



**ST SAVIOUR'S CHURCH**  
SANDPIT LANE | ST ALBANS | AL1 4DF

[ssaviours.org](http://ssaviours.org)

# **ANNUAL REPORT 2023**

Annual Report and Financial Statements of the  
Parochial Church Council  
for the year ended 31 December 2023

*Incumbent*  
**Fr Richard Watson**



# Ministry & Parochial Church Council

## Ministerial Team

The Ministerial Team consists of Fr Richard (Vicar), Fr Corniel Quak (Curate), Fr Tony Halton (Assistant Priest), Fr Andrew Ferrar (Associate Priest – PTO), Elaine Wilson & Trevor Oakes (till December 2023) (Churchwardens), and Dr Imogen de la Bere (authorised to preach).

## Parochial Church Council

Members of the Parochial Church Council (PCC) are either ex-officio, co-opted or elected by the Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM) in accordance with the Church Representation Rules.

From May 2023 the following people served as members of the PCC.

Incumbent	Fr Richard Watson (ex-officio)	
Assistant Curate	Fr Corniel Quak (ex-officio)	
Assistant Priest	Fr Tony Halton (ex-officio)	
Churchwardens	Trevor Oakes (ex-officio) till December 2023 Elaine Wilson (ex-officio)	
Elected Members		
	Matthew Barbrook (Treasurer)	(till May 24)
	Dorothy Hones	(till May 24)
	Diane Nicholas (Secretary)	(till May 24)
	Libby Agrotis	(till May 24)
	Gary Edwards	(till May 25)
	<i>vacant</i>	(till May 25)
	Susan Hare	(till May 25)
	David Summers	(till May 25)
	Bruce King	(till May 26)
	Ellie Matthews (Lay vice-Chair)	(till May 26)
	Trevor Barton	(till May 26)
	Hasmeeta Mahandru	(till May 26)
Representatives on		
Deanery Synod	Geoff Harrison (ex-officio)	(till May 26)
	<i>vacant</i> (ex-officio)	(till May 26)
	<i>vacant</i> (ex-officio)	(till May 26)
Diocesan Synod	Jeremy Harding (ex-officio)	(till June 2024)
Associate Priest	Fr Andrew Ferrar (co-opted till May 2023)	

The full PCC met six times during the year. Fr Richard, Ellie Matthews and Fr Corniel (during sabbatical) chaired the meetings. Diane Nicholas is the PCC Secretary

## Policies

During the year the PCC approved the following policies: Safeguarding including vulnerable adults, vulnerable children, Domestic abuse and Social Media. Current versions can be viewed on the website in the Information section. The Health & Safety policy was renewed in November 2023

## Electoral Roll

The 2023 electoral roll stands at 143

# Statutory Reports

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## CHURCHWARDENS

I would like to start the Churchwarden report this year by giving thanks to Trevor Oakes and everything that he did for St Saviours over many years. We will really miss him! I would also like to thank Fr Corniel for all his support during Fr Richard's sabbatical especially whilst Trevor was ill.

St Saviours continues to go from strength to strength and I am very proud to be a part of this community. It is a joy to represent you as one of your Churchwardens.

## INVENTORY

In August we received a Visitation by the Assistant Rural Dean to inspect the building and its contents. All was found to be in good order. No items were added or removed from the inventory during the year.

## TERRIER

Minor maintenance works have been completed throughout the year and further details are included in the Buildings Team Report.

## FACULTIES

There are currently two faculties in process, these are:-

- Removal of Choir and Clergy Stalls - we are currently awaiting a report from the Victorian Society.
- Disabled Access Ramp to Church Main Entrance - these works are temporarily suspended due to very high quotations. Our intention is to complete these works in conjunction with other future building works in order to mitigate a significant proportion of the costs.

We have also given notice to the International Organ Festival (IOF) for the Peter Collins organ to be removed and this is likely to happen after Easter 2024.

## FURTHER OBSERVATIONS AND THANKS

Fr Richard, Fr Corniel, Trevor and myself attended *Leading Your Church Into Growth* Conference in June and this gave us some very good ideas for how we can grow our ministry here at St Saviours. Following this, *broken/* our Informal monthly Sunday

evening communion service was established and is really lovely to welcome new people to St Saviours.

I would also like to thank our Clergy Team under the leadership of Fr Richard, for all their works and ministrations throughout the year. Thanks also goes to everyone who supports our work at St Saviours in any way, they are far too numerous to mention here but are very much appreciated! We are also very proud that our Church is increasing its involvement in the local and wider community as well.

### **BUILDINGS TEAM**

During the year, we have replaced all outside lighting for health and safety reasons. This has made a huge difference in the environment for both hall and church users as well as commuters and other members of the community using our passage way. As explained in last year's report, the church has continued to be very cold despite the winters being less cold than historically. The gas heaters have reached the end of their lives, and we are reviewing the situation as soon as possible having due consideration for the Church of England's net zero policy. Further details will be provided as soon as further information is available.

The winter has brought certain problems, most notably the church car park potholes and hall floor having deteriorated. Work has been carried out on both by members of the congregation and we thank them all for their time and efforts to assist us. We also have a number of broken windows that need replacement, and we are in discussions with the Architect to obtain a quote to repair these. This work is still ongoing. Thank you everyone who has contributed to the Buildings Team over 2023.

### **DEANERY SYNOD: 2023-24**

The St Albans Deanery is one of the 20 deaneries making up the Diocese of St Albans (Herts, Beds, Luton and Barnet). Our deanery consists of 16 CofE parishes in and around St Albans and is led by the Rural Dean, Fr Richard Watson (St Saviour's). The Assistant Rural Dean is the Revd Kylie Hodgins (St Luke's, Bricket Wood) and the Lay Chair is Meriel Dixon (Christ Church, St Albans). There are usually three synod meetings each year. The role of any deanery is to provide a platform for information to parishes and to enable liaison with other parishes, supporting mission and ministry. Each parish has its own PCC responsible for its own business with three Representatives elected every three years to serve in the Deanery and to elect, in turn, members of the Diocesan Synod and General Synod. So, the Deanery Synod sits between a church's own PCC and the Diocesan Synod. In February 2023 the Synod met at St Stephen's Church and the Revd Becky Leach gave an introduction to life there, pinpointing some key events. Then, Catherine Ross, National Church of England Environment Officer, gave a presentation on Carbon Reduction with tips on how to reduce the Carbon footprint of church buildings. A Q&A session followed. There was then a presentation from the Beds & Herts Historic Churches Trust. Grants are available to all churches and it was interesting to learn that grants can also be awarded to 'non-historic' churches too. In June, the Synod met at St Paul's. Peter Crumpler gave an introduction to his home church, followed by a presentation from the Diocesan Racial Justice Action Group. The DRJA group was newly created in 2020 and is led by Bishop Richard. Dr Jacob Kurien, who chairs the group is a retired GP

and orthopaedic surgeon who lives in the diocese, and was born in what is now Tanzania. Jacob outlined the work of the DRJAG and reported on a newly completed Racial Justice Charter for the diocese. A Q&A session completed the evening. This was the final Synod of the triennium (a 3-year period of office). In October, at Holy Trinity Frogmore, The Assistant Rural Dean welcomed all members, new and returning, to the beginning of the new triennium and thanked those that had served for the previous three years. Revd Nigel Ward gave a short introduction to church life at Holy Trinity Frogmore. There was then a presentation from The Revd Canon Will Gibbs, (formerly of Redbourn) on The Ministry of St Albans Cathedral. Like many other churches they are working on a process to revise their MAP, from its 2019 edition. It was interesting to learn that when referring to their building they are now using the term Cathedral rather than Abbey, as it has more locally been known. A report was received from a General Synod including an update on the Living in Love and Faith discussions and the prayers of blessings for same sex marriage. Group discussions followed. Most recently, in February '24, the Deanery Synod met here at Christ Church. Jeremy gave an introduction to life here. The new Head of Townsend School was scheduled to speak but he was unwell so it was a shorter meeting than usual. 2 new governors for Townsend School were elected by the Deanery. February 2024 Deanery Comings and Goings 2023-24 May 2023 The Revd Jonny Lloyd was installed as Vicar at St Michael's with St Mary's. He was previously the Precentor at the Abbey. Also in May, the Revd Canon Charles Hudson (previously of Broxbourne with Wormley) took up his post as the new Archdeacon of St Albans. June 23 the Revd Vanessa Jefferson took up the role of Minor Canon Precentor at the Cathedral, responsible for liturgy and worship. January 2024 Revd Martin Watson joined St Pauls as their new Curate. Feb 24, Revd Caroline Keightley Colney Heath, returned from Maternity Leave to St Mark's, Colney Heath, with her new son. Current and on-going: after three rounds of advertising and interviews the Vacancy at London Colney, now designated a part time post, remained unfilled. A fourth set of interviews has just been completed, but no news yet.

# General Reports

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## **ADMISSION TO COMMUNION & CONFIRMATION**

During the autumn of 2023 Fr Corniel met regularly with three adult confirmation candidates. All three candidates decided that they'd like to be confirmed on Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> December, when we had asked Bishop Jane of Hertford to be with us. During the joyful service we also admitted two children to communion, as well as baptising another.

## **BIBLE STUDY**

The Monday evening Bible Study at the Vicarage continues to provide an 'oasis' for reflection together on a passage of scripture – usually the gospel reading for the coming Sunday. Each fortnight a group of 7-10 individuals gathers, and it has been a good opportunity to introduce new people to the group and wider congregation. The regular pattern for each evening is the ancient monastic discipline of lection divina (sacred reading) which involves reading the text a number of times aloud and quiet, paying attention to words or phrases that strike us or spark our thinking. The conversation that ensues is always fruitful and an opportunity to learn from each other. The final reading of the passage encourages each individual to consider how the text can be applied to their own spiritual life and discipleship.

## **BOOKINGS**

### **Church**

During 2023 there have been 15 Concert Bookings in St Saviour's. Of these, five were large orchestra (St Albans Symphony Orchestra) including a Children's Concert performed twice on an afternoon. There were two Chamber Orchestra concerts by Amadeus Chamber Orchestra, and a charity Chamber Music Concert for the Tony Wigram Foundation. Four concerts were by Chamber Choirs (St Albans Chamber Choir and Voix de Vivre) and one by a larger choir (St Albans Choral Society). There was also a liturgical performance of the Schutz Passion before Easter. The other concert was a Folk Concert, and a Folk Festival took place during one weekend.

The Big C Choir rehearsed in church on Tuesdays evenings unless it was needed by an upcoming event, but decided to find somewhere warmer for the season starting in September. Regular teaching has taken place – piano lessons in the choir vestry and singing lessons in the church. The church was also used for a 'Pupil's Concert' by a local teacher.

### **Hall**

The church hall is very well used with church events, concerts, regular and one-off bookings. The hall is in need of some attention to make sure it is a space people continue to hire. The current cleaners are efficient, but it is difficult to clean.

The door code system is working well. The figure for the hall income does not include the concert bookings.

## **BOOK GROUP**

In this its eighteenth year, the Book Club came of age! From the complexities of Henry James to the delights of The Revd Richard Coles, the various texts provoked, as always, much stimulating debate. Thanks are due to the staff and resources of Hertfordshire County Library for the excellent service it continues to provide.

## **CHILDREN & YOUTH**

### **Families at Four**

During 2023 *Families at Four* met on the *first* Sunday of the month rather than the second Sunday as it did in previous years. Attendance increased in 2023, with new families starting to bring friends along. Laura Summers took on planning of the sessions, and she is faithfully supported every month by Gloria Winter and Jan Shephard who prepare a range of crafts and activities. We were pleased to welcome Linda Hayden to the team, taking on responsibility for the food provision. During the year we looked at various Christian themes, like Candlemas, Lent and Advent, but we also had sessions with an outreach focus, for example we made gifts for the residents of Clare Lodge, and we organised a litter pick at The Wick. In September, at the start of the new term we had a blessing of school bags. We also marked the King's Coronation and Remembrance Sunday.

### **The Playground**

This area of the church is used not only on Sundays, but increasingly during the week by people with small children who call in. During Tots Time, a number of the parents use the area to read some of the books provided or to explore the activity put together by Gloria, or the wooden communion sets purchased with a grant from the diocese.

### **Sundays at 10**

The number of children attending *Sundays at Ten* continues to be low and unpredictable and there have been some weeks with no attendees. Our teaching resources include Diddy Disciples <https://www.diddydisciples.org/> and the Scripture Union resource books Splash <https://content.scriptureunion.org.uk/light-resources>. Gloria has also joined the Youth & Children Network set up by the Children, Families and Community Minister at St. Paul's Church, a group made up of mainly youth workers and clergy. We held a well-attended Good Friday workshop on April 7<sup>th</sup>. On Remembrance Sunday, the children made their own wreaths which were laid at the font this year. During Advent, the children read at the lighting of the Advent candles and were also responsible for constructing the 200 Christingles given out at the service on Christmas Eve. Thanks, as ever, to our loyal group of leaders and helpers.

### **Tots Time**

*Tots Time* meets on a Friday morning during term time, from 9:30 to 10:30. The sessions are led by Anthea Smith, and supported by Fr Corniel, Moira Seton, and John & Sue Myerscough. Our average number is 12-15 babies/toddlers, accompanied by parents, carers and grandparents. Tots Time happens on the platform at the front of church, which is cleared and filled with toys. Fr Corniel serves coffee and tea, and we have snacks for children. After about 50mins of play and chat, we end with a story and some songs. People who attend often invite their friends, and we welcome new



toddlers most weeks. We have acquired some new toys through keeping an eye on the Freecycle website. A significant number of baptism enquiries have come as a result of initial contact with *Tots Time*, and further connections made with *Families at Four* and our monthly alternative communion service, *broken/*.

### **Children & Families Worker**

The diocesan Mission & Ministry Department have made a grant of £5,000 towards the salary for a part-time Children & Families Worker, which has been match-funded from the Beer & Fizz profits. Thanks to Fr Corniel, a job description and recruitment package was put together and we hope to recruit in the summer of 2024, with the successful applicant beginning in the autumn of 2024.

### **CTM (CHURCHES TOGETHER IN MARSHALSWICK)**

On one Sunday in late January the CTM churches exchanged candles at the regular Sunday morning church services and in the evening jointly supported the Christian Unity Service at St Albans URC (Homewood Road). Over the Lent period CTM arranged a series of five weekly Lenten talks with guest speakers at Marshalswick Baptist Free Church. Collections at these talks generated funding to provide Christian educational material to Junior Schools in Marshalswick and Bernards Heath. The exact form of the most suitable material is being discussed with the schools. CTM ran a market outside St Mary's at the Quadrant at the end of the CA Week raising about £2000 for Christian Aid. In July St Leonard's, Sandridge hosted a cream tea followed by a Songs of Praise in the church grounds. St Saviour's hosted the Advent Carol service at which representatives of the six CTM churches took part in the Readings. The Christmas Nativity Sheep Trail Challenge ran for its second year, requiring participants to find and correctly name the 14 knitted sheep provided by members of the various churches and hidden in the windows of shops at the Quadrant. The Marshalswick Public Library was an enthusiastic supporter and collected all completed answer sheets.

### **COMPASSIONATE CAFÉ**

During 2023 Fr Corniel worked with Libby Agrotis in exploring the possibility of St Saviour's hosting a Compassionate Café in partnership with Rennie Grove Peace Hospice. Compassionate Cafés aim to provide a welcoming space for anyone who has experienced loss of any kind. Although this includes bereavement, it isn't limited to that, and includes other areas where people experience loss, for example loss of mobility, loss of a job, or the loss of a significant relationship. There is no formal counselling as part of the session, but rather the emphasis is on listening and providing an opportunity for people to meet others who are dealing with loss. After some research, visiting other similar cafés and meeting with representatives from Rennie Grove Peace, we approached several potential volunteers; both members of our congregation and people from the wider community. A team of 8 was formed and we attended a training course at Rennie Grove Peace Hospice in September. After this we planned for the café to run every second Tuesday of the month in the church hall between 2 and 3:30pm. Our first session took place in December. Rennie Grove Peace provided both initial funding, as well as a small

ongoing financial contribution and support with promotion of the café with leaflets and through social media.

The Café builds on previous conversations among members of the PCC and others as part of the diocesan *Reaching New People* initiative, which included plans to develop a community café in church.

## **ECO TEAM**

Early 2022, the PCC decided to explore the possibility of St Saviour's becoming registered as an Eco Church, a scheme set up by A Rocha, an international network of environmental organizations with a Christian ethos. The PCC asked Fr Corniel to start a working group. After registering we carried out an Eco Church survey, which covers 5 areas (101 questions in total): Worship and Teaching; Buildings; Land; Community and Global Engagement; and Lifestyle.

When we carried out our first survey in 2022, although we scored Bronze and Silver in three areas, we did not meet the minimum threshold for the two remaining areas and were thus ineligible for registration as an Eco Church. This is because unless each of the five areas meet at least the lowest threshold, an award cannot be given. Furthermore, if a church is eligible for a Gold Award in one area, but other areas only attract a Silver or a Bronze Award, the overall award will be the lowest common denominator (ie. a Bronze Award).

Several "easy gains" were identified and during 2023 we worked on implementing these. Things included the use of more energy efficient products, raising awareness of environmental issues and improvements in our supply chain, as well as recycling practices. In September 2023 we carried a new survey and achieved Bronze status in all five areas and registered St Saviour's as such with A Rocha. It is important to note, however, that it is an ongoing project and that the group will continue to work towards achieving higher awards.

## **EVENTS**

### **Beer & Fizz Festival**

The 5<sup>th</sup> Beer & Fizz Festival drew around 1,600 people to St Saviour's despite very wet weather on the Friday and Saturday. Thankfully a gloriously dry Sunday made the Family Day hugely popular and thank are due to the new team of parents and young people who focused their efforts on improving the provision for the Sunday.

Serving a record number of cask ales (39!) plus ciders and sparkling wines and champagnes we achieved our second highest takings in 5 years (c£14,000) thanks to the generosity of donors and sponsors, who covered the costs of the stock in full, enabling every drink sold to be profit! As well as being St Saviour's highest single income stream each year, it provides us with a great point of contact with the local community – and has proved to be the 'door' through which we are approached for baptisms and weddings, as well as a starting point for other contacts and initiatives.

### **Harvest Festival**

Our Harvest Festival is a smaller event than the Beer & Fizz Festival and is aimed at making connections in the community, rather than fundraising. The Saturday evening Jazz concert was well received, including by the band. After the Harvest service on

Sunday, we had various stalls, a bar, food, live music and a bouncy castle. The weekend attracted lots of positive comments. A big thank you to all the volunteers.

### **HOUSE GROUP**

The house group meet from 2.30 pm on the second Thursday of each month. There are ten regular members, but of course, there is a warm welcome if anyone else would like to come! At present we look at the readings of the previous Sunday as whole, and are grateful for the use of a copy of the sermon to aid our deliberations. An important part of the meeting is the chat and support we share over a cup of tea before we look at the collect and bible passages. There is much to learn from each other whether we speak or just sit quietly and listen.

### **'THE JOLLY SAVIOUR' POP-UP BAR**

Thanks to a small team of volunteers we have been able to run a pop-up bar for a number of events through 2023 to augment our income from hiring the church and hall, and maximising the advantage of our licence to provide and sell alcohol.

### **MARSHALSWICK PARTNERSHIP GROUP**

The Partnership Group was set up after the appointment of the Revd Kate Pearson as Vicar of St Mary's with the intention of exploring ways in which our parishes may work together more closely and productively. The Group didn't meet often in 2023, mainly due to a long running and complex pastoral situation which made joint events problematic. It is hoped that with the resolution of this issue we will be able to make plans for 2024.

### **MEN'S GROUP**

The Men's Group continued to be a popular monthly diversion throughout the year generally meeting on the second Wednesday in the month which gave members a chance to plan ahead. Our discussions are always lively, and the group of course makes it easier for members to get to know one another – which isn't always possible over coffee on a Sunday morning,. There are occasional speakers (utilising the rare private dining room at The Six Bells) or less formal discussions which manage to touch on various issues of theology and spirituality – often accidentally but none the less with good result. There were some exceptions to the usual pattern including the January Burn's Night Supper and the Christmas Dinner again held at The Stables restaurant at Oaklands College. Favourite haunts other than The Six Bells were Aspava, Veer Dhara, Ye Olde Fighting Cocks, The Crown, Chilli Raj, Thai Rack and Dav Vero at the Quadrant. We have a wide age range, and new members are always welcome as are guests at any time!

### **MUSIC**

#### **Choir**

The year seems to have passed at a breathless pace, and so it is time to write a second Annual Music Report. In recalling the years events, I realise that in addition to the usual weekly choral contributions of Introit, Agnus Dei and Motet during the regular Sunday Morning Mass, the choir and organ have played a key part in framing the liturgical year with twenty additional midweek/evening services and events.

Worshippers in the morning congregation may be less aware of this contribution, which therefore receives a greater focus here. The music list (by no means exhaustive) has reflected Times and Seasons, Gospel readings and current events: The calendar year began with the Churches Together Candlemas evensong (in the week of prayer for Christian Unity) which included a candle exchange with representatives of Marshalswick Baptist Church. The choir sang Gibbons Short service, and the motets 'Ave Maria' (Arcadelt) and 'Locus Iste' (Bruckner). This special service was followed the next month by a choral Ash Wednesday eucharist featuring Nicholas Hare's 'Forty Day Mass,' the moving 'Five Part Litany' (Tallis) and motet 'Pecantum me quotidie' (Morales).

As part of the church's Holy Week devotions, the 'Fayrfax Consort' (Director: David Ireson) presented a liturgical rendition of the 'St Mathew Passion by' Schutz on Palm Sunday, with Rogers Covey-Crump as the Evangelist. In another initiative, Corneil introduced a meditative choral service of Tenebrae (Victoria) on Holy Wednesday. The evocative responses were sung by a brave SSATB quintet of the choir in an intimate candlelight service in the chancel. This was immediately followed by full choral services on Maundy Thursday (Byrd 4-part mass and Ego sum Panis Vivus) Good Friday: 'St John Passion' (Victoria) Crucifixus (Lotti) and Solus ad Victamum (Leighton), Easter Eve vigil, and Easter Day; Surrexit Christus Hodie (Scheidt) and Blessed be the God and Father (SS Wesley). On the following Ascension Day a full choral mass ('Missa Aeterna Christi Munera'-(Palestrina) was sung, including motets by Mendelssohn and Philips.

The Coronation of His Majesty King Charles III on Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> May marked the beginning of a long weekend of National celebration. This provided a splendid opportunity at St Saviour's for a festival of music with royal associations on Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> May: The choir effusively sang 'I was Glad'-(Parry) and 'Zadok the Priest' (Handel) with Trumpet Fanfares, the National Anthem and a stirring rendition of the 'Crown Imperial' march (Walton) by Nicholas on the parish organ.

On 14<sup>th</sup> June: St Saviours Church hosted the hugely successful Royal School of Church Music Advanced Singing Course on multi part motets directed by Derek Harrison. This was very well attended by twenty-one members of St Savours choir, which comprised a large component of the over seventy voices present from churches all over Hertfordshire and Bedfordshire. It is hoped that this will be the first of many such occasions in future. Philip and Jacqui Elson generously hosted the end of year 'Choir Barbecue' Party in their beautiful garden on 22<sup>nd</sup> July. The rain sodden afternoon did not dampen the choir's spirits as we were safely protected by an industrial sized canopy and fortified with excellent food and wine. A wonderfully relaxing afternoon was had by all before the summer break.

In October, the choir we were again invited to lead a special Choral Evensong at Woburn Abbey (St Mary's: which is in effect the chapel of the Dukes of Bedford). In the cathedral-like acoustic the choir sang music by Thomas Weelkes: 'Alleluia I heard a voice; Canticles by Walmisley, the motet 'O thou the central orb' (C Wood) and 'Close thine eyes'-M Plumpstead. Our singers were made very welcome, with a lavish afternoon tea and cakes provided. This service of choral evensong was repeated on 15<sup>th</sup> October at St Saviour's Church. The choir sang splendidly at Woburn, and

obviously made an excellent impression as we were invited back to lead the official Bedford Estate 'Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols' in December, with a massed choir of over fifty voices from four local parishes.

The Season of Remembrance included an early afternoon service on 5<sup>th</sup> November to ensure that All Souls Day did not clash with the local firework displays! Notably the choir sang: The Lord is my Shepherd (H Goodhall-vicar of Dibley), 'Thou knowest Lord the Secrets of our Hearts;(Purcell) 'Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace' (Wesley). On Remembrance Sunday the choir sang the evocative requiem mass by Duruflé.

During the autumn recruitment to the choir grew as we welcomed Kathy Goodchild to the Soprano section, and Ian Rogers as a rare additional Tenor. We also expanded the 'deputies' list of experienced local singers who have kindly supplemented the choir on special occasions: My thanks this season are particularly extended to Christine Darby, Mary Baldwin, Claire Robinson, Carol Wilding, Gareth Truran, Ruth Brazier, Stuart Bates, and Laurie Hawkins.

In Advent there was a busy start to the church's year with a special Service of Baptism and Confirmation led by the-Bishop of Hertford in the morning, followed by the musically rich Advent Procession of Carols in the afternoon. Choral music included: 'E'en so Lord Jesus' (Manz), 'Matin Responsory' (Palestrina), 'The truth from above' (R V Williams), 'A tender Shoot' (O Goldsmidt), 'Drop down ye Heavens'-(Lloyd) 'Adam lay ybounden' (B Ord) 'A spotless Rose' (H Howells). An early service of 9 Lessons and Carols on 17<sup>th</sup> Dec included 'In Dulci júbilo' (Pearsall) 'There is no Rose' (Joubert)'The angel Gabriel' (Archer) 'Christmas Lullaby' (J Rutter), 'What tidings bring'st thou' (N Hare). To complete the year the choir received a very welcome affirmation from St Mary's Woburn, which was a nice 'note' on which to end the musical year:

*"Please thank the choir of St Saviour's for their wonderful singing at our service of Nine Lessons and Carols - it made all the difference and was a great help to the local parishes." Tim Gage, Director of Music."*

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the members of St Saviours Choir, and especially Nicholas, our wonderful organist, for all their hard work, commitment, and enthusiasm from Friday to Friday and Sunday to Sunday throughout the year, without which none of the above would be possible. I would also like to thank the clergy team for their continued support and encouragement. If anyone in the congregation would like to join us (or knows someone else who might!) please come and have a chat (or speak to Nicholas or a member of the choir).

## **ORGANS**

### ***Parish Organ***

The Organ Working Group was established as a PCC Working Group in August 2021. The purpose of the group was to explore the restoration of the Parish Organ, and identifying potential funding sources for this.

Liaising with the DAC Organ Adviser, Mr Andrew Lucas, during 2022, the group acquired reports and quotes from several organ builders. All reports agreed that major work was necessary, however, the quotes varied significantly, ranging from £190k up to £360k.

Because of the considerable cost of a restoration, the PCC asked the working group to explore the option of installing a digital organ instead.

This was explored in January during a meeting with Mr Lucas, who advised strongly against it. However, during this meeting, Mr Lucas also presented another report which he had been sent by the IOF, who in 2015 had asked an organ builder to assess the parish organ and provide a quote for its repair – presumably with a view to using it as part of the festival. The quoted costs were significantly less, however, Mr Lucas was confident that the organ builder that had been asked to quote was reputable and suggested we obtain a new quote from them to give us an up-to-date price, since the original quote was now eight years old.

The PCC agreed to this and in April a new assessment and quote were received. As expected, the new cost was higher, however, it was still significantly lower than the other quotes received. More importantly this organ builder allowed for a staged approach, which means the project can be carried out in five stages, each paid for separately as and when completed. The report was reviewed by the Organ Working Group and Mr Lucas and commended to the PCC. The restoration of the parish organ, and its funding are now part of the larger development plan for St Saviour's.

### ***IOF Organ***

In 2022 after an initial approach by the Artistic Director of the International Organ Festival, the PCC decided that the Peter Collins organ (which is also in state of disrepair) should be removed from St Saviour's in accordance with the faculty arrangement which saw its introduction in 1989. Notice (12 months) was given in February and as of December 2023, discussions were ongoing with a view to removal mid-2024. It is a complicated process, but a new prestigious home has been found in London, and the necessary funding found by the IOF for its repositioning and restoration.

Obviously the removal of the IOF organ will 'free up' a significant amount of space at the head of the nave and allow for greater flexibility and development.

### **PARISH PANTRY**

The Parish Pantry was set up to try to address some of the local needs resulting from the national Cost of Living Crisis following the covid pandemic. This is an additional resource to local Foodbanks, catering for more immediate, occasional and regular needs. There is no requirement for a social services referral.

The Pantry is housed in a small cupboard at the back of church, with shelves for tinned and dry food, toiletries and cleaning products. Donations are provided by individuals and groups connected with St Saviour's, as well as the local Morrison's supermarket. The Pantry is accessed throughout the week by anyone who is in need. Some regular users come from families at the local primary school, others come into church anonymously and take what they need. Staples like pasta, rice, tinned fish, meat and vegetables, pasta sauces, toilet roll, nappies, tea and coffee are particularly useful. Thank you to everyone who provided donations for the Pantry. These are very much appreciated.

## **PASTORAL TEAM**

In specific terms, Nonita and Bruce have continued their work of sending bereavement and baptism cards respectively, and, in addition, anniversary cards are sent as follow-up contacts. Their considerable efforts are very much appreciated. In more general terms, there has been little change in the way that pastoral matters have been addressed over the year. The ministerial team deliver Home Communion where requested, and either phone or in-person contact is made by us whenever we are aware of anyone in need. After a meeting with Fr Richard, Fr Corniel and Libby, some research has been undertaken as to how other churches organise pastoral support in a systematic way, but we have yet to follow up on the findings to see whether there is anything to inform how we might formalise pastoral support at St Saviour's.

Fr Corniel and Libby were very pleased to join forces with the Rennie Grove Peace Hospice to start to offer support to people locally, and in the wider community, who have suffered loss in any way. This takes the form of a monthly Compassionate Café where trained volunteers offer a listening ear in a warm and welcoming environment (the Church Hall). We have 8 kind and generous volunteers from both the church community and from other walks of life. The first of these cafés was held in December 2023, and there were 2 visitors who both said they would return. January 2024 saw 5 visitors, so the team very much hopes to build on this and to continue to help more people.

## **REFUGEE LANGUAGE CLASSES**

St Saviour's offers free space to language classes for Ukrainian refugees, organised by StAR (St Albans for Refugees). These started in July 2022 and continued throughout 2023. They are planned by Sean Elder and run by his wife Hilary, who is an ESOL teacher (English for Speakers of Other Languages). Meetings are held in the choir vestry on a Tuesday morning. The classes are attended by around 10 refugees. StAR are very pleased with the arrangements and very grateful to St Saviour's for offering the space.

## **SACRISTY**

The Sacristy team did not meet formally during 2023, but the background jobs that the team are responsible for were still carried out. We had hoped that the young servers would join for other services as well, but this has only happened a couple of times. They are now all regular servers at the All-age Service on the third Sunday of the month. We have a faithful group of servers who serve regularly on a Sunday morning and all the extra services we hold. We are always looking for new recruits, so please speak to one of us if you are interested. Last year we had six volunteers who helped with the cleaning of the brass and silver, this number has dropped, so if you feel you could give an hour every third month, please speak to Elaine. I would like to thank all our servers, especially John, who is my right hand man, and all who serve at the Altar every week. This couldn't happen without you.

## **SAFEGUARDING**

The new Learning and Practice Guidance 2021 came into force in January 2022. There is a national requirement for all dioceses to ensure healthy safeguarding practice, responding well to victims and survivors of abuse in the church context.

The Bishop of St. Albans set minimum requirements for safeguarding training using the new Learning and Development Framework.

Summary of progress in 2023

- The annual Safeguarding Policies and Action Plan were approved by the PCC in March.
- The new course on Raising Awareness of Domestic Abuse was released in November 2021.
- All PCC trustees are required to complete this as well as those working with children and vulnerable adults.
- We have updated the Safeguarding records and all PCC members have completed the required safeguarding training in the last year.

The PCC has complied with its duty to have due regard to the House of Bishops' guidance in relation to safeguarding. Safeguarding alerts made to the PSO have been reported to the Diocesan Safeguarding Lead.

Thank you to all our volunteers who offer their time and skills in support of our parish community and help us in our Diocesan and parish commitment to safeguard all God's people.

## **SENIOR CITIZENS' TEA CLUB**

I would like to thank Elizabeth Cash for all the work she has put in to making the Tea Club such a success over the past 20 years? (A long time anyway!)

The tea club runs on the third Friday of each month between 2pm and 4pm for senior citizens. Numbers over the past 6 months have been gradually increasing (30-35) with a steady trickle of new faces each month. Before Covid we had about 35/40 people, but many have not returned due to ill health/age.

People speak of it being a friendly group with interesting speakers/entertainment and delicious cake! We are starting to advertise the group on social media and other mediums to encourage new people. The "helpers" are amazing, but we really need some more people to lessen the load on them. We also need more cake makers!

## **SERVICES**

### **Sundays**

Our Sunday morning service pattern has remained constant through the year with an 8am Low Mass and 10am Parish Mass, the latter being supported by the parish choir. In the summer of 2023 we launched a new informal evening communion under the title **broken/**. This immediately drew in new worshippers, as well as regular members of the congregation. The service draws on prayers and music from traditional and contemporary sources and is designed to compliment our usual Sunday pattern.

### **Third Sunday All-Age Mass**

Our Third Sunday All-Age Mass is an opportunity for all ages to worship together. As well as involving children and young people, including in serving at the altar, we have actively worked to make it All-Age and involve people across the congregation, particularly those who may not ordinarily take on roles during our other services. We



have used different mass settings and included more contemporary hymns and songs. The sermon slot has been filled in different ways each month, and this has included more informal and interactive Q&A type talks, as well as interviews.

### **Midweek Services**

On Tuesday morning Mass has a time of silent reflection (based on Lectio Divina) after the lectionary readings. This has been well received as an opportunity to pause and reflect on the readings before receiving communion. Coffee is served afterwards. Thursday evening has remained focused on praying for the mission of the church. Mass is followed by a period of silent reflection before the Sacrament (Exposition), ending with a blessing by the Sacrament (Benediction).

### **STREET FOOD HEROES**

Between March and September the front section of the church car park is used to host a monthly street food market which draws a large crowd of local people and families between 4pm and 9pm. The church receives a 'pitch fee' each month, but by far the greatest benefit is the opportunity to welcome so many parishoners and offer hospitality. The events are managed by 'Street Food Heroes' and has grown from the beer festival.

### **WALSINGHAM CELL**

The parish Cell of Our Lady of Walsingham met regularly for a morning Mass of Our Lady on the second Saturday of the month where we were pleased to welcome members from the Cell at the Cathedral as well as members of our regular congregation. The service is followed by coffee at the Vicarage with an opportunity for discussion and reflection, and

### **WOMEN' GROUP**

The Group continues to be a way for women to meet and socialise outside of set church services and meetings. The scope of activities has been scaled back as many don't drive and just need a simple and enjoyable way to meet up. This also means daytime and somewhere accessible. The annual meal usually held at Christmas was a joint arrangement with the WOW group this year and celebrated in January. It was very successful and much enjoyed.

### **WOMEN ON WEDNESDAYS (WOW)**

Women on Wednesdays (WoW) continues to meet on the first Wednesday of the month as a complimentary group to the St Saviour's Women's Group which usually meets during the day. WoW begins with half an hour of quiet reflection in the Lady Chapel from 7.30pm for those who want to join in, with a range of activities from 8.00pm. WoW provides a good opportunity for an evening out as part of a group without partners or children and to get to know each other better.

In 2023 the programme included Quiz night at the King Will, Comedy night at the Crown, meal at Aspava, Games night in church, Hike to the Six Bells, BBQ, St Michael's Folk Festival, Crafts in church, Wreath making at Earthworks for Advent and a joint Christmas meal with the daytime group. There are over thirty members on the WoW WhatsApp group, which we use to stay in touch and update with details of monthly meetings. Around ten people attend each month, some have their main contact with St Saviours via Families at Four. We regularly ask new people to the church congregation if they'd like to be involved.

# Annual Accounts 2023

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Annual Report and Financial Statements of the Parochial Church Council for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> December 2023

*Incumbent*

**Fr Richard Watson**

*Accountants*

**Baverstocks**

**Dickens House,**

**3-7 Guithavon St,**

**Witham**

**CM8 1BJ**

## **Receipts and Payments**

for the year ended 31 December 2023

St Saviour's Church, St Albans

## Income and expenditure account for the year ended 31 December 2023

### General Fund

	-- 2023 --		-- 2022 --	
	£	£	£	£
<b>Receipts</b>				
<b>Voluntary Income</b>				
Planned Giving	46,371.41		51,952.99	
Collections	1,812.95		2,124.14	
Income tax recovered	11,376.73	59,561.09	11,864.86	65,941.99
<b>Other voluntary Income</b>				
Donations	8,685.48		6,686.27	
Legacy	0.00		0.00	
Fundraising Events	0.00	8,685.48	0.00	6,686.27
<b>Other income</b>				
Church Hall Rent	27,408.75		25,738.12	
Church – Hire	11,042.15		7,894.25	
Bank Interest	3,840.60		3,810.42	
Performing Rights Fees	0.00		0.00	
Church Fees	6,986.00		1,476.00	
Wall Safe	0.00		19.60	
Social Committee	0.00		100.00	
Other Income	527.00	49,804.50	(415.09)	38,623.30
<b>Total Income</b>		118,051.07		111,251.56

<b>Expenditure</b>	<b>-- 2023 --</b>		<b>-- 2022 --</b>	
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
<b>Relating to the work of the Church</b>				
Parish Share	66,831.00		57,507.59	
Sanctuary	740.85		689.03	
Children's Church & Youth Group	561.81		808.28	
Music	5,937.00		7,702.80	
Church Running	19,579.37		11,243.71	
Clergy Expenses	6,555.52		2,324.68	
Ministry, Worship and Events	0.00		0.00	
Garden	1,503.75		1,668.00	
Building Maintenance	2,226.10	103,935.40	3,668.95	85,613.04
<b>Administration</b>				
Printing and Marketing	4,477.38		2,756.04	
Secretarial	5,607.80		4,700.97	
Bank Charges	355.55		789.79	
Stationery	1,608.06	12,048.79	885.46	9,132.26
<b>Other Expenses</b>				
Church Hall	1,046.39		4,879.40	
Miscellaneous Expenses	979.11	2,025.50	410.02	5,289.42
<b>Total Expenditure</b>		118,009.69		100,034.72
<b>Surplus/(deficit)</b>		41.38		11,216.84

#### Note

The revaluation of the shares has been attributed to Other Income  
Income and Expenditure Summary

<b>General fund</b>	<b>-- 2023 --</b>	<b>-- 2022 --</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Balance brought forward	22,236.59	11,019.75
<b>Income</b>		
Surplus (deficit) on ordinary activity	41.38	11,216.84
<b>Expenditure</b>		
Transfer to Fundraising Events	0.00	0.00
<b>Balance carried forward</b>	<b>22,277.97</b>	<b>22,236.59</b>

#### Investments (part of 632009001J)

	<b>Shares</b>	<b>Book value £</b>
<b>Balance brought fwd 01.01.22</b>	78.59	1,066.96
Sales in 2023	0.00	0.00
<b>Balance carried fwd 31.12.23</b>	<b>78.59</b>	<b>1,066.96</b>

The value of the 78.59 shares at 31.12.23 using a bid price of 5971.38p was £4,692.91. This represents an unrealised gain over the original purchase price of £3,625.95.

## War Memorial Income and Expenditure

<i>Restricted Fund</i>	-- 2023 --	-- 2022 --
	£	£
<b>Balance brought forward</b>	2,246.31	2,246.31
<b>Income</b>		
Donations and grants	0.00	0.00
<b>Expenditure</b>		
Project Expenditure	0.00	0.00
<b>Balance carried forward</b>	2,246.31	2,246.31

## Flower Fund Income and Expenditure Summary

<i>(Restricted)</i>	-- 2023 --	-- 2022 --
	£	£
Balance brought forward	259.30	380.80
<b>Income</b>		
Donations and fees	0.00	250.00
<b>Expenditure</b>		
Expenditure on flower purchases	(141.50)	(371.50)
<b>Balance carried forward</b>	117.80	259.30

## Maurice Roberts Memorial Fund Income and Expenditure Summary

<i>(Restricted)</i>	-- 2023 --	-- 2022 --
	£	£
Balance brought forward	97.22	97.22
<b>Income</b>		
Additional Donation	0.00	0.00
<b>Expenditure</b>		
Cleaning	0.00	0.00
<b>Balance carried forward</b>	97.22	97.22

This fund is for the repair and upkeep of hassocks/kneelers in the church, and the funds are administered by the Friends of St Saviour's.

## Fund for development Phase 2

	Income and expenditure	
<i>Restricted Fund</i>	--2023--	--2022--
	£	£
<b>Balance brought forward</b>	12,548.67	12,148.67
Income	0.00	400.00
Expenditure on church infrastructure	(3,000.00)	0.00
<b>Balance carried forward</b>	9,548.67	12,548.67

The Phase 2 development fund is restricted to the upgrading of church and hall facilities for the disabled – ramps, lavatories, wider doors, etc. and to revamping the hall to make these changes possible.

## Millennium Window Income and Expenditure

<i>Restricted Fund</i>	-- 2023 --	-- 2022 --
	£	£
<b>Cash Balance brought forward</b>	81.09	81.09
Project expenditure	0.00	0.00
<b>Cash balance carried forward (restricted)</b>	81.09	81.09

## Friends of St Saviour's Income and Expenditure

<i>Restricted Fund</i>	-- 2023 --	-- 2022 --
	£	£
<b>Balance brought forward</b>	10,056.75	9,572.75
Income	449.50	484.00
Expenses	0.00	0.00
<b>Balance carried forward</b>	10,506.25	10,056.75

## Senior Citizens' Tea Club – Fund now closed

### Income and Expenditure

<i>Restricted Fund</i>	-- 2023 --	-- 2022 --
	£	£
<b>Balance brought forward</b>	(35.45)	105.47
<b>Income</b>		
Transfer from General Fund	35.45	424.70
<b>Expenditure</b>		
Various events and expenses	0.00	(565.62)
<b>Balance carried forward</b>	0.00	(35.45)

## Defibrillator

### Income and Expenditure

<i>Restricted Fund</i>	-- 2023 --	-- 2022--
	£	£
<b>Balance brought forward</b>	487.70	687.70
<b>Income</b>		
Donations	0.00	0.00
<b>Expenditure</b>		
Installation expenses	0.00	(200.00)
<b>Balance carried forward</b>	487.70	487.70

## Fundraising Events

### Income and Expenditure

<i>Designated Fund</i>	-- 2023 --	-- 2022--
	£	£
<b>Balance brought forward</b>	15,081.21	11,073.52
<b>Income</b>		
From All Events	29,232.24	21,338.86
<b>Expenditure</b>		
Quinquennial Repairs	(7,356.66)	(17,331.17)
Youth Worker Fund	(8,000.00)	0.00
Charitable Donations	(6,000.00)	0.00
Fundraising Costs	(16,351.41)	0.00
<b>Balance carried forward</b>	6,605.38	15,081.21

## Organ Repair Fund Income and Expenditure

<i>Restricted Fund</i>	-- 2023 --	-- 2022--
	£	£
<b>Balance brought forward</b>	3,356.00	3,386.00
<b>Income</b>		
Donations	0.00	330.00
<b>Expenditure</b>		
Repair Costs	0.00	(360.00)
<b>Balance carried forward</b>	3,356.00	3,356.00

## Vicar's Discretionary Fund Income and Expenditure

<i>Designated Fund</i>	-- 2023 --	-- 2022--
	£	£
<b>Balance brought forward</b>	0.00	0.00
<b>Income</b>		
Donations	1,000.00	0.00
<b>Expenditure</b>		
None	0.00	0.00
<b>Balance carried forward</b>	1,000.00	0.00

## Youth Worker Fund Income and Expenditure

<i>Restricted Fund</i>	-- 2023 --	-- 2022--
	£	£
<b>Balance brought forward</b>	0.00	0.00
<b>Income</b>		
Parish Large Grant	5,000.00	0.00
Transfer from Fundraising	8,000.00	0.00
None	0.00	0.00
<b>Balance carried forward</b>	13,000.00	0.00

## Funds Placement

### Financial Assets

	-- 2023 --		-- 2022 --	
CBF Equity Investment Fund (current valuation)	4,692.91		4,165.91	
<i>Total at-risk equity investments</i>		4,692.91		4,165.91
CBF deposit fund	13,071.27		12,572.67	
Barclays Community (current) Account	51,560.21		49,676.81	
<i>Total cash or low-risk holdings</i>		64,631.48		62,249.48

### Calls on Assets

		Barclays Current a/c		CBF Deposit fund		CBF Accumulation Shares		Totals	
Fund		2023	2022	2023	2022	2023	2022	2023	2022
General		4,611.01	5,595.23	12,974.05	12,475.45	4,692.91	4,165.91	22,277.97	22,236.59
War Memorial	R	2,246.31	2,246.31	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	2,246.31	2,246.31
Dev't fund p2	R	9,548.67	12,548.67	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	9,548.67	12,548.67
Friends	R	10,506.25	10,056.75	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	10,506.25	10,056.75
Maurice Roberts	R	0.00	0.00	97.22	97.22	0.00	0.00	97.22	97.22
Fundraising Events	D	6,605.38	15,081.21	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	6,605.38	15,081.21
Defibrillator	R	487.70	487.70	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	487.70	487.70
Vicar's Discretionary	D	1,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	1,000.00	0.00
Youth Worker	D	13,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	13,000.00	0.00
Organ Repair	R	3,356.00	3,356.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	3,356.00	3,356.00
Tea Club	R	0.00	(35.45)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	(35.45)
Flowers	R	117.80	259.30	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	117.80	259.30
Millennium Window	R	81.09	81.09	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	81.09	81.09
		<b>51,560.21</b>	<b>49,676.81</b>	<b>13,071.27</b>	<b>12,572.67</b>	<b>4,692.91</b>	<b>4,165.91</b>	<b>69,324.39</b>	<b>66,415.39</b>



## Notes to the accounts

### 1. Social Committee

This committee maintains an account at the St Albans branch of the Royal Bank of Scotland for the purpose of receiving income and meeting expenditure in connection with social events. Profits are paid over to the PCC and are included in these accounts.

### 2. Accounting Policies

The financial statements of the PCC have been prepared in accordance with the Church Accounting regulations 2006, using the Receipts and Payments basis. Subject to the above, receipts and payments include income as received and expenditure when irrevocably paid.

### 3. Funds

The General Fund represents funds of the PCC which are not subject to any restrictions regarding their use and are available for application to the general purposes of the PCC. The accounts include monetary transactions, assets and liabilities for which the PCC can be held responsible. They do not include the accounts of other Church Groups that owe an affiliation to another body, nor those that are informal gatherings of Church members.

### 4. Balance Sheet

The following assets and liabilities are recognised but not valued in the statement of Assets and liabilities: -

- Moveable church furnishings requiring a faculty for disposal
- Land and buildings held on behalf of the PCC
- Office Equipment
- Computer equipment
- Four pianos
- Lawnmower
- Cooker
- Dishwasher
- Hall furnishings

Closing bank balances are shown in the receipts and payments accounts.

### 5. Investments

Investments are valued at market value as at 31.12.23. The investments consist of shares held in several common investment funds and are all held in the United Kingdom. The 22 Sandridge Rd Fund, and the Ives Bequest have not been included in the Accounts as the PCC has no control over these. The trustees for these funds are the St. Albans Diocesan Board of Finance.