representation Rules.

During 2020 (after the 2020 AGM) the following served as members of the P. C. C:

Ex-officio Members

1. David Alexander (Vicar, Chairman)
2. Ian Marshall (Churchwarden)

Elected Lay Representatives We are entitled to 12 elected representatives:

(The rules state: 6 reps if up to 50 on the Electoral roll
9 reps if up to 100 on the Electoral roll
12 reps if up to 200 on the Electoral roll
15 reps if over 200 on the Electoral roll)

	Elected	Year Elected	Term of Office	Term Ends
1	John Alexander	2018	3yr	2021
2	David Newbound	2018	3yr	2021
3	Neil Rolls	2019	2yr	2021
4	Karen Ritchie	2019	2yr	2021
5	Julie Bailey	2019	3yr	2022
6	John Kingham	2019	3yr	2022
7	Stewart Leary	2019	3yr	2022
8	Stella Marshall	2019	3yr	2022
9	Vacant	2020	3yr	2023
10	Vacant	2020	3yr	2023
11	Vacant	2020	3yr	2023
12	Vacant	2020	3yr	2023

Elected Representatives on Deanery Synod** who automatically also serve on the PCC

1 Vacant	2020	3yr	2023
2 Vacant	2020	3yr	2023
3 Vacant	2020	3yr	2023

** We have between 100-199 names on our electoral roll and so are entitled to 3 Elected Deanery Synod Representatives.

NB The clergy of the church also serve on the Deanery Synod

Co-opted

None

Office came to end at APCM 2020

PCC Members: Deborah Bachini, Linda Clitheroe, John Pinnock, Rosemary Stipta,

Deanery Synod Members : Steve Dolby, Christine Younger

Elections at 2019 AGM

We are very appreciative of the significant contributions of the PCC members coming to the end of their period of office. Under the present rules in place for our PCC, elected members who have served for 3 years, apart from 'office holders'*, are not eligible for re-election until 12 months after the end of their term of office.

John Alexander*

David Newbound*

Neil Rolls*

Karen Ritchie

** Eligible for re-election as an Office Holder*

There will be elections for the following positions:

4 PCC member(s)	to serve for 3 years to 2024
4 PCC member(s)	to serve for 2 years to 2023
0 PCC member(s)	to serve for 1 year to 2022
3 Deanery Synod member(s)**	to serve to 2023

** NB From 2020 Deanery Synod representatives can only serve for two successive 3 year terms (i.e. for a maximum of 6 years)

Committees

Standing Committee

The Standing Committee is the only committee required by law, and is our only official committee. It has power to transact the business of the P.C.C between its meetings, subject to any directions given by the council. We also have a number of 'Action Church Teams' (ACTs) that organise activities, or discuss matters, as directed by the P.C.C. and Vicar.

Electoral Roll

There are 134 parishioners now on the Church Electoral Roll. This represents a change of minus 2 from the previous year's ACM Electoral Roll. These changes are due to parishioners moving, changing church, death or people who live outside the parish and no longer regularly attend St Thomas's.

Review of the Year

Each year we are able to report on much vigorous activity within the life of St Thomas's. This year has been very different and we have little to report in terms of organised activities – we have been in some sort of lockdown for much of the year, and very restricted in what was allowed in-between. We are grateful to all members of the church family, and those who have associated themselves with us, in keeping in touch with one another and seeking to support each other, practically and spiritually. There have been many phone calls, emails and messages – and much prayer for each other. Thank you to you all.

We are also especially thankful for the wonderful pastoral support offered by David Newbound as Pastoral Worker, Debbie Newbound as Parish Nurse and Deborah Bachini, who, in addition to keeping the Church Office operating as a connection point in difficult circumstances, has helped in ringing members of the church to offer support. When we have been able to meet for services we have been very careful to keep one another safe. Thank you to everyone who has worn face coverings and kept socially distant from those from different households. This has been a real challenge for us all as we longed to encourage one another.

Thank you also to those who have cleaned the church building before and after the services and operated the 'Track and Trace' system.

We have livestreamed a daily 'Prayer and Share' to those who could join us via Facebook Live, and those who connected later via Facebook, Google Public Folder, YouTube and the website. As well as many church members, we have been joined by others, both locally and around the country and the world. In addition, we have held Coffee by Zoom so we could meet up with one another socially, if only over the internet. We also began livestreaming services when they restarted in the church building. We are grateful to all who have made this possible, especially John Pinnock and Rosemary Stipta, and for excellent advice from Andrew Pinnock.

When lockdown was first introduced we delivered letters to all our church members, including a simple prayer sheet which we hoped people could use daily, even if they did not have access to social media. We have also delivered cards around the parish and to other contacts. Church members have been involved in volunteering and delivering food and

medicines to those in need. We have also worked hard at producing a weekly email to keep people in touch via a mailing list.

The main focus of the last year has been attempting to care for and support one another, and for those we couple in our local community, during a time of great difficulty and challenge. Thank you for all the ways in which each person has risen to the challenge. We look forward to the future with confident hope in God as we share His love together.

David Alexander, Vicar. On behalf of the P.C.C

Warden's Report

2020-21 has been a strange and difficult year in the life of St Thomas' with the church having to cope with the strictures that Covid-19 has created with changes to the way church services have been run and other routine measures. The paramount concern this year has been the safe-keeping of our church family members and visitors with measures in place to make sure we have adhered to 'social distancing' and other hygiene measures and many thanks must go to those who have volunteered to make sure that the church has been a safe place for any who have attended services. We have all seen how difficult it has been avoiding the natural tendency for handshakes, hugs and high fives.

We do hope that in the following year certain measures will be relaxed to make our services more 'normal' as the country slowly but surely beats this dreadful virus.

Many thanks must go to all who have been looking after the upkeep and maintenance of the church building and grounds, especially Ian Clitheroe supported by his wife Linda and Deborah Bachini. Ian has completed much essential maintenance and repair work to the church building, as required by last year's 'quinquennial' report, and also maintenance of the grounds and clearing up. Thanks also to those other members of the church who have done their bit in keeping the church grounds tidy. I have to give special thanks to Deborah Bachini who has worked very hard to make sure that essential reports and returns were completed and for keeping me up to date with all the paperwork.

This is my final year as church warden a task which I have enjoyed and which has been made so much easier with the help and support of Deborah, Ian, Linda and David Alexander. I know that whoever takes on this role will be well supported and encouraged by the Parish Administrator and clergy.

At this point, I would like to mention that a number of members of the congregation have approached me to say how much they have appreciated the care and love they have felt David Alexander has given them over the last 18 months during the worst and darkest times of the lockdown. All credit must go to David for his shepherding and care of his 'flock' during Covid-19 and, I know, will continue to be so in the future.

I want also to give thanks for the kindness I have been shown by many people, including present and past treasurers, those who love this church and especially our vicar.

Ian Marshall
Churchwarden

Sunday Club Review

It is hard to believe that it has been almost a year since we last saw any of the children together in church. We can't wait until we can all meet in person again. We have tried to keep in contact with the children and their families over the last year, in a covid-safe way. We have had monthly Zoom meetings and emailed activity packs over the last few months, meaning that we were able to still have a nativity at Christmas and meet for remembrance Sunday, it has been lovely to see and hear from the children, although does not come close to replacing the in-person interaction and it is not practical for all families.
We will be reviewing the possibilities of in person meetings over the summer term, but as with everything safety will remain paramount and no meetings will be planned until it is safe to do so.

Sara Hillyard

STUFF (St Thomas's Unbelievably Fabulous Fun)

Due to the Covid pandemic and various individuals being poorly we've had no events for STUFF since last year's AGM.

Angela and Richard Scarlett-Marshall

Safeguarding

Due to Covid19 Linda, David and Judi met outdoors socially distanced in the summer. We had hoped to arrange some training supported by the Diocesan Safeguarding Officer. This of course did not go forward and is still on our agenda. We would remind everyone that we are always available via telephone if anybody needs to contact us.

Judi Kingham and Linda Clitheroe
Safeguarding Officers

Home Groups
Again, after starting 2020 with a couple of meetings, as lockdowns came to be, we had to abandon regular meetings for the rest of the year but are hoping to resume them at some point in the future. As the name indicates these take place in someone's home either weekly or fortnightly and, when it comes to the bible study bit, we try to follow the theme of the main church services although we often do our own thing. It is an opportunity to meet with other members of the congregation in an informal and enjoyable setting, to chat over refreshments and catch up with church and other news and also a time to pray over various issues and concerns. No one is under any obligation to join in with the prayers, or any other part of the evening for that matter but usually everyone finds the evenings go all too quickly. We start at 8pm and aim to finish by 9.30 and lifts are always available for those who haven't got transport.

Ian Marshall

Morning Prayer

As we have been unable to meet in church this year, Morning Prayer has been replaced by the live-streamed Prayer and Share from the Vicarage each day at 10am, and afterwards put on the Google public folder

David Newbound

Christian Meditation

The Christian Meditation group has been unable to meet this last year.

David Newbound

Noah Soup Kitchen

The Soup Kitchen closed in March 2020 and, currently, has not reopened.

Karen Ritchie.

Hands of Mercy

2020 has been a challenging year for so many of us because of Covid and the lockdown. It has been especially difficult for Hands of Mercy in the Philippines. The situation has been dire – extreme poverty coupled with lockdown, people not being able to work and having virtually no way to buy food or pay bills.

It has been one of the most trying and tough seasons in all of Hands of Mercy's history. As of the time of writing (April 2021), the Philippines is still in lockdown. It will be a while yet before they get large enough stocks of the vaccine to vaccinate their population of 109 million and start to move forward.

To make matters worse, the Philippines was hit with typhoons last year which has led to an increase in food prices in 2021. Your prayers are very much needed for this struggling country.

But yet despite the huge challenges, we have seen God's incredible faithfulness. We have been blown away by the generous and sacrificial giving of our supporters, including you at St. Thomas', to help support Hands of Mercy. This meant that we were able to send out extra money for food for a whole year during their lockdown, meaning that thousands of people were able to eat during the pandemic.

We have been so blessed by the St. Thomas' virtual concerts on behalf of Hands of Mercy which have raised funds and awareness (thanks in particular go to John Alexander who ably hosted these!)

In other news, we were really pleased that Linda Clitheroe started as the Hands of Mercy administrator in July 2020, taking over from Fran Gunn who was retiring. It wasn't easy doing a handover during the middle of a pandemic! But Linda has settled in well and we are blessed to have her on board.

Thank you to everyone of you at St. Thomas' who has given, prayed or supported Hands of Mercy in any way, especially during this Covid pandemic – we wouldn't be here today without your support.

God bless you and salamat! ('thank you' in Tagalog!)

Emergency food parcel that has been vital during the pandemic to feed families and children

Samantha Graham and the UK Trustees

Care Team

The Care Team have not been able to meet this past year, but we have kept in touch with each other.

David Newbound

Pastoral Care Report

So often over the last 14 months the people I have been in contact with each day have conveyed to me that their hearts have been really troubled. They have struggled increasingly: physically, spiritually, emotionally and mentally. Many have been troubled by so many different kinds of losses which, to many, have been like a grief that they have lived with in varying degrees on a day to day basis. Compounded by the loss of physically seeing family and close friends. Loss of going out if they have been shielding. Death of a loved one, friend, neighbour, colleague. Difficulty in getting through to GP. Cancelled Hospital appointments etc. Loss of employment. Not to mention the closing of churches. All these things, and more, came about so quickly as lockdown was implemented. It has been, and remains, difficult for people.

Again and again through lockdown we have had to discover new ways of being a church and ministering to those in our care, whilst still complying with government guidelines but also with diocesan recommendations. Time and time again I have been drawn to, and used in conversations and prayers with people, these words from John's Gospel, which came directly from Jesus to his disciples : *At a time of uncertainty and change. Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God and also in me. (John 14:1).* These words powerfully moved me and enabled me to support others. They convey such tenderness and love. They comfort, encourage, enable us all. For God and his Son, who is the same yesterday, today and tomorrow, will see us through. They also encourage us to not only stand firm but to grow and step out in faith.

I have also had to discover new and fresh ways to walk with, and alongside, others. I have not done this alone. I have been supported prayerfully and practically. Yet what I will hold onto is this - a deep gratitude for people continuing to open up, share deeply, for their generosity and kindness, for welcoming me and inviting me to deepen existing friendship and make some new ones. For this I will remain and continue to be humbled and will be eternally grateful.

As a church we have sent out across the Parish 200 Christmas and Easter Cards, and hand delivered 150 Palm Crosses with a prayer. We have supplied chocolate eggs in church on Easter Sunday, which for some was the only Easter egg they had this year. On Mothering Sunday we gave laminated cards of daffodils. Now as we come out of lockdown let us continue to support and encourage each other. Finally I would say huge thank you to everyone who has continued quietly to help and support others.

Thank you for the privilege of journeying with you. God bless David.

David Newbound
Director or Pastoral Care

Parish Nurse

The Parish Nurse service has been working through the pandemic, I have largely been working through with video calls and phone calls, sharing on line support. We have managed to secure a few grants through Lockdown which will help with things like Parish Nurse notice board for advertising events, and other media equipment to help with other on line support which we will be working on while we still have restrictions but it means we can still give valuable support.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Steve Dolby for tirelessly working to secure various grants which are essential in my ministry.

As you know we normally have a symposium in March, this year it is still going on but via zoom which will be very different but also informative. I will share those days with you when I have completed them. Many thanks for your on going support from David the vicar, Deborah Bachini, the PCC, Steve Dolby, Neil Rolls and as ever my husband the Director of pastoral care and all those in the church family and wider community. God bless you all in our year ahead.

Debbie Newbound

Social and Fundraising Team

What a challenging year this has been, our last social event was all the way back in February 2020. We have all missed the opportunity to get together with several events that were planned over the year having been cancelled or postponed.
Over the coming months as restrictions lift and we start to be able to see each other again safely we will look at what options there are for social events to re-commence.
At this time we have no set plans, safety will of course be our first priority and no events will be planned until we can be confident that it is safe for them to go ahead, once we do start planning events we will review to see what events people are interested in and try to make sure we are meeting together in a way that everyone can both enjoy and feel able to attend.

Sara, Ruth and the Social Team

Lunch Club

Lunch Club has been unable to meet this last year.

Men's Breakfasts

Due to various lockdowns, restrictions on meeting in public venues and other constraints, men's breakfasts didn't take place this year but, again, it is hoped that this regular activity

will re-commence at some point in the new year. It involves a group of men who meet approximately once a term on a Saturday morning in a pub or café to enjoy a hearty breakfast, good company and a brief but, hopefully stimulating, 'God' slot. Men of all ages are very welcome and are under no obligation to 'sign-up' to a long term commitment. The general chat has always been lively and has proved to be a very good way to start the weekend: it is usually over by 10am leaving the rest of the day clear. When we start up again there will be ample notice given in the weekly newsletter so keep your eyes peeled as they say. As an offshoot, we are starting a men only church WhatsApp group which should be up and running which any man is welcome to join. Again, watch this space.

Ian Marshall

St Thomas' Volunteers Group

We are a group of 8 ladies and 2 gentlemen who run the Coffee Mornings on the first Saturday of every month. At the Coffee Mornings, as well as refreshments, we have a raffle, a cake stall, a book stall, DVD stall and a stall with bric-a-brac and various other items. We are happy to help on other occasions when asked.

The Coffee Mornings are very popular and well attended but sadly we could only hold three Coffee Mornings in 2020, in January, February and March, and only managed to raise £405 for the church. Then, due to the Coronavirus Pandemic, the churches were shut down and everywhere went into Lockdown. During the rest of 2020 we were no longer able to meet together and so were unable to hold any more Coffee Mornings especially our Annual Charity Coffee Morning in May which would have been for the Children's Society.

We usually meet in the Church Hall on the third Wednesday of the month between 11.00am and 12 noon for discussion and hope that one day, in the not too distant future, we will be able to meet together again.

Georgina Cook

Stewardship Report

The year 2020 is a year most people wish to forget and look forward to a brighter 2021. It has been a year of furloughs, job losses and bereavements.

With this difficult situation, which has affected all of us in some way, I wish to thank everyone who has faithfully been committed to supporting our Church this financial year (2020). As you can appreciate, with increased running costs year on year, regular stewardship giving and donations are more important than ever.

However, stewardship is not only about money, it is also about giving time and practical help to St. Thomas's Church. In terms of giving your time and practical help there is a need for cleaners, Sunday Club helpers, litter pickers and people to carry out odd jobs, etc. The list is endless. However, with the easing of "lockdown" and, consequently, the eventual re-opening of our church (with social distancing, etc) the cleaning of the building, particularly after services, is of paramount importance. If you are in a position to help please talk to the Churchwarden or the Parish Administrator at the Parish Office.

As at 31st. December, 2020 the membership of the Scheme was 75. (couples counted as one). A net reduction of 3 from the previous year.

Finally, I would ask that you take this opportunity to pray and reflect on your giving. If you would like to join the Stewardship Scheme and make regular donations please ask me, the Treasurer or the Churchwarden for details.

Leslie Sims

Stewardship Secretary

Administrators report

Last year I wrote "The office is seldom quiet", but this year sadly has been a very different story. From the end of March 2020 I have mainly been working from home, only going into the church office once a week to empty the postbox, run the water and make sure everything is safe and secure. I have become involved in ringing some parishioners for a chat, and this has been a pleasure, so many lovely chats – thank you! In July 2020 we began the mammoth task of cleaning the whole building and freshening it up so that we could re-open for services. Also much work was done to purchase appropriate cleaning materials and set in place safety measures for socially distanced worship. Thanks to David, Debbie and Jan for their help with that. All the usual mundane office jobs have had to continue, things like servicing alarms and heaters, putting out the wheelie bins etc and this has all helped to add some sense of normality to my life!

My thanks to David A, Linda, Ian M, David, Debbie, John and Neil who have all continued to support and guide me throughout the year. I'm looking forward to being back in the office every morning again, as soon as it is possible to do so safely.

Deborah Bachini

Church Flowers Report

As the church has not been open for services on a regular basis we have not had flowers in church for over a year.

Linda Clitheroe

Deanery Synod Report

The deanery synod met five times during 2020 but only the February meeting was held "live". At this meeting we had a presentation on the issue of modern-day slavery and the Clewer initiative (a national campaign to raise awareness of this issue) which made us aware of the reality of modern-day slavery in context such as car washes. At our June meeting we had a presentation from the then Director of Training Tim Bull on Clergy Wellbeing.
Online forums for finance and churchwarden training at deanery level have been delivered. Measures for the pastoral reorganisation affecting St Matthews and Holy Trinity Biscot were

begun.
Revd Joe Pienaar and Revd Nick Grew left the deanery along with the curates in training Revd Jess Mclaren and Revd Sarah Hancock.

Steve Dolby

Comments and Questions for the AGM or PCC or Vicar.
(please either raise at the meeting, or send to the Church Office)

Any Comment:

Any Question:

Independent Examiner's Report to the PCC of
St Thomas' Church, Stopsley, Luton

This report on the financial statements of the PCC for the year ended 31 December 2020, which are set out on pages 2 to 7 is in respect of an examination carried out in accordance of the Church Accounting Regulations 2006 ("the regulations") and under section 145 of the Charities Act 2011 (the 2011 Act).

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

As members of the PCC and the charity's trustees, you are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements; you consider that the audit requirement of the Regulations and section 144(2) of the 2011 Act do not apply. It is my responsibility to issue this report on those financial statements in accordance with the terms of the Regulations.

Basis of independent examiner's report

My examination was carried out in accordance with the General Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act and to be found in the Church guidance on PCC Accountability, The Charities Act 2011 and the PCC, 5 th edition 2017. 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 financial statements 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,

Independent examiner's statement
In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

1 Which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements
- To keep accounting records in accordance with section 130 of the 2011 Act; and
- To prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and to comply with the requirements of the Act, as also contained in the Church Accounting Regulations 2006 have not been met; or

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

Signed:

Date: 11 June 2021

Howard Ashmore
Godfrey Laws & Co. Ltd
Chartered Accountants
& Registered Auditors
69 Knowl Piece
Wilbury Way
HITCHIN
Hertfordshire
SG4 0TY

St Thomas' P.C.C. Stopsley, Luton
Statement of Financial Activities
For the year ended 31st December 2020

Incoming Resources (all unrestricted)	**Note**	2020	As restated 2019
		£	£
Incoming resources from donations and legacies	2(a)	117,256	94,443
Other voluntary incoming resources	2(b)	6,076	12,515
Income from charitable & ancillary trading	2(c)	640	1,425
Other ordinary incoming resources	2(d)	4,297	3,467
Total Non-Designated Incoming resources		128,269	111,850
Resources Used			
Grants	3(a)	11,470	(20)
Activities directly relating to the work of the Church	3(b)	93,322	105,794
Publicity, Church management & admin.	3(c)	1,043	4,450
		105,835	110,224
Net Annual Surplus / (Deficit)		22,434	1,626

St Thomas' P.C.C. Stopsley, Luton
Balance Sheet as at 31st December 2020

	Note	2020 £	2019 £
Fixed Assets	4	1,407	2,761
Current Assets			
Debtors	5	2,996	7,084
Bank Accounts		57,149	31,650
Cash		119	-
		60,264	38,734
Liabilities: Amounts due within one year	6	6,411	8,669
Net current assets		53,853	30,065
Total assets less current liabilities		55,260	32,826
Funds			
General Account	7	0	496
Legacy Funds	8	54,185	31,255
Youth Project		1,075	1,075
		55,260	32,826

TREASURER'S STATEMENT

I have prepared the financial statements on pages 1 to 7 for the year ended 31 December 2020

Signed: Neil Rolls Date: 23rd May 2021

Treasurer: Neil Rolls

APPROVED by the Church Meeting held on 23rd May 2021 and signed on its behalf by:

Signed:

Reverend David Alexander (Chairman)

St Thomas' P.C.C. Stopsley, Luton
Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year ended 31 December 2020

1. Accounting Policies

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the Church Accounting Regulations 2006 together with applicable accounting standards and the Charities SORP.

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention except for the valuation of investment assets, which are shown at market value.

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. Funds designated for a particular purpose by the PCC are also unrestricted.

The accounts include all transactions, assets and liabilities for which the PCC is responsible in law. They do not include the accounts of church groups that owe their main affiliation to another body nor those that are informal gatherings of Church members.

Incoming Resources
Voluntary income and capital sources
Collections are recognised when received by or on behalf of the PCC.

Planned giving receivable under covenant is recognised only when received.

Income tax recoverable on covenants or 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 and the amount due,

Income from investments
Interest is accounted for when received.
Resources Used
Activities directly relating to the work of the Church

Fixed Assets
Consecrated land and buildings and movable church furnishings

Consecrated and beneficed property is excluded from the accounts by s.96 (2)(a) of the Charities Act 1993.

No value is placed on movable church furnishings held by the churchwardens on special trust for the PCC and which require a faculty for disposal since the PCC considers this to be inalienable property.

St Thomas' P.C.C. Stopsley, Luton

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year ended 31st December 2020

Equipment

Office Equipment and sound equipment is depreciated on the straight line basis at a rate of 33.3% per annum.

Churchyard Maintenance Equipment is depreciated on the reducing balance basis at a rate of 30% per annum.

Individual items of Equipment with a purchase price of £250 or less are written off when the asset is acquired.

Current Assets

Amounts owing to the PCC at 31 December are shown as debtors less provision for amounts that may prove uncollectible.

2. Incoming resources (all unrestricted)	**Note**	2020	As restated 2019
		£	£
2(a) Incoming from donors			
Planned Giving		44,705	56,578
Gift Day		0	3,607
Income Tax recoverable		9,640	13,511
Collections (open plate) at all Services		938	3,958
Collections (credit card) at all Services		51	1,189
Legacies		61,921	15,600
		117,256	94,443

A prior year adjustment has been made in respect of income from legacies, last year (2019) these were recorded in a note to the accounts rather than as incoming resources the figures have now been restated.

2(b) Other voluntary incoming resources			
Coffee mornings, Lunches & Teas		476	1,876
Hire of and Donations for use of hall		525	1,288
Social Events		0	2,777
Miscellaneous Donations & Receipts		4,096	4,837
Parish Nursing Donations & Receipts		980	1,737
		6,076	12,515
2(c) Income from charitable and ancillary trading			
Magazine Subscriptions		510	887
Magazine Adverts		130	538
		640	1,425
2(d) Other ordinary income resources			
Wedding and funeral fees & receipts		4,297	3,467

St Thomas' P.C.C. Stopsley, Luton
Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year ended 31st December 2020

	2020	2019
3 Resources Used	£	£
3(a) Grants to Charities		
World Relief	4,774	0
World Mission	145	0
UK Social Concern/Relief	4,841	0
UK Church Mission	1,710	(20)
	11,470	(20)
3(b) Activities directly relating to the work of the Church		
Ministry: Parish Share	63,806	67,374
Clergy Expenses	3,293	4,616
Pastoral Worker	4,680	4,680
Pastoral Discretionary Expenditure	268	791
Church Office Wages	6,460	7,752
Church: Running Expenses	5,213	7,315
Routine Maintenance	2,939	2,448
Major Repairs	0	3,188
Service Costs	2,205	1,071
Parish Nursing	980	1,208
Depreciation	1,354	1,049
Telephone Charges	1,855	1,569
Miscellaneous	270	2,732
	93,322	105,794
3(c) Publicity, Church Management & Administration		
Stationery & printing (incl. magazine)	845	3,863
Independent Examiner's fee	120	120
Miscellaneous	78	467
	1,043	4,450

St Thomas' P.C.C. Stopsley, Luton

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year ended 31st December 2020

4. Fixed Assets

	Sound Equipment	Office Equipment	Churchyard Equipment	Total
Cost/Valuation				
At 1 January 2020	10,233	5,600	1,540	17,373
Additions during year	0	0	0	0
At 31 December 2020	10,233	5,600	1,540	17,373
Depreciation				
At 1 January 2020	10,233	2,839	1,540	14,612
Charge for year	0	1,354	0	1,354
At 1 January 2020	10,233	4,193	1,540	15,966
Net Book Value				
At 31 December 2020	0	1,407	0	1,407
At 31 December 2019	0	2,761	0	2,761

5. Debtors

	2020 £	2019 £
Income Tax recoverable	2,996	7,024
Other Debtors	0	60
	2,996	7,084

6. Liabilities: Amounts due within one year

Donations	330	660
Other Creditors & Accruals	6,081	8,009
	6,411	8,669

7. Funds

	General Account	Legacy Funds (Unresticted)	Youth Project	Total
At 1 January 2020	496	31,255	1,075	32,826
Surplus/(Deficit) for the year	(496)	22,930	0	22,434
At 31 December 2020	0	54,185	1,075	55,260

8. Legacy Funds

	2020 £	2019 £
B Cox	53,685	600
B Harris	0	10,000
Bryan Sexton	0	5,000
Daphnie Elsie Ward	500	0
Francis Estdale	0	2,280
J L Kingham	0	10,000
James Dyer	0	1,000
John Shaw for Church Maintenance	0	875
Toyer	0	1,000
Waters	0	500
	54,185	31,255

Independent Examiner's Report to the PCC of
St Thomas' Church, Stopsley, Luton

This report on the financial statements of the PCC for the year ended 31 December 2020, which are set out on pages 2 to 7 is in respect of an examination carried out in accordance of the Church Accounting Regulations 2006 ("the regulations") and under section 145 of the Charities Act 2011 (the 2011 Act).

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

As members of the PCC and the charity's trustees, you are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements; you consider that the audit requirement of the Regulations and section 144(2) of the 2011 Act do not apply. It is my responsibility to issue this report on those financial statements in accordance with the terms of the Regulations.

Basis of independent examiner's report

My examination was carried out in accordance with the General Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act and to be found in the Church guidance on PCC Accountability, The Charities Act 2011 and the PCC, 5 th edition 2017. 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 financial statements 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,

Independent examiner's statement
In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

1 Which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements
- To keep accounting records in accordance with section 130 of the 2011 Act; and
- To prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and to comply with the requirements of the Act, as also contained in the Church Accounting Regulations 2006 have not been met; or

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

Signed:

Date: 11 June 2021

Howard Ashmore
Godfrey Laws & Co. Ltd
Chartered Accountants
& Registered Auditors
69 Knowl Piece
Wilbury Way
HITCHIN
Hertfordshire
SG4 0TY