



St Margarets, Tylers Green

Annual Parochial Church
Meeting 2025

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1 Agenda

- A Bible Reading and Prayers
- B Annual Meeting of Parishioners
 - 1 Appointment of churchwardens
- C Annual Parochial Church Meeting
 - 1 Apologies for absence
 - 2 Minutes of the last annual meeting held 28/03/23
 - 3 Election of lay PCC members (0 vacancies)
 - 4 Appointment of sidesmen and appointment of auditor for 2025/2026
 - 5 Chairman's address
 - 6 Accounts and review of annual reports
 - 7 Any other matters of general church interest
- D Closing Grace

2 Minutes of the last APCM (Held on 9th April 2024)

Minutes of Vestry Meeting and Annual Parochial Church Meeting

Tuesday, 9 April 2024 at 7.30pm held in The Sanctuary

People in attendance: 21

Opening Prayer & Bible reading:

Rev. Samuel began by welcoming everyone, then read from Paul's letter to the Ephesians 3, followed by a prayer.

Vestry Meeting

Election of Church Wardens:

Kathryn Grudgings had indicated that she was prepared to stand for a further year as Church Warden. David Winder is also prepared to stand for another year and, there being no other nominations, these were carried unanimously. The Vestry Meeting closed. Big thanks were recorded to David and Kathryn for all they had done and would continue to do.

Annual Parochial Church Meeting

Rev. Samuel declared the APCM open. The APCM is only open to those on the Electoral Roll of the Parish.

1. Apologies for absence:

Sue Wallace, Katie Streten, Rhoda McDouall, Deborah Yeates, Phil Cooper and John Watts

2. Minutes of the last APCM:

The minutes of the last APCM, held on 29 March 2023, having been circulated, were proposed by Roger Edwards, seconded by Corrine Summers and carried unanimously.

3. Matters arising:

Nothing of note which would not be coming up later.

4. Election of Deanery Synod Members:

This was not an Election Year. Our current reps are David Carter and Roger Edwards, with Revd Graham being co-opted automatically. Roger said that the meetings are interesting and informative and he frequently takes Christine along.

5. Election of PCC Members:

There were no vacancies this year. The PCC therefore currently comprises: Revd. Samuel S. Thorp (Vicar), Revd. Graham Summers (Clergy); David Carter and Mary Lee (LLMs); Kathryn Grudgings and David Winder (Church Wardens); Emma Byrne, Rhoda McDouall (Lay Members); David Carter and Roger Edwards (Deanery Synod); Alison Bright (Treasurer) and Gail Wellings (Secretary).

6. Electoral Roll:

Jean Stables reported that there were currently 77 souls on our electoral roll. Next year, being the sixth year, everybody comes off and has to enrol again. Revd. Samuel thanked Jean for her work on this.

7. Deanery Synod:

This has been previously covered, and the pack contains comprehensive reports provided by Roger. St. Margaret's had been signed up by Roger as an eco-friendly church

8. Treasurer's report:

Katie Streten had agreed last year to take on the reclamation of the Gift Aid, which has been a huge help. Sue Wallace had kindly contributed towards the costs of maintaining the organ. Our first utility bill last year had been £7,000 which had been a great shock. The two charities we supported last year were Wycombe Homeless Connection and Sharon International Ministries. David Carter proposed the acceptance of the Accounts and this was seconded by Jean Stables and carried unanimously. Grateful thanks to Alison were recorded by David Carter and Jean Stables With regard to the appointment of an Auditor for next year, James Smith was appointed again, proposed by Revd. Samuel, seconded by Revd. Graham and carried unanimously.

9. Safeguarding:

Emma reported that all Safeguarding matters were current for which Revd. Samuel thanked her.

10. ANY OTHER BUSINESS:

Revd. Samuel said how encouraged and delighted he had been by the Christmas and Easter crafternoon and he hoped we could have more. Revd. Graham then spoke about the Dementia Café. It had been an encouraging start but needed publicity and support.

11. Closing prayers:

Revd. Samuel thanked everyone for coming and David Winder wanted to record special thanks to Dave Byrne for all his help.

Everybody then said The Grace.

3 Reports

Introduction

This year the APCM Reports are taking the following structure:

- Mission and Evangelism
- Pastoral Care and Discipleship
- Worship and Teaching
- Governance and Administration

These headings cover nearly every aspect of Church Ministry, and we now use these headings as the basis of our PCC agendas and are using these headings to structure our Mission Action Plan. The core concept is that our **Mission Action Plan** should outline where we are going, the **PCC Agendas** should resource the implementation of the plan, and our **APCM reports** should enable accountability by making it easy to see both the plan for our activities and how things have happened in reality.

The Mission Action plan can be found in the Appendix and is a living document which we invite you to read and comment on as together we chart a course for the future of our Church as we proclaim the Gospel in our communities of Penn, with Knotty and Forty Green, and Tylers Green.

The Vicar's report precedes the rest as by its nature it discusses elements pertinent to each category.

Vicar's Report

Time passes and leaves no one unchanged in the process. Much as the seasons come and go and we see the growth and changes in the world around us; our Churches are no different. We continue to proclaim the Gospel of Christ Crucified, Resurrected and Ascended, we meet in worship and prayer, friendship and fellowship, and step into our communities seeking to have hearts that are open to the possibility of encountering God and his purposes for us in each conversation we have with all whom we meet. In many ways things remain the same, but in a number of significant ways things have either changed or are in the steady yet unpredictable process of changing. Our Churches are living Churches and we have much to be encouraged by even as we have challenges to engage with.

A few weeks after our last APCM, our Administrator Gail Wellings fell and broke her hip. Her time in hospital and then at home recovering from both the injury and associated complications left our office and Benefice Administration limping along with a high degree of uncertainty and a noticeable diminution in capacity. At the turn of the year, Gail Wellings made the decision to retire as our administrator after many years of faithful service to this Benefice. I have to express my heartfelt gratitude to her for the instrumental role she has played in welcoming me to the role of Vicar, and for her encyclopaedic knowledge of social and pastoral community links and connections. Her absence is visibly noticed in the pews by the lack of the weekly printed news sheet, and particularly the prayer requests which were contained in it. However, her absence has been most keenly felt in the many administrative tasks which have been shouldered by myself, our Church Wardens and Ministry team, and especially by Holy Trinity's treasurer John Scurrill who has consistently gone above and beyond the call of duty through his very helpful efforts to keep on top of all things financial and funereal.

One of the blessings within these circumstances has been the way that both Churches have constructively worked together and supported each other during this time. It has long been the practice for the standing committee of each parish to do the business required by their respective roles, but because employment of an administrator is a joint endeavour of the two PCCs both standing committees have met together as a joint standing committee. This committee has met a number of times and has been both a real support to Gail Wellings but also to me throughout the last year. Through that whole process I have worked closely with Alison and John as your Treasurers and whilst they may be able to put a numerical value on various elements of Church life, I cannot thank them enough for their invaluable efforts and support. One of my priorities for our churches is finding ways that we can work effectively together as a benefice whilst preserving and focusing on the unique identities and strengths of each parish. I commend your Churchwardens and Treasurers to you for exemplifying these qualities in your service and as your representatives.

Last year I wrote with sadness of the passing of Holy Trinity's Churchwarden Oliver Heal, who was a significant loss to our Churches both as the man of character that he was but also as a capable and valued Churchwarden. I am pleased to say that Nico Wilson has stepped into the role of Churchwarden with enthusiasm, curiosity, and diligence. Along with Paul Ricketts' faithful efforts Holy Trinity is well served. David Winder has likewise continued to grow into the role and his behind-the-scenes efforts for St Margaret's cannot be underestimated. He has been most capably shown the ropes by his fellow warden Kathryn Grudgings who has been quietly yet relentlessly effective in her role as Churchwarden for a long while. At this APCM she is however stepping down as Churchwarden and I want to acknowledge and commend her to all of you as someone who has done an excellent job for St Margarets but also for the whole benefice. I am extremely grateful for her kindness and time and hope that you will all join me in expressing our gratitude for all she has done. Unfortunately, she has not been replaced, and so we shall have to rally around David Winder in the coming year and lend him our aid, talents, and strengths. We shall be praying for God's encouragement for someone else to become a churchwarden in due course, with the assurance that we shall support and encourage them as they learn the ropes.

Mary Lee has written a helpful report on the Ministry Team yet I must thank the Ministry Team for not just their hard work - and they do plenty of it! - but especially for their commitment to praying together each week and for the mutual support and encouragement which is offered within the ministry team. My thanks to David, Graham, and Mary for all that they continue to do. In addition to the administrative situation, Linnea and I have also been navigating the realities of being vicar with a young family; which itself has been a blessing but the support of the ministry team as well as of the wider congregation and indeed the broader community has been very special. Linnea has been on maternity leave from her LLM role but she shall soon start preaching and leading services on an occasional basis.

One unexpected benefit has been the organic opportunities to get to meet and know more people in Penn and Tylers Green whilst pushing Alfred's pram around; first to encourage him to nap, and latterly to see the ducks and play on the swings! Public visibility in our community is a key principle which matters to our Churches and is appreciated by those in the local community as well; our support of the Carols on the Common as well as our act of Remembrance with the schools on the green, and the Good Friday Christian Witness of hearing the passion of Christ by the sign of the cross, are all good signs to Penn and Tylers Green that the Church is alive and engaged. We also had a stall at the Village Expo in February which was a great occasion to speak with local people, but it was also fantastic to see so many Church people involved with other stalls and local organisations present; the presence of the Church is more than a Vicar with a dog collar, it's the presence of Christians among the people in the ordinary things of their lives.

Mindful that we have a gospel to proclaim and a faith to share, we are seeking to encourage people in their faith by providing training for those involved in our services; particularly running a workshop on prayer for those that lead the intercessions. This is something that we shall continue to do in future and for more roles, with the hope that the whole congregation will feel empowered to take their turn in contributing to the worshipping life of our Churches. At St Margaret's we have been seeking to help our younger people feel included as a part of our Church Family, we had a "name tag" Sunday and now a termly Tygre Club led service where they influence the whole service and show us that willingness to get involved is a meaningful contribution to our services. I have to particularly acknowledge Katie and her efforts with both the Crafternoons and the games and film nights. We have also sought to encourage individuals to grow in their faith and understanding by offering an Exploring the Apostle's Creed course and then running two Lent groups on Mark's Gospel. We continue to prioritise the idea of 'returning the Bible to the Pews', and this year's Lent Reflection series on Substack charted a course through highlights from the whole of the Bible leading up to the death and resurrection of Jesus. These have all been well received and we hope to do more things like this in the future.

Easter and Christmas were very encouraging this year, with more events and services happening than last year and a noticeable increase in visitors coming and joining us. One particular success to highlight was the string of successful school services at St Margaret's which were packed with children and their parents, another was the Easter baptism of Eleanor - aged 14 - whose testimony was a real witness to a large number of people who don't normally attend church services. This is part of a national trend and is much needed following the significant lull of the pandemic. On Advent Sunday Holy Trinity was pleased to dedicate a new collection of Books of Common Prayer, updated and appropriate to the present reign of King Charles. This coincided with Holy Trinity becoming a corporate member of the Prayerbook Society, and we hope that the prayerbook services at 8am and on select occasions through the year will be a blessing to those who appreciate the traditional forms of liturgy, even as we hope to explore new services to engage with other elements of our local community; particularly in Knotty and Forty Green, but also among those who are otherwise engaged in sports and family life on Sunday Mornings. I know that these kinds of projects will have the support of the new Bishop of Buckingham, The Right Reverend Dave Bull - he succeeds Bishop Alan, who after many years of ministry in our area sadly died unexpectedly last year. Bishop Dave will be joining us for St Margaret's patronal festival in October, and we pray for him as he settles into his new role.

One of the Key Elements which we have been working on behind the scenes, as it were, has been a process of reflecting and developing our Mission Action Plan. This is something that we have been asked to look at by the Deanery and has been a joint process between the PCCs and the Ministry Team. The starting point for this is included as part of the APCM reports in the Appendix, but the next stages are to have a consultation with the congregations for further feedback and suggestions which will in turn drive the agendas for PCC meetings and thus the activity of our Churches. During a session led by Parish Development Advisor Revd Asa Humphries, we had an exercise which we did in small groups and when we all reported back to the whole we discovered that our answers had all overlapped significantly; with a desire to work well with other Churches and Christians in our community, to equip people to share their faith, and to work with young people/families/those in our parish with whom we do not have (much) contact (yet). I am incredibly grateful for the many emails and conversations I have had with individuals from the Churches about this topic and we have done our best to lay out our priorities.

Among those priorities remains a firm commitment to doing occasional offices well; we have had quite a number of baptisms, the confirmations of Robert Walpole and Beth McLaughlin, a handful of lovely weddings, and have continued our funeral ministry; which has included the bittersweet loss of some long term members of our congregations whom we entrusted to God's loving care. To this end we continue with our valued commemoration service at All Souls and introduced, by request, a 'blue Christmas' service for those who find Christmas a difficult time of year. The Sanctuary Cafe has a separate report but I'd like to take this opportunity to thank Revd Graham Summers and his dedicated team of volunteers for all that they have done. It's easy to trivialise our efforts as 'trying our best' when in fact all those with experience of this kind of activity who have visited or discussed what the Sanctuary Cafe is doing are thoroughly impressed.

On the topic of thanks, it is a running joke at the Ministry Team meeting on Wednesday mornings that David Carter, quite reasonably, would like to know the hymns for Sunday morning. Alas Revd Graham and I have seldom managed that until later in the week, but we are appreciative of both Deborah and Robert our fine organists who faithfully play so well and enable the rest of us to sing with confidence and joy - even when those hymns are selected at short notice!

Many of these topics have been discussed with Archdeacon Guy who has been keen to support me as a first time Incumbent settling into this role. I have now joined the Mission and Pastoral Committee for the Deanery which I hope will enable us to identify ways we can work together with other local churches, and be inspired by their activities even as we inspire others. I am also a member of the subcommittee for the Diocesan Partners in World Mission for the link between Oxford Diocese, England, and Vaxjo Diocese in Sweden. There have been other opportunities I have been invited to consider as part of the life of the wider Diocese but whilst willing to play my part, my heart and focus is firmly set on Penn and Tylers Green and seeking to see our Churches of Holy Trinity and St Margaret's grow and flourish as we seek to build one another up in the love of Christ so that we might bring more people to know the love and forgiveness of Jesus for themselves.

"Speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love."

- *Ephesians 4.15-16*

With every blessing and my sincere thanks once again to each and every one of you,

Samuel S. Thorp

Revd Samuel S. Thorp
Vicar of Penn and Tylers Green

3.1 Mission and Evangelism

Electoral Roll

There are 59 people on the Electoral Roll of which 38 are resident in the Parish of Tylers Green and 21 are non-resident.

Jean Stables – Electoral Roll Officer

Events

The events committee is a small group of 6 people from both churches who aim to provide a mixture of social events throughout the year that include the wider community. For 2024 we had a variety of events, including Open Gardens, Heritage Weekend, Harvest Supper, Memorial Service, Christmas Tree Festival, Pancake Evening and most recently our Easter Monday Walk.

All the events have seen a good attendance, particularly this year we saw increased popularity with the pancake evening, with several local families attending and both Heritage weekend and Christmas tree festival were buzzing with people looking for how many Crosses there were on the Heritage weekend or deciding their favourite tree at the Christmas tree festival.

Usually most of the events include cake! And for that we are very grateful to our amazing volunteers who bake beautiful homemade cakes for these events, thank you.

If you would like to become involved with any of the events it would be lovely to have another pair of hands to help, just let the office know and they can pass on your details. We look forward to seeing you at the next event!

Emma Byrne – Events Committee

Parish Newsletter

The Parish Newsletter is a quarterly publication produced by a small committee of volunteers with articles from the Ministry Team and key local community figures on themes of Theological, Moral, Historical and otherwise 'Church related' matters. This includes advertising seasonal services and Church events.

The Parish Newsletter has for many years been delivered to every home in the two parishes, however this year we have had to stop delivering to some houses at the bottom of Hammersly Lane due to the safety of delivers on a busy road without pavements. We are also facing a shortage of volunteers to deliver the magazine for us. Presently there is an imbalance between how many copies different people deliver, and a period of review to identify a more equitable and sustainable system of delivery is high on the agenda.

The PCCs have traditionally subsidised the printing costs, with a supplemental income from advertising. The price of advertising has not increased for nearly 13 years while the printing costs have increased, and Church finances have become less robust. To address this, we have increased the advertising from £66 p/a for a slot to £100 p/a. This is still a cheaper rate than many other local publications offer and so should be appealing to advertisers, and it reduces the financial cost of the Parish Newsletter to the PCCs. The goal for the Parish Newsletter is to be financially self-sufficient, to have a sustainable means of delivery, and to be a tangible Christian witness to reach out to our local community in Penn and Tylers Green. We are heading in the right direction.

Revd. Samuel S Thorp – Vicar

Crafty Ones

Crafty Ones is currently made up of five members occasionally six. We currently knit, embroider, cross stitch and of course chat. We ran weekly up till December when we broke for Christmas, however we have not continued yet due to my mobility issues and the cold weather in January and February. It is hoped that we start again soon as I know our Friday afternoons are being missed.

If anyone would like to join us they would be most welcome. We meet on a Friday afternoon in the Sanctuary from 2.00pm till 4.00pm with tea and biscuits. The cost is £1 per afternoon. To find out more please ring me on 01494 712138.

Jean Stables

St Margaret's Art Group – SMART

The Art Groups meet on Wednesday and Thursday mornings from 10am to 12am. The attendance of both has been steady as our members are confident in the measures, we take in cleaning the furniture and social distancing. We have a number of new painters. Owing to illness, Brian Miller and John have relinquished the leadership of the Wednesday Group and we are very grateful to a group of ladies who now lead. We are also grateful to Jean Stables for her leadership on Thursday.

The Group provides money to the Parish Rooms and we have made a donation to St Margaret's Church funds each year. The usual Christmas party was, unfortunately, cancelled this year owing to illness and inclement weather. We look forward to the summer events.

David Carter – LLM

3.2 Pastoral Care and Discipleship

Sanctuary Café

The 'St. Margaret's Dementia Cafe' started in June 2023 meeting twice a month in the Sanctuary supported by a fantastic group of volunteers including members of both churches and, indeed, one helper from outside our church community.

Dementia is a challenging condition, not only for the sufferer but also for their carer with an ever growing need for support. So, our aim is to provide a safe space where both can receive respite and support in a calm and friendly atmosphere all lubricated by an endless supply of tea, coffee and biscuits.

We started slowly but the project has gained traction to the point where we have recently decided to expand our offering and we now meet weekly every Thursday afternoon at 2.30pm. We have also recently decided to change our name to 'The Sanctuary Cafe'. Not only is this less cumbersome than the original but is a response to local feedback and what we have discovered to be best practice in this area.

Jesus taught... "By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another" (John 13:35) and, even more forcibly, the Apostle Paul said... "Bear one another's burdens, and in this way you will fulfil the law of Christ". So, we are encouraged as we seek in this way to be the love of Christ in our local community.

However, this isn't just the province of the faithful volunteers who make this work on a weekly basis. We ask for the support of all of you in prayer for God to continue to bless 'The Sanctuary Cafe' and all those who visit.

Please also treat this as a formal invitation to join us on any Thursday afternoon to be refreshed and see all our activities in more detail. You will be most welcome.

*Revd. Graham Summers.
Easter 2025*

Home Groups

The Benefice has one active homegroup which continues to meet on a roughly fortnightly basis. They have used York Courses throughout the year, though many attended the Lent Course in 2025. Various members have had difficult circumstances arise and they have found the group a helpful support of fellowship and prayer.

Tygre Club / X Stream

We have enjoyed another busy year at TYGRE Club. Our regular attendees are in the older age group, meaning that our activities reflect their ages of ten and upwards. These have included crafts, games and discussions, based on the readings of the day. In addition to our regular sessions, the teenagers have enjoyed several film and games evenings, organised by Katie - complete with pizza and popcorn. All regular attendees have also participated in the planning and leading of three Youth Services, with a fourth on 18th May.

Our sessions would not be possible without our dedicated team who plan, prepare and lead each week. My very grateful thanks to them – Katie, Tash and Emma. They are ably supported by our Crèche leaders, Rhoda, Heather, Janet, Alison and Vanessa. We would love to welcome new members to come and join the fun as we learn and share God's word together!

Georgina Newton

Crafternoons

We hosted 3 Crafternoons this year for the younger Tygre Club members and open to all in the village and beyond: one in the summer focused on Butterflies, one just before Advent focusing on Advent and Christmas activities and one on Easter Saturday focused on Easter celebration. Summer and Christmas had good attendance average of 12 children per event. Easter was very quiet with only 5 children. We will reschedule next year's Easter Crafternoon to a little earlier in Lent.

Our programme of film and games nights is designed to give the older youth a space of their own. We have played 3 different films: The Blind Side, The 6th Sense and upcoming Risen. And we have hosted two games night, with the second involving a talk and a book gift about prayer (and a heated drafts competition between Samuel and Albert!) We are hoping to connect with other churches in the area and start working with them to extend attendance.

Thanks David, Janet, Alison, Georgina, Tash, Heather and Ian for joining me in bringing these events for our younger congregation members and making them feel valued and able to explore and deepen their relationship with God and Church.

Katie McLaughlin

3.3 Worship and Teaching

Ministry Team

Ministry Report for the United Benefice of Penn and Tylers Green - Holy Trinity and St Margaret's 2024

“Shepherd the flock of God that is among you, exercising oversight, not under compulsion, but willingly, as God would have you; not for shameful gain, but eagerly; not domineering over those in your charge, but being examples to the flock.” 1 Peter 5.3

Under the capable shepherding of Revd Samuel, the Ministry Team is supportive in the driving of our flock through its seasonal range of activities and witness to the Gospel.

In spite of what can sometimes feel to be somewhat limited resources, we nevertheless enjoy being able to run a full programme of activities and services that reflect and mark the changing times of the year both liturgically and seasonally even though it can be quite exhausting.

Aside from Revds Samuel and Graham the team includes Licensed Lay Ministers (LLMs) - David, Linnea and me, Mary, along with Authorised Preacher - Annette Bruce. None of us has a clearly defined role as such but we employ our individual strengths and preferences (where possible) within the team whether it be operating sound systems, managing the website, leading non-sacramental services such as Morning Worship along with preaching and taking funerals both in our parish churches or at Crematoria. David and Mary are also engaged in leading the occasional service at a couple of our local URC churches to help them cover Ministry absences. Linnea through 2024 was on maternity leave but is looking forward to returning to a more active role in the Ministry team over the next year.

In preparing this note It was necessary to look back at the 2024 calendar to recall all the activities and services we conducted as time so quickly moves on to considering the next event that it is easy to forget all the various things that have been done or achieved.

Easter fell at the very end of March 2024 with Lent coinciding with the happy arrival of Alfred Thorp during that time. As such it was considered that we could not stretch ourselves to run a Lent course although Revd Samuel provided online Reflections through the medium of Substack focusing on the Prodigal Son. We held our usual Holy Week fare with Compline for the first three days of the week, Maundy Thursday Communion Service and Good Friday meditation and a Holy Saturday Reflection which was led by Revd Samuel.

Later in the year during August we participated in the Apostles Creed course run by Revd Samuel in the Sanctuary which was well attended and a good talking point.

One Saturday in October we held a Grave Talk café session in the Sanctuary to talk about practical preparations for death but in a Christian context. It's not a subject many wish to engage with even though it's a destination we are all heading for! We shall be running this session again as those who do choose to come along have found it invaluable.

The season of Advent was as busy as it can be with its various activities and services including Christmas Tree Festival and its culminating Christmas Jumper service, Christingle, Carol and Crib services along with a reflective Blue Service which we have not held before. All members of the Ministry Team now possess at least one Christmas jumper!

The weekly Ministry meetings we hold on Wednesday mornings are an important opportunity for the Team to debrief the previous Sunday's services and the week's events to see how well they went and how they may be enhanced for the future as well as to consider upcoming services and events and to

discuss any pastoral issues arising. The meetings always start with a short service of Morning Prayer which takes place in the Lady Chapel at Holy Trinity. This service is open to everyone who wishes to join us and starts at 8.30am.

Aside from our weekly services in the two churches we also take services at the two care homes in our Benefice – Alde House and Bury Lodge. The frequency of the services has changed over time and we now visit Alde House seasonally and Bury Lodge monthly with a Christmas carol service at Bury Lodge. It is difficult to believe but it was only once June was through that Revd Samuel had experienced a full year with us and so 2024 was a learning curve for each of us to adjust to how ministry within the Benefice will adapt and grow through the coming years and taking on board new liturgical formats. Preparation of the Ministry Action Plan will form an important vehicle for directing that growth in appropriate ways. We are looking forward to being part of that evolution and continuing to work with Revd Samuel.

This note is not intended to be a definitive catalogue of everything we did during 2024 and I'm sure there are a number of things I have omitted but hopefully this will provide a flavour of what the Ministry Team gets up to!

Mary Lee – LLM

Flowers

We are blessed with a dedicated team of 'flower ladies' who seek to honour God by decorating St. Margaret's with flowers each week. In addition to the weekly arrangements prepared on an individual basis, we come together for special events and festival Sundays. These are good times of fellowship which we all look forward to and enjoy.

An annual highlight is the Open Gardens weekend where we take a full part in the village celebrations. St. Margaret's is open throughout the whole event and decorated with special displays on the altar and each window.

If you like what you have seen each week and would like to join us please do speak to either Corrine or Deborah. This isn't about being an expert flower arranger, it's about fellowship and doing our best for God. It isn't just about being a 'flower lady' either. Any male members would be more than welcome to join us.

Finally, at a time when church finances are under pressure, we would just like to commend all those flower arrangers who have provided their displays at no cost to church.

Corrine Summers & Deborah Yeates.

3.4 Governance and Administration

Churchwardens

The fabric of St Margaret's has been maintained in good order following the report from the Diocese surveyor.

The building did not comply with the latest electrical safety regulations and work was done to enable an electrical compliance certificate to be issued and retained. Roof deterioration was evident following a drone inspection and work commenced to replace tiles, cement valley gulleys and repair unstable masonry. The cost £5500 was significant and the wardens have applied for a grant to offset the expenditure.

In an effort to address the issue of unaffordable energy costs we reduced heating the building to Service times only whilst trying to retain a warm environment for our congregation. This has proved successful. Current projects include the newly refurbished notice board having service times, scripture passages and publicity material to communicate ourselves to the local population.

The Parish Council will be asked to attend to the flagstone paths where jointing has deteriorated. Hopefully they will in addition arrange cleaning of the war memorial as previously promised.

After many years of Warden service, Kathryn will be stepping down from duties next month. I wish to acknowledge her valuable service to St Margaret's, and I know you join me in thanking her for unstinting dedication to the role and for her patience in helping me to get to grips with the many and varied duties and wish her and her family all future happiness.

Whilst a new prospective new Warden has not yet materialised, I have been offered valuable assistance by several of the congregation and would welcome a rota based help with setting up, clearing up and participation in work parties as necessary.

David Winder – Church Warden

Treasurer's Report & Audited Accounts

(Accounts can be found in the Appendix)

Voluntary Income for 2024 was down on the previous year, mainly due to the fact there was £7,500 less from donations. In 2023 we received a large legacy. Gift-aided income was up on last year, the total received in 2023 being for two years. Gift Aid recovery this year, will be approximately the same as last year. The Stewardship Appeal brought in £6,600, due mainly to a single donation of £5,000. Monthly giving was increased by a number of people, for which we are very thankful. We received a legacy of £1,000 and a similar donation from St. Margaret's Art Group.

Fee income was similar to last year, with one wedding and five funerals.

United Benefice income was from the Pancake evening, Fizz and Quizz and the Harvest Supper, and includes the money given to Village Care.

In **Church Activities**, Parish Share was up on last year, and is now the subject of some dispute in the Diocese. The new Electoral Roll number will not be used until 2026. The Utilities total was considerably reduced from the previous as we had a £500 credit for both gas and electricity due to the previous high prices. Timing for the heating system was also adjusted. A new 3-year contract has been taken out through Utility Aid. Maintenance Costs cover the Quintennial Report which cost £1200; £800 spent on the

heating system; £750 for an electrical compliance inspection plus necessary remedial work and £300 for repairs to the external signage. Ministry expenses were much reduced on the previous year, since they included all the costs of finding a new vicar and work on the vicarage. The main cost incurred was an upgrade to the office system. Service Costs include a new supply of gift-aid envelopes (£100); organist costs and servicing the organ (£980), and approximately £600 for music licences. Church Activities cover successful Crafternoon sessions for the children in the Sanctuary at Christmas 2023 and Easter. Supplies bought will cover future events as well. The Newsletter costs were marginally down on last year as fewer copies were printed. Donations for 2023 will be given in 2024.

As a result of the Stewardship appeal, we ended up with a small surplus. Provision was required, however, for roof repairs this year. Our reserves have been maintained, though they were considerably depleted in 2022 following the pandemic, and it has not been possible to rebuild them.

Alison Bright – Treasurer

Safeguarding

The first and most important part of this safeguarding report for St Margaret's is we have had no reported safeguarding incidents year to date.

In the meantime in the background we try to grapple with the paperwork and online dashboards that need to be managed and maintained for the current safeguarding systems in place from the Diocese. We are maintaining safeguard training and DBS checks every three years.

We have reviewed relevant policies and the PCC is in the process of updating the social media policy. Our safeguard policy was renewed in March 2025. We report and discuss safeguarding at each PCC meeting.

It is important to maybe highlight that 'safeguarding' encompasses the safety of our children within the church family, which most people would expect, but it is also about supporting the volunteers who offer their time with the children.

Another strand to safeguarding which people may not always consider is those more vulnerable members for the congregation, this includes awareness of financial and emotional abuse.

There have been several reports in the news of forced labour, modern slavery etc., all of which is hidden in plain sight within our communities and should not be labelled as "well that wouldn't happen here".

Emma Byrne – Parish Safeguarding Officer

Deanery Synod

AMERSHAM DEANERY SYNOD (ADS) MEETINGS 2024-2025

Briefing Notes from the Amersham Deanery Synod (ADS) Meeting Thursday, 14th March 2024 Christ Church, Waterside, Chesham.

1. Julie Dziegiel (Treasurer for 14 years and is now an Honorary Lay Canon) advised that the Amersham Deanery Synod annual budget for 2024 has been reworked and the deficit of (£7,735) will be balanced by taking money from reserves. ("A concern being managed"). Details are available on www.amershamdeanery.org.uk under the heading 'Share Allocation'. The Amersham Deanery Trust Report and Financial Statements to 31 st December 2023 contain a lot of information which is also available on the ADS link.

2. Parish Development Advisor Revd. Asa Humphreys (now six months in this post) explained what he does to help with/facilitate the following: (1) Filling parish vacancies (2) Supporting Funding Applications including for Missions (3) Training for curates and those new in post. (4) 'Vision Days' for PCCs and DCCs. (5) Help with Mission Action Plans (6) Working alongside patrons.

3. Jeremy Moodey (unable to attend) provided his attached 3 -page summary report of the General Synod held in Church House, Westminster from 23 rd to 27 th February 2024. The topics cover: (1) Safeguarding (2) Same-sex blessings (3) Other church matters, including £100 million for African Chattel Slavery. As before, I strongly recommend you read Jeremy's astounding report in full.

4. Laurence Tebboth gave a trailer for a huge diocesan campaign to encourage more children to attend church.

Diocesan Briefing Notes from the Amersham Deanery Synod (ADS) Meeting Thursday, 20th June 2024 at Chesham Bois Parish Centre.

1. New Bishop of Buckingham to be appointed. Interviews in October and appointment in November 2024.

2. Elections to Oxford Diocesan Synod for 2024 to 2027.

House of Clergy Deanery representatives will be Rev'd Edward Bowes, Rev'd Peggy Ludlow and Rev'd David Whale. House of Laity Deanery Representatives will be Mr Peter Flory, Mrs Helen Savage and Mr Lawrence Tebboth. Dr Andrew Bell, Mrs. Julie Dziegiel and Rev'd Jeremy Moody as General Synod Members, are also members of Diocesan Synod.

3. Disciples Together Putting children, young people and families at the centre of a more Christ like church. There were various breakout sessions with flip charts on this subject and the overall results will be coordinated and presented at the next Deanery Synod meeting. Topics included will be 'How can we best support each other across the Deanery and what Diocesan resources would help?'

Briefing Notes from the Amersham Deanery Synod (ADS) Meeting Thursday, 28 th November 2024 at the Church of St George, Little Chalfont.

1. The new Bishop of Buckingham will be David Bull. David will be living in Milton Keynes.

2. General Synod Report, by Revd. Jeremy Moodey

Rev'd Jeremy Moodey gave a very articulate and frank update of the possibility/impossibility of reconciling LLF/gay marriage & gay wedding blessings within the C of E. This issue was not really resolved at the last General Synod. The resignation of Archbishop Welby and the election of his replacement will only delay resolution and may cause a change in direction. Note. Jeremy urged us to read the Makin Report. Change to Safeguarding must follow for our Bishops.

3. Deanery Treasurer Julie Dziegiel gave a lengthy presentation on the revised Parish Share for 2024. (The revision arises from the cost of an appeal). Julie also presented the proposed Parish Share for 2025.

The backdrop to income is that congregations and Electoral Rolls are falling and the number of Ministry vacancies in the diocese has increased. There were many tough questions and disagreements about the traditional methodology used by the Deanery. Some churches feel strongly that it is inconsistent, unfair and unacceptable. It was also said to be driven top downwards from Oxford HQ. Eventually votes on the proposed Parish Shares for 2024 (revised) and 2025 were taken, with majorities in favour. Julie pointed out that the Parish Share is voluntary (i.e. not mandatory) and she does consult with the PCC treasurers. (Alison?). The Parish Share (Revised) for 2024 means St Margaret's should pay £42,930 and for 2025 (Revised) £43,593.

4. Ministry in Little Chalfont's Estates by St George's

Rev'd David Whale and Rev'd Victoria Jones gave an inspiring presentation on its ministry There is significant social housing area in Little Chalfont with many needing spiritual and food help and Christian love. St. George's holds multi-generational activities throughout the week in the support of the insecure and needy. Christian beliefs and love are revealed (to non-churchgoers) paradoxically in the church. St George's is a safe and welcoming refuge for all. Steve and Lindsay Poulson are our Deanery Link Mission Partners in Honduras. They have made a mission progress video available via a link on the Deanery website. (They are expecting their first baby!)

(Full minutes for these meetings can be found on the Amersham Deanery website).

*Roger Edwards – Deanery Synod Representative for Penn and Tylers Green
April 2025*

Appendix

Accounts for the year ending the 31st of December 2024

The Mission Action Plan