

# 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 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).

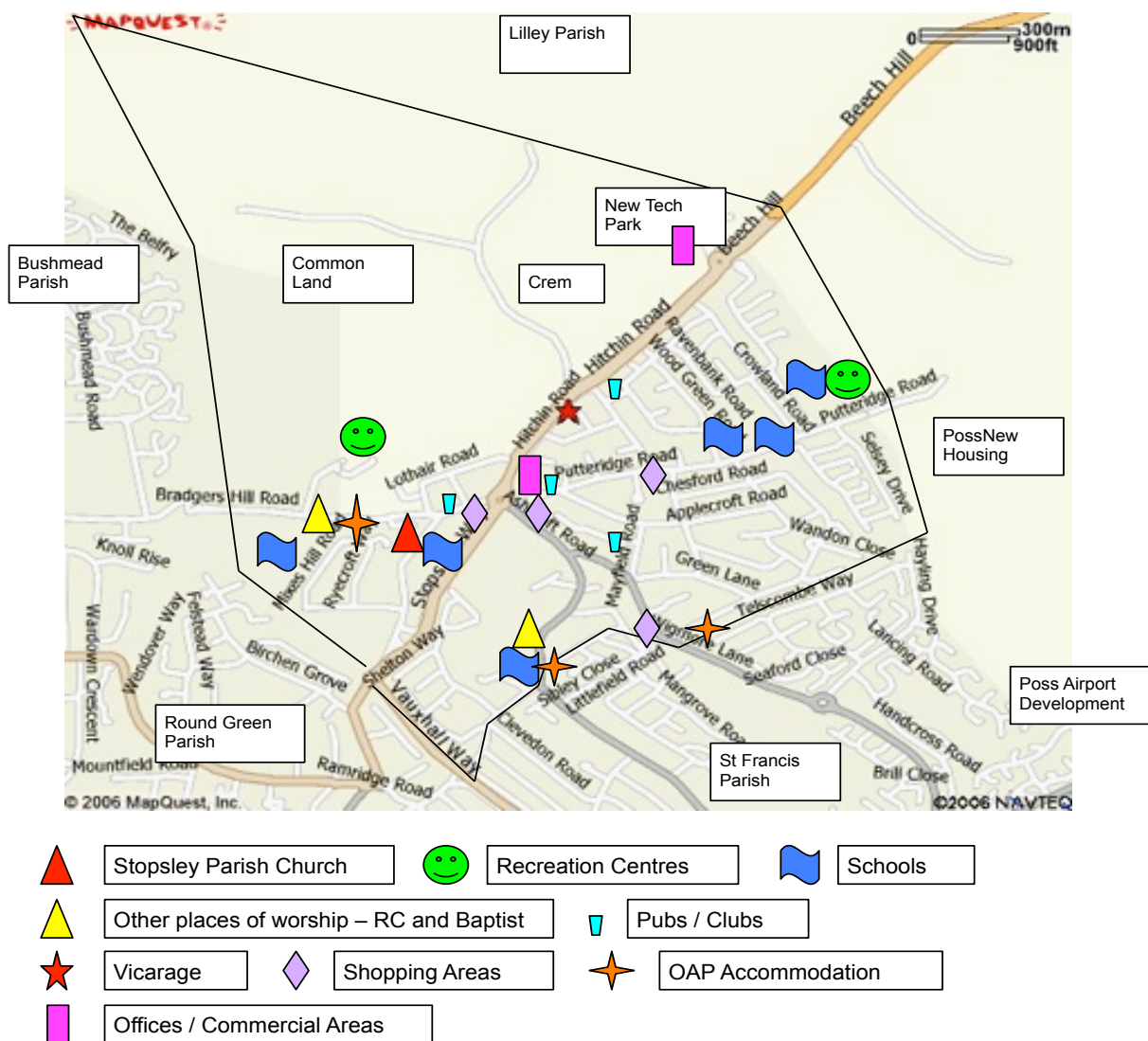
**Location** : North East area of Luton, at the boundary with Herts. The parish includes the wards of Stopsley and Putteridge. The busy A505 from Luton to Hitchin runs through the parish and separates the church geographically from much of the rest of the parish.

**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 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)

	<u>Elected</u>	<u>Year Elected</u>	<u>Term of Office</u>	<u>Term Ends</u>
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 of 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 31<sup>st</sup>. 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 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 31<sup>st</sup> 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.**

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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 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 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		<u>77,697</u>	<u>233,281</u>

**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
		<u>105,284</u>	<u>101,584</u>
<b>Net Annual Surplus / (Deficit)</b>		<u>(27,587)</u>	<u>131,697</u>




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

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

**TREASURER'S STATEMENT**

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

Signed : 

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)**

	<b>Note</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>2022</b>
		<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
<b>2(a) Incoming from donors</b>			
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
		<u>62,753</u>	<u>220,294</u>
<b>2(b) Other voluntary incoming resources</b>			
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
		<u>9,538</u>	<u>9,974</u>
<b>2(c) Income from charitable and ancillary trading</b>			
Magazine Subscriptions		291	191
Magazine Adverts		0	0
		<u>291</u>	<u>191</u>
<b>2(d) Other ordinary income resources</b>			
Wedding and funeral fees & receipts		<u>5,115</u>	<u>2,822</u>

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

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

	2023	2022
	£	£
<b>3 Resources Used</b>		
<b>3(a) Grants to Charities</b>		
World Relief	532	1,042
World Mission	0	0
UK Social Concern/Relief	248	192
UK Church Mission	(990)	540
	<u>(210)</u>	<u>1,774</u>
<b>3(b) Activities directly relating to the work of the Church</b>		
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
	<u>104,380</u>	<u>98,178</u>
<b>3(c) Publicity, Church Management &amp; Administration</b>		
Stationery & printing (incl. magazine)	1,284	1,462
Independent Examiner's fee	(240)	120
Miscellaneous	70	50
	<u>1,114</u>	<u>1,632</u>



## 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
<b>Net Book Value</b>			
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 (Unrestricted)	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**

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 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 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