



**The Parish Church of  
Saint George the Martyr  
Waterlooville**



**Annual Report and  
Financial Statements  
of the  
Parochial Church Council  
for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> December 2024**

**Churchwardens:**

**Sarah Canham, 101 Redwing Road, Clanfield PO8 0LX**

**Richard Spurgeon, 11 Sandy Brow, Purbrook PO7 5JP**

**Banks:**

**Lloyds  
Bank PLC  
272 London Road  
Waterlooville  
Hants PO7 7HN**

**HSBC Bank PLC  
312 London  
Road  
Waterlooville  
Hants PO7 7DX**

**Mr Paul Read FCA  
Independent Examiner  
9 Tamar Down  
Waterlooville  
Hants PO7 8QJ**

**THERE WILL BE A ST GEORGE'S ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH  
MEETING ON SUNDAY 13<sup>TH</sup> APRIL 2024  
IN THE CHURCH AFTER THE 10 am EUCHARIST**

---

**A G E N D A**

1. Welcome
2. Apologies
3. MEETING OF PARISHIONERS  
to elect two Churchwardens to serve for one year
4. MEETING OF ELECTORAL ROLL MEMBERS  
Report by Electoral Roll Officer
5. Minutes of 2024 APCM and Matters Arising
6. Presentation of Audited Accounts and Treasurer's Report
7. Election of 5 PCC members
8. Election of 1 Deanery Synod Member
9. Reports from the Churchwardens, PCC Secretary and Treasurer and church groups
10. Appointment of Independent Examiner

**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING of St George the Martyr, Waterloo, held on Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> April 2024 in the church commencing at 11.15 am.**

**There were 57 persons present at the meeting.**

**Chris Gadd, outgoing Churchwarden chaired the meeting**

---

**1 WELCOME**

- 2 APOLOGIES** were received from Ann Hilliard, Sandra Hewett, Marian Haughton, Eileen Oades, Rosemary Monk, Dawn Hyett, Ian Gibson, Pat Phillips

**Introduction by Chris Gadd, outgoing Churchwarden**

A very warm welcome to you all to this year's APCM. Being a lawyer, can I take the opportunity to open by providing you with the legal rationale for me chairing today? I am delighted to see Fr Colin here today, but he remains off work and, absent the Incumbent, the Church Representation Rules provide that chairing the APCM falls on the deputy chair of the PCC which is me and remains so until our new churchwardens are sworn in by the Archdeacon in due course.

Can I start with a few thank yous?

First to Fr Colin himself. Until the time he was not able to minister, for his wisdom and guidance and leadership at St George's. We continue to pray for his return to health.

To Rev Liz. For all that she did when she was with us. And to all our retired priests - to Frs Charles and Tyrone, and to Reverend Sandra all of whom have stepped in to lead our worship here.

I'd like to thank Jane, for her continued brilliance as Parish Secretary. To Sara Pask (ably assisted by Malcolm) for her work on our accounts of which we will hear more shortly.

To Anne Morgan for leading our serving team. To Sonja (assisted by Lynn Winter) for the great work that she does on safeguarding.

To David Cain and our brilliant choir. And to the PCC who do so much and all the various sub committees.

To June Diaper and our flower ladies. To Wendy our wonderful Sacristan.

To Lynn Winter, Jess Deal and all who help at our Sunday school.

And to Andrea. She has stepped in to a relatively newly created role in helping me with St George's Dragons, our group of young people that attend High Tide once monthly and also meet at one of our houses for games, food and worship. It's a really important area of our ministry and has been fabulously successful and I could not manage this without her help. And thanks also to Amber and to Sarah Brewer for their help.

Can I also make a special mention to Fr Ray and to Richard Spurgeon both of whom have, in their differing ways, offered me counsel and support during these past few months.

And finally, as a catch-all so I can't be accused of missing anyone out, to all those who make St George's work in a myriad number of ways. Thank you to you all.

Whilst this APCM is intended to reflect the activities of the past year, I am sure you are aware that this is my last year of being churchwarden following two tours and 6 years. I hope therefore you will allow me the indulgence of reflecting on some of the things that have happened during this last 6 years.

Being a churchwarden is both a tremendous privilege as well as a great responsibility. I have absolutely experienced both.

During this past 6 years, the church has experienced a number of very significant challenges. I think it unlikely that we as individuals or collectively are ever going to experience the unique challenge of a worldwide pandemic. It is almost hard to picture ourselves back at the start of that period and very easy to make judgements based on hindsight. The Church of England of course has made many mistakes as an institution during my lifetime. But on a personal view, the church's decision to close their doors during the pandemic, was easily and by far the worst decision the Church of England has made in my lifetime. For the head of the church to abdicate his responsibility to our nation and to leave people alone and fearful in their homes was as close to wickedness as I have known. It was the greatest act of self-harm in my life.

We as a church and me personally have also had to cope with the sadness of the issues that Fr Colin has experienced. Mental health

challenges are of course horrid. It is to Fr Colin's great credit that he has been open about the issues he has faced. We continue to pray for his return to health.

And so to my dubious strengths as churchwarden. I am very aware of my limitations and, despite impressions to the contrary, am very self-critical. I know for many of you I am insufficiently collegiate. I don't always follow what would be considered the correct church process. I am impulsive and often fail to consult. And I know I have upset more than one of you over the years.

But to all of you here (and those at home), whether you have agreed with my methodology or not, I do hope that you will accept that in everything I have done I have always worked for what I thought were the broad interests of this church and for the Glory of God.

To serve as churchwarden for 6 years has been the privilege of my life. I wish every blessing to my successors. Thank you.

Richard then thanked Chris for his sterling work over the last 6 years. He has done a fantastic job over this time, some of which has been really challenging. Richard on behalf of the whole congregation presented Chris with a card, 2 bottles of his favourite wine and a Majestic wine voucher.

### 3 **MEETING OF PARISHIONERS TO ELECT TWO CHURCHWARDENS TO SERVE FOR ONE YEAR:**

As above Chris Gadd is standing down after 6 years. Rosy Stone resigned on 31<sup>st</sup> August 2023. This means we need 2 new Churchwardens and we have 2 people who would like to stand as Churchwarden:

- Richard Spurgeon - proposed by Sheila Howard, seconded by Norma Kershaw.
- Sarah Canham – proposed by Malcolm Brewer, seconded by Jane Cook.

Chris asked if everyone present is happy for these 2 people to be elected as Churchwarden and this was agreed unanimously.

They will be sworn in by the Archdeacon in due course.

4      **MEETING OF ELECTORAL ROLL MEMBERS / REPORT BY  
ELECTORAL ROLL OFFICER**

Jane read a report from Derek Strickland that there are 147 parishioners currently on the Electoral Roll, 70 of these are from outside the parish. Thank you to Derek for taking this over from Tony Rice-Oxley and for his work on this.

The average weekly attendance, counted during October 2023, was 95 adults and 13 children including weekday services.

5      **MINUTES OF THE 2023 APCM AND MATTERS ARISING**

The minutes were agreed as a true and accurate record of the meeting held on 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2023 and were signed by Chris Gadd, Churchwarden. They were agreed unanimously by a show of hands from everyone present.

6      **PRESENTATION OF AUDITED ACCOUNTS AND TREASURER'S  
REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31.12.22:**

Sara Pask read out her report which is included in the APCM report and has already been circulated and put on the church website as follows:

“Good morning everyone, I hope you have all had a chance to look through the financial information for the year ended December 2023.

I'm afraid that it doesn't make very exciting reading but I would like to thank everyone who makes regular thanksgiving payments to the Parish by standing order, envelopes and through the Parish Giving Scheme.

The first thing I will mention is that, according to the accounts, the parish made a surplus of £9,000 in 2023 as against a deficit of £14,000 in 2022. However, this is not as good as it may seem because our Parish Share to the Diocese for 2023 was set at £66,200 we were only able to pay £27,550. This, I believe, is the first time that we have not been able to pay our full share in many years.

In 2023 the PCC took over the payment of the Church Hall gas bills as the Hall was no longer able to cover this themselves. In 2023 our total gas bill amounted to £9,600 (2022 £670). As you all know, gas prices rose steeply during 2023 and this is also a major factor in the total paid out.

The parish had a Stewardship drive early in 2023 which resulted in an annual increase in giving of £1,000. Unfortunately, some people left the parish or passed away which had an adverse effect on our income. I would like to take this opportunity to urge any of you who currently give regularly by bank standing order or green envelope to seriously consider changing to the Parish Giving Scheme which is made by a monthly direct debit from your bank account (which you can cancel or amend at any time). Another benefit of the Parish Giving Scheme is that you can ask for your giving to be increased by a chosen percentage on an annual basis which prevents your giving losing its value over the years. One other advantage of this scheme is that it takes away most of the bureaucracy involved in the Parish claiming Gift Aid back. If you would like any information about the Parish Giving Scheme please ask me.

Our fundraising efforts during 2023 resulted in a profit of £7,000 (2022 £12,000). The decrease in funds raised was due, mainly, to the fact that we did not have a Church Charity Shop in 2023. The shop is a very lucrative source of funds but it was also very hard work for the organisers and volunteers. It is not known whether we can have a shop again in the future due to the redevelopment of Waterlooville town centre.

You may have noticed that we have an “Endowment Fund” which is currently valued at approx. £33,000. Under the terms of the Fund we can only receive the interest from this investment but we can apply to spend some or all of the funds on a “capital project”. We have been exploring the question of improving the efficiency of heating the Church in a much more eco-friendly way. The boiler, which is housed in the Church Hall, is over 25 years old and will inevitably require more repairs or may even become unusable. The PCC are looking into various options and the funds in the Endowment Fund will certainly be needed then.

A couple of good things to say about 2023 from a financial standpoint is that we were finally able to claim back just over two years of Gift Aid that was due to us which shows in the amount received of £12,700.

The Film Club is doing well financially, is covering all its expenses and last year made a profit of £2,900. However, as these funds are in a “restricted fund” we are not able to use it for general parish expenses

other than those directly related to the running of the club. The PCC can, if necessary, resolve to spend some of these funds for another reason.

I would like to give my thanks to Malcolm Brewer, our Assistant Honorary Treasurer for all his help and support during 2023 and I look forward to this continuing for 2024.

My thanks are also due to Paul Read, our Independent Examiner for examining the annual accounts. I am pleased to say that Paul has agreed to examine the accounts again next year.

Please can I ask you all to approve the 2023 year end accounts by a show of hands. Those in agreement? Those against? Any abstentions? Thank you.

Chris and I will sign the accounts off. A full version of the accounts is available on request".

Sara asked if there were any questions:

Linda Wainwright raised a question about our inability to pay the parish share and why this is not shown in the accounts. Sara said the PCC have decided not to bring forward last year's debt as it will make our accounts look worse and worse. The Diocese are looking at various ways to make the parish share fairer and several of the PCC recently got together and filled in a questionnaire sharing our thoughts.

## 7 **ELECTION OF PCC MEMBERS / 2 DEANERY SYNOD REPS**

First of all thanks to the PCC members who have met 6 times over the last year. We have had some interesting discussions. Thank you to those PCC members standing down - Sue Hodgins and Mo Peters who have served for 3 years and Dawn Hyett who has served for one year for Linda Smith who stood down from the PCC. Dawn is able to stand straight away again.

We have had 6 applications:

- Malcolm Brewer (Assistant Treasurer) – proposed by Jane Cook, seconded by Antony Shepherd



- Dawn Hyett – proposed by Sarah Canham, seconded by Mo Peters
- Lynn Winter (Deputy Safeguarding Officer) – proposed by Linda Wainwright, seconded by June Diaper
- David Cavey – proposed by Jane Cook, seconded by Mo Peters
- Sue Hodgins – proposed by Mo Peters, seconded by Anne Morgan (for her second term on PCC)
- Candy Williams (Deanery Synod) – proposed by Linda Wainwright, seconded by Dawn Trimby

Candy Williams wishes to remain as Deanery Synod rep so at the first PCC meeting of this new year we will need 1 person who has been elected above to stand as Deanery Synod rep alongside Candy and 2 people to stand for 1 year to cover resignations but can then stand again next year for 3 years.

Chris asked if everyone is happy for these six people to be elected onto the PCC/Deanery Synod and this was agreed unanimously.

#### 8. **REPORTS FROM THE CHURCHWARDENS, PCC SECRETARY AND TREASURER AND CHURCH GROUPS**

Chris said that the APCM report had been available for some time both hard copies and on the church website so asked if anyone had any questions on any of the other reports.

No questions were forthcoming.

#### 9 **APPOINTMENT OF INDEPENDENT EXAMINER**

We are very grateful to Paul Read (who attends the 8am service) for again successfully examining the accounts for 2023. Sara said that Paul has indicated his willingness to do this again next year and thanked him for all that he does. This was proposed by Sara Pask, seconded by Mo Peters and agreed unanimously.

As there was no further business the meeting closed at 11.50pm and was followed by the St George's Day Parish bring and share lunch in the Church Hall.

# ST GEORGE'S CHURCH – ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2024

## Background

St George's Church has the responsibility of cooperating with the incumbent (Fr Colin Lawlor) in promoting in the ecclesiastical parish the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical. It also has maintenance responsibilities for the churchyard and church hall. Services were held every Wednesday at 10am and Sunday at 8am and 10am.

## Membership

Members of the PCC are elected by the Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM) in accordance with the Church Representation Rules. The following served as members of the PCC:

**Incumbent:** Fr Colin Lawlor

**Ex Officio:** Jane Cook (Secretary)  
Sara Pask (Treasurer)

**Wardens:** Sarah Canham  
Richard Spurgeon

**Representatives on the Deanery Synod:**

Candy Williams  
Vacancy

**Elected Members:**

Sue Hodgens  
Malcolm Brewer, Assistant Treasurer  
Sara Schillemore  
Patricia Byrne  
June Diaper  
Marian Haughton  
Anne Morgan  
Dawn Hyett  
David Cavey  
Lynn Winter

## Committees

The PCC operates through a number of committees/groups, which meet between full meetings of the PCC – Fabric, Finance & Quinquennial, Pastoral Committee, Church Hall Committee, Mission and Stewardship Committee, Social and Fundraising Committee, Eco Church Group Committee and we have reports at each meeting from Sonja Renfrew, our Safeguarding Officer and on Deanery Synod meetings from our Deanery Synod representative.

## Church Attendance

Derek Strickland is the Electoral Roll officer and he has been working on creating a new roll which has to be done every 6 years and will be reported on at the APCM. The list that is displayed now only has names on it because

of GDPR. If anyone still wishes to fill in a form after this meeting they can do and hand it to Derek and it will be agreed by the PCC.

The average weekly attendance, counted during October 2024, was 90 adults and 12 children. This includes weekday attendances.

### **Review of the Year**

The full PCC met 6 times during the year with an average attendance of 82%. The PCC meets once every 2 months with Fabric, Finance and Quinquennial, Pastoral, Church Hall, Social and Fundraising and Eco Church sub-committees continuing to meet in the interim, to enable items to be discussed in more detail, and report back to the full PCC to get any items confirmed.

Due to Fr Colin's ongoing absence through illness the Mission and Stewardship Committee have not met as he is chair of this Committee. The PCC will continue to invite outgoing Churchwardens to remain on the PCC for a further year to provide continuity.

Sara emails the monthly overview of the budget accounts to PCC members before the meeting to give people a chance to send any questions to her so they can be answered at the meeting.

We have supported over 12 wide-ranging charities, both at home and overseas, in particular £304.41 to the Children's Society, which included £189.29 from the Christingle service and continued support of three children under the African Child Trust Scheme. Other benefiting charities included Waterloo Food Bank, The New Blendworth Centre, Bishop's Lent Appeal, Rowan's Hospice /Naomi House (Jack's Place), Christian Aid, Water Aid, Mission for Seafarers, SightSavers, Hampshire and Isle of Wight Air Ambulance, International Fund for Animal Welfare and Two Saints. These were all retiring collections.

The giving through envelopes and banker's orders decreased to £28,559 before Gift Aid Relief. The tax recovered on Gift Aid donations amounted to £7,297, however, there is a considerable amount of Gift Aid still to be claimed for 2024. Gift Day was held and raised the sum of £2,195. Contributions on the collection plate were £4,244 for 2024 which was on a level with 2023. £88,954 was spent to provide the Christian Ministry from St George's Church, which includes the partial contribution to the parish share of £35,142. Our remaining fund balances are invested in a CBF Church of England Endowment Fund currently valued at £37,151 – we are allowed to spend the interest but cannot withdraw any of the capital unless it is to pay for a capital project.

Paul Read examined the accounts and has agreed to examine them again next year. The PCC are very grateful to him for the time he has spent on this.

The following has happened during the course of the year and most will be written about in more detail in the following reports:

- Sadly Fr Colin was off sick for most of the year with a phased return to work not going exactly as planned. We are so thankful for our retired priests Fr Charles, Rev Sandra and Fr Tyrone for keeping St George's going during this difficult time.
- The Waterloo Music Festival took place in June for a week and was again very successful and well attended.
- A total of 15 of us again joined with our friends from Havant and Paulsgrove for our annual trip to Walsingham.
- A Summer Fayre and Christmas Bazaar took place along with several other events which will be explained in more detail in the following reports.
- Bible study groups meet regularly on a monthly basis along with a prayer group.

On behalf of the PCC

Sara Pask, Treasurer  
Jane Cook, Secretary

Signed: Sarah Canham Date 13<sup>th</sup> April 2025  
Sarah Canham, Churchwarden pp Fr Colin Lawlor, Incumbent

## **Treasurer's Report 2024**

2024 has been another year in which we saw reduced income and increase in some outgoings. We ended the year with a small surplus of £600, however, this was only achieved by underpaying our Parish Share to the Diocese by £34,283.

Giving by standing orders, Parish Giving Scheme, pink/green envelopes and open plate is down in 2024 by £2,400. This reduction has been caused by regular generous givers leaving the parish and deaths in our congregation. Fundraising events brought in £5,400 in 2024 as against £7,000 in 2023.

The church hall is barely able to cover its costs and lettings are harder to come by. The PCC supports the Church Hall by paying the insurance and utilities. This poses the question of whether the Church Hall is financially viable???

Our utility bills for the church have come down somewhat, but remain relatively high as do our own domestic bills.

We have been unable to pay our full Parish Share for the past four years and in effect have an outstanding debt with the Diocese of £100,000. This is a situation that cannot continue if we are to thrive as a parish. Everyone needs to take a close look at what they give, has it been increased in recent years or if you do not give to the Parish yet please consider doing so by using the Parish Giving Scheme which is the most efficient. I have to say that we are in a very problematical situation and that the future of our Parish could be brought into question.

The Diocese has introduced a programme called Cornerstone to help parishes address the kind of problems that we currently have and over the next month/years we will be implementing some of the measures from Cornerstone to help our congregation understand our financial situation and to prayerfully consider our response of thanksgiving.

I know that the above gives a gloomy and downbeat overview of our Parish but there are many of our congregation who continue to give generously and regularly in their money and time and this is very much appreciated.

Sara Pask  
Honorary Treasurer

**ST GEORGE THE MARTYR, WATERLOOVILLE  
COMBINED ACCOUNTS OVERVIEW FOR 2024**

	UNRESTRICTED	RESTRICTED	2024 YEAR TOTAL	YEAR'S BUDGET For PCC Account	2023 YEAR TOTAL
<b>INCOME</b>					
Planned Giving S/Orders	25443		25443	30000	28709
Planned Giving Green Env	691		691	1000	963
Gift Aided Pink Envelopes	2424		2424	1500	1469
Gift Aid Tax	7297		7297	4000	12756
General Collections	4244		4244	3000	4151
Gift Days	2195		2195	1500	0
Donations & Appeals	989		989	2500	2361
Liturgical Donations	1067	1067	1067	500	699
Bookstall	216		216	220	234
Parish Magazine Advertising	700		700	800	800
Parish Magazine Sales	44		44	0	40
Fees received (PCC)	3940		3940	1500	1935
Fete, Bazaar, Fund Raising	5439		5439	7500	7028
Sales	0		0	0	7.00
Photocopying Income	140		140	0	107
Income from Investments/Bank	1472		1472	1000	1243
Bulletin Sponsorship	0		0	530	480
Church Hire	4000		4000	4600	4770
<b>Unbudgeted items:</b>					
Fees received (Assigned)	1556		1556	0	1782
Other Funds	5433		5433	0	0
Hall Lettings	20858		20858	0	27068
Toddler Group Income	0		0	0	828
Social Committee	304		304	0	1659
Ex.ord Income	2500		2500	0	17881
Film Club	838	838	838	0	2940
Pastoral funds received	0		0	0	0
Tea/Coffee	1255		1255	0	0
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>			93045		119911

EXPENDITURE	UNRESTRICTED	RESTRICTED	2024 YEAR TOTAL	YEAR'S BUDGET For PCC Account	2023 YEAR Total
Parish Share	35142		35142	69425	27550
Gas/Elec/Water Insurance	9928		9928	15520	13542
Church and Grounds Maintenance	3521		3521	1000	2227
Clergy Expenses	1140		1140	2000	1512
Administrator	4110		4110	4300	3820
Liturgical Costs	889		889	1000	722
Magazine, Bookstall & Bulletin	745		745	540	767
Piano and Organ tune	306		306	400	102
Administration	2376		2676	650	826
Photocopier Costs	732		732	1100	788
Fees paid out	675		675	0	343
Capitation Fee	20		20	20	20
Fundraising & Sales costs	745		745	1000	1239
Pastoral Costs	0		0	0	0
Music Support	221		221	400	1310
Sunday School	34		34	100	111
Mission	191		191	500	157
Director of Music	6987		6987	6405	5186
<b>Unbudgeted items:</b>					
Assigned Fees	457		457	0	1125
Ex. Ord Outgoing	2969		2969	0	16918
Hall Running Costs	20297		20297	0	28507
Hall Depreciation	0		0	0	0
Social Committee	0		0	0	1154
Giving to Charities	2819		2819	0	1863
Quinquennial costs	1800		1800	0	0
Toddler Group	100		100	0	698
Film Club	145	145	145	0	8607
Bank Charges	180		180	0	204
Tea/Coffee			529	0	0
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>			<b>97358</b>		<b>119298</b>

## **Churchwardens Report**

The past year at St George's has been somewhat of a rollercoaster ride of ups and downs. When Richard and I volunteered ourselves as churchwardens at the APCM in April of last year we were unprepared for quite such a challenging year ahead.

It started with the departure of our Parish Administrator, Alex, who had been a mine of information and had efficiently helped the parish to run so smoothly. With her leaving we lost a valuable experienced resource and had to start looking for a new person at a time when Richard and I were only just beginning to get to grips with Parish life. At this point Alison stepped into the role and we all began learning together.

However, after only a few months in post Alison decided the job was not for her and she too left for pastures new. Then Helen came along and has fitted into the role admirably. Her feathers are not easily ruffled and she meets every challenge with steely determination. One of Helen's biggest challenges has been working with the uncooperative partner that is the office computer system and we are currently looking into some form of replacement that will make life easier for all concerned.

During this time of upheaval Chris Gadd remained in a supporting role so that Richard and I could ease into our new positions. By Christmas the handover was complete and Chris was at last able to fully relinquish the role to us. We extend our thanks to Chris for his many years of service to St George's and hope he is now enjoying a somewhat quieter life whilst running the Dragons group!

Following after the APCM a group from the church once again attended Walsingham for an enjoyable and refreshing spiritual retreat.

In June the Waterloo Music Festival took place and was once again a great success. However, it takes a monumental effort to run these events and it relies heavily on an army of volunteers. Each year it becomes harder to find willing hands and with this in mind and considering the financial costs, this year the Festival will run over a shorter period from the 11th to the 14th of June. David Cain and Richard, along with a festival committee are deeply involved in running this year's event.

Our next successful event was the Summer Fête, where the weather proved very unkind to us, with blustery showers and high winds necessitating us to hold onto gazebos etc to try and prevent them all from blowing away. Well done to all the helpers who braved the conditions and raised such a fantastic sum for church funds.

Early October saw our regular Harvest Festival gathering and the consumption of a Posh Ploughman's lunch after the service. Thanks go to the organisers for another very successful event.

At the end of October a Pre-loved sale was organised and this was followed by a table top sale in November. Although we could have wished for more



people to attend these events the effort put into them is very much appreciated and any funds raised help towards the church's vast costs. November also saw our regular Remembrance Sunday service, which is always a moving occasion. Also in November we had a wonderful confirmation service attended by Bishop Jonathan with five confirmation candidates attending. The church was packed with well over 100 people. This was followed by a luncheon and celebration cakes in the church hall. The Christmas Bazaar took place at the beginning of December and was one of the liveliest and most colourful events of the year. The fun and vibrant atmosphere was helped by having a wonderful Father Christmas in attendance along with one of his elves! A marvellous sum was raised for the church. Congratulations to everyone involved.

The Christmas period also saw several concerts being held in church as well as our regular carol service with mulled wine afterwards and an extremely successful Christingle service with some 170 people in attendance.

Despite these many positive things occurring during the past year we have continued to have only limited input from Fr Colin due to his ongoing ill health. His phased return to parish life has not run as smoothly as was at first hoped. It has culminated in his recent stay in the neurological unit in Southampton hospital where it became necessary for him to undergo brain surgery. Our prayers remain with Fr Colin for his restoration to health.

Richard and I extend our very grateful thanks to our team of retired clergy, who, hoping for a quiet life, have currently been thrown back into full service mode. Fr Ray, due to ill health, decided not to renew his licence, but we are very lucky to have Fr Tyrone who remains available for Sunday services and we thank him for his continued help and guidance.

Rev Sandra does an amazing job with her quiet, calming ways and I personally value her help, advice and friendship very highly. Fr Charles seems to have limitless energy and has helped above and beyond the cause, not only with taking services, but performing many other ecumenical duties whilst also providing support and advice to us both in our roles as Churchwardens.

Our thanks must also go to all the various groups within the auspices of St George's church who all help everyday parish life to run so smoothly. From those who run fundraising events, keep the church hall alive, work with the Sunday school and young people, clean the church, decorate it with flowers, supply endless cups of tea and coffee, run the finances, belong to the pastoral group and our Anna Chaplain who gives such extended support to our clergy team, the PCC and outreach groups such as knit and natter and the parent and toddler group, the team of servers, our wonderful choir, our Sacristan and sidespersons you are all such invaluable members of our church and parish.

May God bless you all.

Sarah and Richard, Churchwardens

## **St George's Church Hall Report**

The Church Hall Committee have met seven times during the year.

Sadly in recent years the use of the hall by regular and one-off outside hirers has reduced significantly. The karate club continue to hire each week and the hall is used several times throughout the year by the HATS group. However, hiring halls for activities such as children's parties is no longer a popular choice compared to a booking at McDonald's or an activity centre.

Nevertheless, the hall does have regular user groups from within the church community such as the Sunday school, St George's Dragons, Knit and Natter, the Book Club, the Friendship Group and St George's Ladies to name but a few. We also have regular use by the Toddlers Group, the Thursday Markets, and the Film Club. The hall is also used for once a year gatherings like the Waterloo Music Festival, the Harvest Festival lunch and the APCM luncheon. Also it is used for fundraising activities for St George's church such as the pre-loved sale, the table-top sale and the Christmas Bazaar.

Sadly these events do not bring much money into the hall's coffers and they are, as a result, in a very sad state.

Some repairs/improvements have been undertaken during the year with the stage curtain being replaced in July and in August a general clear out in the hall was done and some things went to be sold at the table top sale.

Fiona Ross has now become the new Hall Manager, following in her father's footsteps. Fiona keeps a maintenance book in which all items requiring attention are listed. The hall committee relies heavily on the goodwill of people like Malcolm Brewer to sort out these repair problems. If it is beyond his skills he and Fiona work to call in the appropriate expert, but this of course can prove very costly for the hall finances. This was the case when it became necessary to replace the kitchen's dishwasher. Very luckily a kind member of the congregation gave an anonymous donation towards the cost of this replacement.

However, we now have the expense of replacing one of the fire exit doors in the main hall and this is needed urgently to make sure we comply with health and safety regulations whilst also making provision for a disabled exit in the event of an emergency. We have very recently heard that we have been successful with a grant application, submitted by churchwarden Richard Spurgeon on behalf of the hall committee, which will hopefully pay at least half of this cost.

We also have the added problem of the ceiling in the kitchen which is on the point of collapse and repairs being required to the flat roof above the kitchen, which is causing the damage to the ceiling. These repairs will require the payment of a very hefty bill and this is something that cannot be left for long as the ceiling is in imminent danger of falling down.

On a slightly more positive note we were all thrilled to welcome Bishop Jonathan, who not only performed a confirmation service in the church, but

agreed to officially switch on the hall's replacement lights. These lights are more cost effective and are greener to run. We were also able to secure a grant to cover this expense.

So the maintaining of the hall to make it safe and usable by all, means living on the proverbial knife edge financially. Talks are on-going between the PCC and experts with reference to the selling of all or part of the hall for redevelopment but this may take some time to resolve and in the meantime we live with uncertainty, hoping nothing else of a major nature goes wrong.

Sarah Canham  
Hall Committee Chairman

### **Christ Church Portsdown Mothers' Union, including members from St George's**

Our first meeting in February was a talk about the Mission Aviation Foundation.

On 5th March our AGM followed a service in Christ Church, Portsdown, led and then chaired by Rev Andy Wilson. Our branch has 27 members at present, of which 5 are indoor members.

This year's Lady Day service was held at All Saints, Catherington on 25th March, its theme was "Transformation".

For our April meeting Ros (Molloy) led us in a Taizé style worship with taped music and singing, including the beautiful Taizé chants "Jesus, Remember me" and "O Lord, hear my Prayer, when I call, answer me".

Kevin from the Blue Lamp Trust was our speaker in May. He gave a most interesting and informative talk on "Fire Safety and Safety in the Home".

Our Summer Tea Party in June is always very popular, this year with over 60 guests, from other MU branches and local churches. We had a buffet tea, a Bring and Buy Stall, MU Cards for sale, a large raffle and the usual table quiz.

A small group of us gathered on Sunday 16th June for the MU Wave of Prayer; a short service including prayers for our Wave of Prayer links across the world. This year we prayed especially for Bukavu in the Congo, Nyahururu in Kenya, Gboko in Nigeria and New Guinea Islands in Papua New Guinea as well as for Portsmouth here at home.

This year's Mary Sumner Day Service, for the Havant and Portsmouth Deaneries, on 9th August, was held at Holy Trinity Church, Blendworth and was led by Associate Priest Rev Joy Windsor.

Our September meeting was a service of Holy Communion led by Rev Janette Smith, Vicar of the Church of the Good Shepherd, Crookhorn and Curate at St John's, Purbrook and Christ Church, Portsdown.

Caroline Scull spoke to us in October on the MU programme for Literacy and Numeracy, and in November there was a talk by Tracey Harvey from HMS

Nelson about the “Aggie’s” (the Aggie Weston’s), a Christian Charity that has been serving the Royal Navy since 1876. It bears the name of its founder Dame Agnes Weston.

At our Christmas Party with guests, held on 3 rd December, about 40 people enjoyed a buffet tea, there was a raffle, Bring and Buy Stall and MU Cards and Merchandise.

Janet Johnson

### **Mission and Stewardship Committee Report**

The Committee has not met due to Fr Colin’s continuing illness.

### **Pastoral Committee Report**

Committee Members: Patricia Byrne, Rosy Stone, Marian Haughton, Anne Morgan, Lynn Winter, Lynne McNeill, Jackie Rossi, Tricia Taylor.

In the last year the Pastoral Team have met regularly every 2 months to go through the list of those members of our congregation who require care in the form of home visits, telephone calls and general support. Unfortunately, this list grows ever-longer but with a very proactive Pastoral Care Team we manage to get in touch with everyone.

Baptisms: For each application, members of the Pastoral Team take turns in contacting the family, conducting an initial home visit and making the necessary administrative arrangements, in addition to being in attendance on the day of the baptism. We have several booked over the next few months.

The St. George’s Church Friendship Group with Bereavement Support: Linda Smith has stepped down from running this group, and a lady by the name of Eileen Swetland has now taken on the role. Patricia has been in touch with Eileen and she agreed to attend the next committee meeting of the Pastoral Group.

Anna Chaplaincy – report by Marian Haughton:

Over the course of the last 12 months I have visited several parishioners in their own homes and taken regular communion to a few. Some have been happy to receive a visit although they prefer to have communion in church. I have also made contact by phone to a couple of parishioners when someone from their regular support network has been unable to visit.

It was arranged for a Catholic priest to attend a resident who was dying; I had sat with him and read a passage from our service sheet and said a couple of prayers. I spoke to the staff about his faith they informed me he had a strong Catholic faith but that he had not yet been seen by a priest. The priest visited and was able to anoint and give the last rites to the resident.

I arranged Christmas services for both the South Africa Lodge and Two Beeches care homes, which were warmly received and several of St

George's congregation also attended which supported Anna Chaplaincy. We gave out little knitted choristers to the residents after the services that had been made by myself, Jackie, and Patricia.

Alternate monthly church services have been arranged for these two care homes and these were once again supported by some of the congregation (one of whom plays the keyboard), and these are led by Rev Sandra.

I also take communion to a lady who has also requested that Barney, my daughter's dog, visits at the same time and I am pleased to report that he settles down quite happily whilst communion is being given.

I would like to thank everyone on the Pastoral Team for their time, hard work and input.

Pastoral Committee

### **Knit and Natter Report**

I am delighted to report that since its inception 3 years ago, this group has steadily grown to a point where we now have around 35 regular attendees, comprising mainly ladies from within the local community. Those who come along are always willing to learn new handicraft skills as well as passing on ideas and tips to others and have undertaken a wide range of projects; these include making warm knitware for the premature baby unit at QA Hospital and a number of items for St. George's Church such as a nativity set, numerous miscellaneous items for the Church Bizarre, Harvest Festival and floral displays. The Knit & Natter sessions are always lively and enjoyable, with the Church Hall being filled with laughter and friendly chatter. I am very aware how important Tuesday afternoons are to so many of those who come along, and indeed for some it might be the only opportunity each week that they have to meet up with other people

Patricia Byrne

### **Eco Church Group Report**

After achieving our Bronze award from A Rocha last year in recognition of all the hard work that goes into making our church greener, more environmentally friendly and environmentally conscious, we've had a quieter year but productive none the less.

Our aim this year was to maintain the changes we put into place over the last two years and work towards our Silver award. The criteria for this have changed so although we'd managed to tick off quite a few challenges, we've now had to start again – many items are the same but there are many extra, all designed to benefit the planet.

The bird boxes which toddler group helped install have been used by bluetits again this year; the bug hotels have also been open for business and are often checked by the children thereby teaching even our youngest children the importance and diversity of our wildlife. The apple trees both had fruit this year and in 2025 we're hoping the apples will grow big enough to eat! The 'no mow' area had quite a good range of wild flowers and grasses during May to September but in 2025 we plan to enrich this with some Native British wild flower seed, bought with some of Len Palmer's bequest.

All the meals served by St George's social committee this year have included vegetarian and vegan options and have promoted use of leftover food and no waste.

Signs have been put up in the church flower room and loo to encourage use of environmentally friendly cleaning products.

The two recycling bins in the hall kitchen have been well used reducing the amount we send to landfill, and the compost bin by the church is regularly in use.

We were delighted to welcome Matt Lockwood, Net Zero Carbon Support Officer for Portsmouth Diocese, to speak at our Harvest service. He is passionate about his subject and was able to enthuse the whole congregation with thoughts and plans for how we can all be involved in making changes for the benefit of the planet.

David Cain has worked particularly hard for the Eco group this year, exploring our heating system and working out how we will best be able to manage our heating in the future in a more environmentally conscious way and with much lower bills. This is ongoing.

The Eco church subcommittee has space for one or two new members so please join us!

Malcolm Brewer, David Cain, Jane Cook, Sara Pask, Mo Peters, Lynn Winter.

## **Safeguarding Report**

The Diocese of Portsmouth is committed to safeguarding children, young people and adults and creating protective and supportive environments where all people, and especially those who may be vulnerable, are able to worship and pursue their faith journey in safety. The diocese safeguarding team are an experienced, professional team of safeguarding officers, with backgrounds in the police and social services. St George's Safeguarding Officer, Sonja Renfrew, is part of a wider network of parish safeguarding officers, and there is an extensive training programme for all of those who work with children, young people and vulnerable adults, whether paid or unpaid. The safeguarding culture within our diocese has been and is currently being transformed with St George's following both the national legal

and procedural framework for safeguarding children and adults, as well as Church of England policy and practice.

### **The Makin Report**

The publication of the Makin Report in November 2024 led to the resignation of the Archbishop of Canterbury over the Church's failure to deal with abuse by John Smyth. It prompted our bishop to reaffirm his commitment to the primary importance of safeguarding across our diocese. You can read his full response on the Portsmouth Diocese website.

### **Reporting a Concern**

If you have information about a safeguarding situation where a child or adult is in immediate danger, or requires immediate attention, please call emergency services on 999.

Any safeguarding concerns must be initially reported to your **Parish Safeguarding Officer (PSO) - Sonja Renfrew OR deputy safeguarding officer - Lynn Winter**, and/or the church's Incumbent as soon as possible.

### **Out of Hours**

The Diocese have commissioned thirtyone:eight to offer **OUT OF HOURS AND HOLIDAY COVER**. They can be contacted on 0303 003 1111 during these times. During such times, the Diocesan Safeguarding Team will ensure that information about such arrangements is available to parishes that may need safeguarding advice in their absence. An Information Sharing Agreement between the two organisations will allow for a designated safeguarding officer to receive a copy of the advice that thirtyone:eight may offer the parish church/caller to ensure appropriate follow up and support. Please make sure when contacting thirtyone:eight that you inform them that you are calling from the Diocese of Portsmouth.

### **Safeguarding Concerns/Referrals**

As well as your parish's safeguarding officer, the diocese has a team of Safeguarding experts available to support our church community. If you have a safeguarding concern, the diocese Safeguarding Team can be contacted during office hours, Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm via:

**Email:** [safeguarding@portsmouth.anglican.org](mailto:safeguarding@portsmouth.anglican.org) / **Telephone:** 023 9289 9665



**Karen Johnson**  
Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor  
[allocated to St George's]

**Sonja Renfrew B.Sc., BA SW – Designated Parish Safeguarding Officer [DSO]** [safeguarding@stgeorges.church](mailto:safeguarding@stgeorges.church)

## **George's Men**

St George's Men have met socially only twice this year, once for a wet walk and for our annual curry at our restaurant of choice, Pasha in Cowplain. This was a well-supported and much-enjoyed evening that has become an annual fixture.

Whilst we have not met socially too frequently, the men do collectively and individually provide a tremendous amount of help in maintaining the grounds and doing many other jobs that assist in keeping the parish spend down. In the forthcoming year, we very much hope we can meet up more regularly.

Chris Gadd

## **St George's Fly-fishing Club**

I am pleased to report that we now have 14 members, six of whom are members of the congregation, and of the others, some live in the parish, while the rest are friends and family.

Fly-fishing is a fantastic sport, taking you to some of the most beautiful places in the world, and bringing you into harmony with the natural world. You will see Kingfishers, water-voles, deer, heron, egrets, cormorants and of course loads of ducks, swans, moorhens and coots, apart from the odd trout. The techniques are not too difficult to learn, and we are more than happy to help newcomers to acquire them. It's one of those sports that can be enjoyed into old age, men and women compete on equal terms (Georgina Ballantine caught the biggest British Salmon ever – 64 lbs, on the River Tay in 1922), and you go on learning and improving throughout your fishing career. You have an odds-on chance of catching on your first outing, and once you have hooked your first fish, you may well be hooked yourself! And, of course, you take your catch home with you to eat, and, if the freezer gets a bit full, trout make great presents!

Our group has some very experienced anglers, and others who are relatively new to the sport. We are always most willing to welcome new members, experienced or not, and will happily lend people the necessary kit till they have made up their minds that this is indeed the sport for them. In fact a complete set of reasonable entry level kit costs around £120 (about half the cost of a set of entry-level golf clubs). A day's fishing costs typically £35-£45. We go mostly to Meon Springs, where the fish are relatively easy to catch, but smaller, or to Northbook Farm, where the fish are bigger and better, but a little more difficult to catch. We take our own packed lunches, although there is a café at Meon Springs, where the barista coffee is great, but the food is rather expensive.





We go fishing once or twice a month, and the picture shows our outing to Meon Springs at the end of November, where we all caught. If you would like to come and join us talk to Fr Charles (07711 787237), or catch one of us at Church (Fr. Charles, Richard Spurgeon, Tony Chapman, Patricia Byrne and Norma Kershaw). Tight Lines!

Fr Charles

### **St George's Ladies report**

St George's Ladies have a Facebook group which keeps people up-to-date with what is going on and anyone not on Facebook is sent an email by Rosemary. Any ladies in the congregation are very welcome to join us. You don't have to come to every event but if you are interested please have a chat to one of us.

On Wednesday 24th January 27 of us met at No 73 in Waterloooville for our post Christmas meal and Secret Santa which was very enjoyable.

In February a craft evening was held in the Hall where you could knit, crochet, sew or embroider.

In March Sue Hodgens hosted an evening and invited Shahala Hegan to talk to us about Iran as she knew it and what has become of it. Rosemary also held 2 showings of The Shack at her house. Lent lunches were also served in the Hall on 5 Wednesdays in March with home-made soup, bread, cheese, pickle etc.

Unfortunately the film evening planned at Pat Mitchell's in April was cancelled as not enough people could attend.

Our annual Bluebell walk was held at Little Hyden woods in Clanfield on 23<sup>rd</sup> April. We met at The Rising Sun pub and did our walk and finished up back at the pub for a drink after.

In June we met in Norma's garden for a cheese and wine evening.

Ladies also made scones to sell at the cream tea at the Waterloooville Music Festival on 14<sup>th</sup> June.

On Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> July Jackie Rossi organised a cream tea trip on the Chichester Canal which was enjoyed by all who went.

In September the annual Strictly sweepstake started and was eventually won in December by Pat Mitchell and Jane RO.

Also in September a back to school fun evening was held in the Hall.

On Sat 19<sup>th</sup> October in line with a request from the F&F Committee for all groups in the church to hold a fundraising event the Ladies Group held a Pre-Loved sale in the Hall

On 2<sup>nd</sup> November the poppies were put up in readiness for Remembrance Sunday.

Also in November some of us met in the Hall to sort through the stuff left over from the Pre-Loved Sale to take to local charity shops.

In December we had our Christmas get together in the Hall with food, carols, a quiz and the ever popular Snatch raffle. Another busy year.

Jane Cook / Rosemary Monk

### **Walsingham Cell Report**

The St George's group of 15 pilgrims set out on the Friday after Easter and as usual we travelled with our friends from St Albans, West Leigh, St John's, Rowlands Castle, St Faith's, Havant and St Michael and All Angels, Paulsgrove - 36 in all. The Havant Cell were again led by Bishop John Hind and Paulsgrove by Fr Hugo Deadman. We had a stop at Ely en route with a lovely Eucharist service held in the Cathedral Lady Chapel.

The St George's pilgrims were very fortunate to have Fr Charles Howard leading the Waterlooville Cell. St George's serving team again enhanced the wonderful outdoor processions and we again experienced the beautiful liturgies and the fantastic food.

On Saturday morning we had our usual visit to the Slipper Chapel and Catholic Shrine and in the afternoon our coach driver took us into Wells where we had a nice walk and ice creams.

Fr Timon and Noreen from St Dunstan's Bellingham were staying the same weekend as us so it was lovely to catch up and spend some time with them. Fortunately there were no medical issues this year!

During 2024 Pilgrims met at St Faith's on 2<sup>nd</sup> February for Midday Prayers to celebrate Candlemass, on 17<sup>th</sup> March for a Cream Tea/Prayers and on 15<sup>th</sup> August for a Eucharist for the Assumption. Pilgrims gathered at St George's on Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> July for Compline in the Church grounds followed by a BBQ on a beautiful summer evening, and on 25<sup>th</sup> September for a Eucharist to mark the new Feast Day of Our Lady of Walsingham.

This annual trip is always the weekend immediately after Easter and costs approximately £260 per person. Linda Wainwright and Jane Cook currently do all the admin for this. We have 15 people booked from St George's on the 2025 Pilgrimage. If you are thinking about joining us in 2026 (the dates will

be 10-12 April 2026) or if you would like more information about this weekend please do talk to one of us.

Linda Wainwright / Jane Cook

### **St George's Holy Dusters Report**

"The unsung heroes of St. George's Church" - the dedication and hard work of The Holy Dusters Team ensure that our church is kept clean and tidy, with their less than glamorous but nonetheless very important work "behind-the-scenes" usually going unnoticed.

The cleaning team comprises Sue Hodgens, Rosy Stone, Pat Mitchell, Margaret Deal, June Diaper, Ian Gibson, Sharron Hillary, Anne Morgan, Christine Culley, Jackie Rossi, Jane & Steve Cook, Marian & Barry Haughton and Patricia Byrne. I would like to offer my personal thanks and gratitude to each and every one of the team, who have turned out come rain or shine, polish and mops in hand, ready to "do their bit".

I would make mention that if more people were to volunteer to help then we could revert to cleaning our church on a fortnightly basis, rather than every 3 weeks.

Patricia Byrne

### **Church Flower Fund Report**

We are very grateful for the donations we receive from the congregation to enable us to use fresh flowers for the Festivals. Flowers are very expensive and, whilst we all would probably prefer to see fresh flowers each week, the monies in the Fund do not stretch that far. We have a huge stock of artificial flowers, which are used extensively with fresh greenery during 'lean' times. Thank you to the small team of flower arrangers for their time each week and especially for preparing the Festival flowers at Easter, Christmas and for the Music Festival.

June Diaper

### **Bible Reading Fellowship Report**

During 2024 fourteen people subscribed to the Bible Reading Fellowship New Daylight notes. The booklet, which can also be supplied via a computer or mobile phone, gives a daily printed passage from the Bible with comment and prayers written by a wide range of theologians. Every 10 days or so the themes and writers change and the notes are published 3 times a year in January, May and September. The group subscription rate for 2025 is £5.25

per copy. I deliver copies to several parishioners unable to attend church. I can supply sample copies and organise new subscriptions at any time.

Linda Wainwright

### **Havant Deanery Synod Report**

There have been 3 meetings throughout the year.

**The 201<sup>st</sup> meeting** was held on **Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> March** at St James' Church, Emsworth. There was an opening prayer by Kate Macfarlane and a welcome by Andrew Sheard who spoke about his parish and recent events. Thank you to the Deanery band for leading the worship.

Archdeacon Kathryn Percival gave an update on the introduction of 'Prayers or Love and Faith' in her role as the 'Living in Love and Faith' Advocate for our Diocese, and progress so far. Discussions in the Diocese had been held using the pastoral principles outlined by General Synod. As a result, the 'Prayers of Love and Faith' resources were produced as well as guidance on their use and about how parishes can approach the topic. She outlined the aims, the current position, and the processes around decision-making in the parish setting. Examples of the prayers were shown. Synod members had previously been sent links with further information. The prayers for use in regular public worship services were agreed at General Synod last November and some couples made use of the prayers on the first day that they could. Each incumbent has the choice of whether the prayers are used in their church. It is recommended that this decision is made following consultation with the PCC. Nationally, the Bishop of Leicester is to lead the next phase of the process of introducing 'Prayers of Love and Faith' (PLF). Deanery Synod was then split into groups for discussion about questions that Archdeacon Kathryn had suggested. Feedback and further questions were then given. In our Deanery the overall picture is mixed as some parishes have had full discussions and voted about using the PLF and others have only partly done so and not made any definite decisions yet. Andrew concluded that the Deanery hopes to collect a list of where parishes are in their discussions about PLF.

Andrew Sheard then updated us on recent staffing changes. With the two vacancies at BCI and Rowlands Castle it has been agreed that there will be a half-time stipendiary priest for each parish. At Hayling where there is a vacancy for a full-time priest in charge, Revd Richard Wyld is helping out and Revd Sarah Baker is assisting at Rowlands Castle. At St. George's Waterlooville, Revd Colin is coming back to work on a gradual basis. Three of our Deanery curates have moved to new areas of ministry (Revd Jill to Leigh Park, Revd Liz left the Deanery and Revd Coleen to Purbrook and Portsdown). We also have four new curates joining the Deanery from June and they will go to COGS, Bedhampton, Cowplain and

Warbington-with-Emsworth. Archdeacon Ian Jagger, who stepped in to take over as acting Archdeacon, has now withdrawn so our Deanery currently has no Archdeacon. Any issues will be directed to Bishopsgrove or the Area Dean. The next ordination for priests and deacons in our Diocese will be on 29<sup>th</sup> June.

**Deanery Mission Plan and SMMI Funding Update** - Andrew told us about proposed applications from Havant Deanery for SMMI funding involving rejuvenation projects at Berewood, Horndean, PO9 and a possible Choir Church.

**The 202<sup>nd</sup> meeting** was held on **Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> June** at St Faith's Church, Havant. Andrew Sheard welcomed new members of Deanery Synod and gave a special welcome to Canon Bob White, our acting Archdeacon and apologies for Rev Tom Kennar. The speaker for the evening was Vanda Leary, the Strategic Programme Manager for Portsmouth Diocese who introduced herself and how she has been working with Bishop's Council and Senior Staff in Portsmouth Diocese to produce a plan for rejuvenation. The Diocese of Portsmouth longs to be **"A rejuvenating community of Jesus-centred, Kingdom seeking disciples."** Vanda explained the need for the change due to various factors including the drop in church attendance (1% of the population in the Diocese attend an Anglican church) which fell steeply in COVID. Other factors at play include an older demographic amongst church goers, stretched staffing, financial challenges and buildings unfit for mission. 'Growing Younger' is a key priority as only 10 out of 133 parishes in the Diocese have 25+ children and youth and 25% of parishes have no children at all. The National church target is to double the number of children and young disciples by 2030 and to ensure that a thriving child and youth ministry is within reach of all children and young people in England.

The diocesan strategy is to be made up of 4 key aspects which are Revive, Revitalise, Renew and Rejuvenate, all with Diocesan support.

- 1. Revive** – focuses on Spiritual Leadership of clergy and lay leaders working closely together. The aim is in 2025, 9 networks to be piloted and then the next year to launch to cover 40% of our parishes. Resources to be used include those available at [divinerenovation.org](http://divinerenovation.org). Coaching and other support will be provided by the Diocese.
- 2. Revitalise** – involves growing existing churches by offering parish health self-assessments and targeted support in a few key areas. Local Pilots include **Choir Church** at St Faith's, Havant, **Flourish** – a new initiative in schools including Horndean Junior School (Catherington and Clanfield parish) and a **PO9 pioneer** linked with Park Community. Funding to support these will come from the Diocese or from SMMI Funding.

Other initiatives under the revitalise umbrella include School chaplaincies, and iSingpop - using music to work with schools. In addition, we will aim to grow capacity for children's, families and youth work by using Youthscape Launchpad (clergy training), Youthscape.

Essentials and training more people through apprenticeships.

**3. Renew** - Planting new churches to include 2 major church plants in our Diocese

An SMMI funding bid will be made in time to be evaluated at the end of October 2024. The aims of the presentation were welcomed by all.

News was shared from all our parishes.

**Deanery Lay Chair** – Deb Henning–Vears is about to be ordained and therefore has to leave this role. Andrew thanked her for her work and said that she would be missed. A card and gifts of a book token and an orchid were presented. One person had expressed an interest in taking over the role and no-one else volunteered to stand in addition. Kathy Gunn was therefore proposed by Shelley Saunders and seconded by Jackie Howard, and after a vote in favour by the majority was elected as the new Lay Chair

**Deanery Treasurer** – Paul Franks has requested to stand down from this role. Colin Adams has expressed an interest in this position. He was proposed by Revd Kate Macfarlane and seconded by Elaine Hoey.

References have to be taken and assuming these are satisfactory the position will be confirmed at the next Deanery Synod meeting. Andrew reminded us that Elections are coming up for Diocesan Synod and our Deanery need to appoint 15 clergy and 12 laity, papers to be sent out soon.

**The 203<sup>rd</sup> meeting** was held on **Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> November** at St Clare's Church, Warren Park. Revd Kate Macfarlane welcomed Jonathan Jeffery who explained about the church and its work in the community.

Andrew Sheard reflected on the news of the resignation of the Archbishop of Canterbury. Andrew made comment that parishes need to continue to address the way that they are approaching safeguarding. Bishop Jonathan has written a very helpful article on the Makin Report which can be found on the diocesan website. Our speaker for the meeting David Cain, Diocesan Environmental Officer for Portsmouth Diocese, was welcomed. Worship was led by the Deanery Band.

**Parish and Deanery Staffing Update**

- Deanery Treasurer – references have been received for Colin Adams. Colin has been briefed and the handover is underway
- Parish News – there are several interregnum parishes.
  - Revd Joy Windsor will become 0.5 Priest in Charge at Blendworth, Catherington and Idsworth (BCI) and 0.5 Missioner for Horndean. Her role was a House for Duty position but now stipendiary. Joy's induction will be Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> January 2025.
  - An interview for 0.5 priest for St John's, Rowlands Castle has been held – the news will be announced soon through diocesan mailings and St John's church
  - Hayling Island – there is a possibility of someone to take on this role with an interview planned for the end of November.

## **Update of Deanery Action Plan and SMMI Funding**

SMMI (Strategic Mission and Ministry Investment) of £5.2m in the diocese reflects the level of trust in Portsmouth Diocese by the Central Church. Part of the SMMI flowed directly from the Havant Deanery Action Plan including:

1. Mission to develop Christian community in the heart of Horndean
2. Investment and support in Leigh Park including growing links with Park Community School and a Youth Chaplain based there.
3. Appointment of a 0.5 Flourish Worker in Horndean (Catherington and Clanfield Parish) to build partnership between church, school and families with worship based in schools.

There has also been development at St Faith's Havant, which has been investing in the vision of Choir Church primarily made up of primary aged children as one of 3 pilots in the Diocese. There has also been development at St Faith's, Havant, which has been investing in the vision of Choir Church primarily made up of primary aged children as one of 3 pilots in the Diocese. Clergy and lay leaders are to develop supportive prayerful partnerships called 'cairns' to strengthen the spirituality of leaders (lay and ordained), an investment in their spiritual refreshment. There are 9 pilot cairns across the diocese including one in our deanery formed of the new curates.

### **Anna Chaplaincy Update and Impact, Revd Coleen Jackson**

Current situation – across the nation there are 400 Anna Chaplains, the 5 year plan projection was initially cautious, this is now expected to be 500 within the next year. There are 44 Anna Chaplains in the diocese, however by end of November 2024 there will be 53 Anna Chaplains contributing to mission for the elderly. The deanery currently has 9 Anna Chaplains which will rise to 12 at the end of November 2024, rising to 15 in 2025. There are around 3-4 Anna Friends per chaplain. Anna Chaplaincy is gathering momentum in the diocese and most parishes in the Deanery have commissioned one. On Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> November 2024, 6:30pm, at St James', Emsworth, a commissioning service will be held for 6 new Anna Chaplains on the mainland of the diocese. A further service at Holy Cross, on Monday 9<sup>th</sup> December 2024 at 6pm for the commissioning of 2 Anna Chaplains on the Isle of Wight. At least 2 people have registered interest in training to be Anna Chaplains for the course in February 2025. Our Annual Diocesan gathering will happen on Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> February at Portsmouth Cathedral with Revd Canon James Woodward, Principal of Sarum College, leading and also preaching. Further training sessions will be held in 2025 and if anyone is interested please contact Coleen Jackson or Emma Sneddon. Presentations were given by 4 Anna Chaplains from the deanery about their work – Carolyn Shannon, Dawn Jenkins, Dennis Chandler and Elaine Andrews. Emma Sneddon gave a short speech during the meeting. Emma has been appointed to take over as diocesan coordinator of Anna Chaplains.

## **Net Zero Carbon, lead David Cain, Diocesan Environmental Officer**

The General Synod in 2020 discussed the need to become Net carbon zero. The target for the carbon footprint of our organisation is to be net zero by 2030, originally the target was 2050. Church Commissioners looked at financial ways to help parishes on their journey to net zero, the diocese had £15,000 originally for this purpose. In November 2023, further funding for capital building, for the Net Zero Carbon Programme Manager for the dioceses of Portsmouth, Guildford and Chichester, with Matt Lockwood support officer and for David Cain, Diocesan Building Development Officer, to also take on the role of Diocesan Environment Officer. There are 4 criteria for funding:

1. Action plan
2. Communications strategy for parishes deaneries and the diocese
3. An annual emissions audit
4. Diocesan environmental advisory group

The action plan has practical tips for improvement of carbon footprint. Demonstrator projects are being developed to look at technology and how it works for churches. Stage 1 is to identify projects that are suitable for the project and formulise the solution, Stage 2 is the implementation of the solution

David suggested how to promote Carbon Net Zero within parishes, ideas include: eco groups, planting in church gardens, wild areas, bug houses, caring for creation.

Questions from the floor:

Q: What does net zero mean for a church?

A: Trying to reduce the amount of carbon put into the atmosphere by our activities. We avoid offsetting, instead the aim is to reduce our impact.

Q: Is there no fixed result?

A: We want church to reduce their footprint as much as they can.

Q: What is the percentage of churches in diocese or nationally that are limited by listed building status?

A: I don't think they are, building consent for churches is not done by the local authority. Trying to change the mindset. If we want to be green we need to show that we are being green – we are serious about what we want to do.

Q: For a footprint does account needs to be taken of churches, church halls and clergy residencies?

A: Yes, but footprint is tiny compared to the total footprint of those that attend. Effort is being put into clergy housing to get residencies to net zero, initially through demonstrator projects. The aim is to pool resources to see if it works in one house, then roll out to other residencies.

A Carbon Net Zero Conference will be held at the Portsmouth Cathedral on 18<sup>th</sup> January 2025, tickets are £5 per person, this is in conjunction with Chichester and Guildford dioceses.



The deanery representative for the Net Zero Project is Lesley Baker who is keen to work with churches in the deanery, her email address is [lesleychildminder@gmail.com](mailto:lesleychildminder@gmail.com).

Candy Williams

### **St George's News and Website Report**

Website: <https://www.stgeorges.church>

The church magazine, St George's News, is published four times a year in its colourful format. Material for publication (copyright free please) is always welcome, please help by trying your hand at writing an article that we can use. We also need more advertisers – our rates are very reasonable and it all helps the church funds.

The website is where to go for information about St George's – there is a comprehensive calendar of forthcoming events, you can find an advanced copy of the Sunday Bulletin, usually from Thursdays onwards, and there are copies of the magazines to view, going back as far as 1997 – they make for a fascinating trip down memory lane, and a way to explore the history of St George's over the last 25 years or so.

You can also subscribe to our mailing list and receive important announcements. Go to [stgeorges.church/maillinglist](https://www.stgeorges.church/maillinglist) and type in your email address and name.

To find the website is easy – we have a very special memorable address! – simply type in: [stgeorges.church](https://www.stgeorges.church)

If you are involved in running any church groups, or organising any event, please remember to let the magazine team know so that it can be included on the website and magazine events calendar.

Email [feedback@stgeorgesnews.org](mailto:feedback@stgeorgesnews.org) - that's also the address for sending anything for publication.

John Johnson

### **St George's Companionship Group with Bereavement support**

We have held meetings on the second and fourth Monday of every month, 10am -12. The numbers of attendees have varied from 20-45 people. There is no charge, but a donation is appreciated to help towards costs. We also do a little raffle.

All surplus money is saved and is put towards an outing for the whole group. This year we have had a trip on the Chichester canal, we have had entertainment (Elvis), and much more. We have also been on monthly lunches out to local venues.

We held a fantastic event on the second Monday in December, we had special guest Santa (Fr Charles), who circulated and gave out chocolates and sweets. We had lots of stalls around the hall, and a big raffle. The food provided for everyone was Christmas buffet food, and drinks including mulled wine. We also had a wonderful choir singing Christmas songs. A really lovely event. A bigger donation was given to the Church, donations were given to other people for their charities including Fitzroy for people with learning disabilities. It was a wonderful event. Thanks to everyone who supported it. I'd like to thank all the Volunteers who help at all the meetings and events especially to Lindsay and Janet (J), and many more who help run the kitchen and the raffles and provide transport. Also to Fiona as Hall Manager. After this event I stood down as organiser (due to work commitments), and a small committee has formed to continue this lovely group. I wish them every success. I will continue to support when I can. I will continue to offer 1-1 bereavement support if anyone needs it.

Linda Smith

### **St George's Choir Report**

Musically, 2024 was a good year with the choir singing at all the Sunday services, with additional extras such as Candlemas Carols, Ascension Day and the full round of Easter Services.

The first Sunday in November included a Requiem for All Souls' where the choir prepared Faure's Requiem as the mass setting accompanied by a small string orchestra. 2024 was the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Faure's death which happen to fall the following day.

Services in the latter part of the year included an atmospheric Advent Carol Service at the beginning of December, and later in the month it was great to welcome a sizable congregation for the Christmas Carol Service.

I'd like to thank Fr Colin and the churchwardens for all their help and support; all the members of the choir for their hard work and dedication and also to you all for your kind words and encouragement for all we do musically together, it is very much appreciated. We are always on the lookout for new recruits in the choir, do let me know if you want to get involved, you will be most welcome.

David Cain, Director of Music

## **St George's Servers Report**

We currently have 6 servers for a Wednesday morning! Tony Rice-Oxley kindly returns every 6 weeks to serve! Many thanks to Tony for so doing! It is much appreciated! We can always do with more servers. Please let me know if you would like to serve on a Wednesday. Full training would be provided. The more servers we have the less frequently we have to be on duty!

On a Sunday, we have a team of 11 servers. We have 3 thurifers: Fr Charles, Abigail and Amber. Many thanks to them. Therefore we are always able to provide an MC/Crucifer and 2 acolytes on a Sunday, plus a thurifer when required. Thank you to Dawn Trimby for organising the Sunday rota. Many thanks, too, to all the servers for your continued support and commitment. If there is anyone in the congregation, who would like to be a server on a Sunday morning, please don't hesitate to speak to me! Again, full training would be provided.

I am currently organising the server's annual dinner which will be in July or August, hopefully at the White Hart, Denmead.

Anne Morgan, Head Server

## **Youth Ministry at St George's Reports**

### **Dragons**

St Georges Dragons is a meeting of our young people twice monthly, once in the church hall and once at High Tide.

The leadership team comprises Chris and Amber Gadd, Andrea Thomas, Sarah Brewer and Nerujah Janenthiran.

At our Dragons meetings, we start the evening with some food and games followed by craft activities, bible reading / study and ending with worship songs and prayer. Our numbers, starting with a handful collecting in our homes in 2023, have grown to 25 or more.

High Tide is the monthly event organised by the Diocese and moves between different churches each time. The evenings (which regularly tops 120 attendees) are similar in content to our Dragons meetings and we take the older members to this.

In 2024 the Dragons were delighted to help lead worship at the morning Eucharist. This involved our young people shadowing our servers, delivering the readings and leading intercessions. The leadership team are keen to grow our young people in their faith and we see involving them actively in services as one part of that. It is very much hoped this will become a regular feature of our church.

In May, 18 Dragons and adults attended Big Church. It is the biggest Christian Festival held annually in the UK, hosted on the Wiston Estate in West Sussex, and attracts tens of thousands of Christians each day of their weekend event

from all over the world. It was a fantastic day of Christian witness and engagement for us all and we very much hope to return.

In 2025 we are looking to grow again in numbers by reaching out to our community and by providing an attractive and enjoyable programme of evenings for our Dragons to enjoy.

Those of us leading Dragons have a strong sense of calling. We see it as a key part of our church and very much in line with St George's mission action plan. We are grateful for the support of our Wardens and the wider PCC.

If anybody reading this has children or grandchildren, or knows of anybody with young people who may be interested in joining us, please do get in touch.

Chris Gadd

### **Sunday School Report**

During 2024 Sunday school has continued to meet each week, formally during term times, and informally, for colouring / simple crafts / puzzle sheets during the holidays.

Positive news – we continue to expand! We have been delighted to welcome several new children throughout the year who have been attending regularly.

Ages range from a few months to 11 years. Not all children are able to attend each week but all are welcome whenever they can come. We are always pleased to welcome the grandchildren of our Church members.

We follow the Church year and mark the important festivals in Church, joining in with, for example, the distribution of the cards on Mothering Sunday, the Palm Sunday procession, the giving of the Harvest gifts and the making and laying of the wreaths on Remembrance Sunday. A few of the children serve at the Altar in the role of boat girls when asked.

Due to the fact that there are not enough children in a particular age group to work in groups, we have continued to work in one group. This is quite challenging, trying to aim teaching at appropriate levels. Additional help would enable the babies and toddlers to have a proper playtime and would also enable us to do some focused age related work with the older children. In the meantime, we have a few toys and colouring for babies / toddlers and use various resources from Stepping Stones, Twinkl, Pintrest amongst others, for the older children.

Baby Polly was baptised on 29<sup>th</sup> September with many of her Sunday school friends and their Mothers/Grandmothers/carers present too. Ditto on the 13<sup>th</sup> October when Baby Lydia and big sister Eleanor were also baptised into the Church Family.

More positive news, on the 17<sup>th</sup> November, Flora and Ellen were amongst five candidates confirmed by Bishop Jonathan.

We are encouraging the children to join in with The Lord's Prayer and, where possible, have a practice before we come in to Church. It has been

explained to the younger children that even if they are not sure of all the words, it is fine to say a Big AMEN at the end!

The delightful Nativity once again featured some of our younger children in the main roles, each taking on a few words. With thanks to Jess for producing and directing, to all who helped with costumes and to Sheila for kindly providing the chocolate afterwards!

We look forward to encouraging your children in 2025.

The Sunday School Team

### **St George's Parent and Toddler Group Report**

The adults are a mix of grandparents and parents and the children range from babies to pre-schoolers.

The children had the opportunity to do a craft each week. I tried to include a painting craft at least once a term as children don't always get to do this at home. I also tried to include as many different textures as possible while still being as environmentally friendly as possible by using things like the Easter egg wrappings, cut off fur fabric and other off cuts of fabrics and materials. Purchasing many of these items from the Rowans craft shop. This is a local charity shop which sells craft materials that people no longer require/need. This in turn helps fund the Rowans hospice as well as protecting the environment by stopping craft materials going to landfill. Glueing or stickers were once again the children's favourite activities.

We went into church twice during the year once for Easter and for Christmas. For Easter, the Easter story was read and the annual Easter egg hunt, which the children enjoy. For Christmas, the Christmas story was read by Fiona, then we returned to the hall for Father Christmas and a little party. Both times unfortunately there were no clergy available.

I took photos and sent them to be placed in the church magazine. If the group appeared in the Church magazine parents/grandparents are giving a copy purchased from toddler's fund. This advertises the church and other activities that happen.

The mats and toys were regularly washed and hoovered to help stop the spread of viruses. Hand gel, tissues and wipes were always available to help with this as well.

I welcomed people as they arrived, kept the register, kept accounts up to date and giving them to church treasurer at the end of the year and prepared the crafts. I shopped for the milk and biscuits before each session then set up the room ready for group. The adults and children helped pack up the toys

and place them by the cupboard or stage. While they sang songs I would put them back in the cupboard and under the stage usually with the help of a parent or grandparent.

Toddlers donated £200.00 in January split between the hall for heating and the church funds. At the end of the year another £336.26 was handed to church and £20.00 was handed to Amber who has taken over the running of toddlers.

Dawn Hyett

### **St George's Social and Fundraising Committee Report**

The Social and Fundraising Committee is without a Chair as we couldn't find anyone to take it on so a different member of the Committee chairs each meeting.

Lent lunches took place for 5 Wednesdays from 21<sup>st</sup> February to 20<sup>th</sup> March when we served homemade soup, bread, cheese, pickle etc. and raised £440, £220 to Christian Aid and £220 to St George's.

On 21<sup>st</sup> April the APCM took place and this was followed by a Parish bring and share lunch with a raffle and a basket for donations to the church.

An Inter-Church Quiz had been planned for 4<sup>th</sup> May but sadly we only had one positive response from another church so this was postponed until 5<sup>th</sup> October. Unfortunately despite more letters to local parishes there was no interest in this and the decision was taken to cancel it.

The Summer Fete was held on 6<sup>th</sup> July. Unfortunately the weather was not kind and we had some heavy showers and wind that caused some of the gazebos to blow down. Despite this around £1,500 was raised.

The Harvest Festival service took place on Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> October and it was decided to hold a "Posh Pub Ploughmans" parish lunch. This went very well and made a profit of £294.86 for church funds.

A Pre-Loved sale of clothes was organised by St George's Ladies Group on 19<sup>th</sup> October and raised £156. Clothes were then put out at the Table Top sale, organised by the Church Hall Committee and the Christmas Bazaar which brought in more money. The Table Top sale took place on the 16<sup>th</sup> November and raised £314.60. Bacon rolls and tea and coffee were also served. People asked if we can do another one outside in the church grounds in the summer and this will be discussed further.

The Christmas Bazaar was held on Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> December. Fr Charles kindly agreed to be Father Christmas and had a grotto in the Hall. Parents could take a photo of their child with him and the child got a chocolate bar. There were lots of stalls and bacon, sausage and egg rolls and refreshments. An amazing £1,822.65 was raised.

We certainly miss having a church shop which used to raise much needed funds for the church but with the building work in Waterloooville this option is no longer available.

If anyone would like to come and join the Social and Fundraising Committee you would be received with open arms!

Social and Fundraising Committee

### **St George's Bonus Ball Fundraiser Report**

The St George's Bonus Ball has been running since 2008, and, for a nominal weekly fee, awards a prize to the person who matches the bonus ball in each Saturday's weekly National Lottery draw. If an unselected number is drawn, the prize rolls over into the following week. Currently, we have 50 members, but there are a total of 59 numbers available, so more players are always welcome!

In 2024, we had 29 different winners, with the lucky participant pocketing around £40 on each occasion. We also had 16 people who won multiple times, with one person picking up the prize on five occasions! More importantly, this fundraiser donated just over £500 to the church over the course of the year, so a big 'thank you' to all those who take part.

St George's Fundraisers are currently looking at moving the bank account to a new bank, as monthly fees are being introduced to our existing account. Those who participate in the Bonus Ball need do nothing at the moment. You will be informed as and when any changes need to be made.

Iain Renfrew

**[www.stgeorges.church](http://www.stgeorges.church)**