



**Annual Report and Financial Statements  
of the  
Parochial Church Council  
For the Year Ended 31<sup>st</sup> December 2023**



## **ALL SAINTS' CHURCH PCC AND TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2023**

### **Annual Report to the Charity Commission of the Parochial Church Council of the Ecclesiastical Parish of All Saints', Croxley Green in the Diocese of St Albans for 2023**

Registered Charity No. 1165115

The principal address of All Saints' Parish is The Parish Office, All Saints' Church, The Green, Croxley Green, Hertfordshire WD3 3HJ

Tel. 01923 772109

Website [www.croxleygreenallsaints.org](http://www.croxleygreenallsaints.org)

### **Aims and Purposes**

To promote the whole mission of the Church of England, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical.

### **Objectives and Activities**

The objectives of the PCC are to co-operate with the Vicar and parish clergy in promoting in the parish the whole mission of the Church.

### **Public Benefit**

All Saints' activities included:

- regular public worship open to all free of charge
- church open for private worship and contemplation
- pastoral work, including visiting the sick, the housebound and the bereaved
- teaching Christianity through sermons, courses and small groups
- promoting Christianity through staging events and meetings, including activities for senior citizens and young people
- supporting other charities, local, national and international.

### **Achievements and Performance**

2023 saw the following achievements at All Saints'; namely:

Maintaining a full range of services throughout the year and extending inter-generational participation in our regular worship;

Planning, financing and completion of the church hall refurbishment; and

Substantial completion of the programme of quinquennial review building works.

#### *Church Membership*

There was a slight increase in numbers attending services, which exceeded pre-Covid numbers. Eight new worshippers joined the regular congregation.

#### *Electoral Roll:*

Following an annual revision the year ended with 92 names on the Roll, unchanged from 2022.

#### *Worship and Study*

All Saints' continued to build on its ethos of intergenerational worship, inclusion and building community. There was a weekly communion service at 9.45am, with monthly Book of Common



Prayer communions at 8am on the first Sunday and Family Services at noon on the third Sunday. Morning prayers were said in church with a communion service on Thursdays while livestream reflections were published on the Facebook page on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. Special services were held during Advent, on Ash Wednesday, during Lent and Holy Week and on the patronal feast of All Saints', a remembrance service for All Souls and a Civic Service on Remembrance Sunday. Our Advent services included very popular Christingle and Crib services and we hosted five Carol Services for local schools.

We gained seven new adult worshippers during the year and an average of eight children attended Sunday morning services. New initiatives included weekly Lent candles at services and age-appropriate Lent bags for adults and children with prayers, reflections and activities to encourage a feeling of journeying together through Lent towards the cross. The PCC approved the Vicar's proposal to involve children, after preparation, to assist in distributing the chalice at communion. Children from the congregation and local schools created angels which were hung from the light fittings in the church, making a wonderful display.

There were 9 baptisms and 10 funerals, only four of which were held in the church, during the year, but no weddings.

All Saints' joined with other Croxley Green churches to run a Lent course "Prayer is for All". Other courses were "Living Well Together" during July and "Exploring Faith" during August – September. These included Quiet Church sessions. A Thursday compline service was greatly appreciated.

A small team led by the Vicar provided an act of worship every other week at Clarendon Lodge, a local care home.

### *Pastoral Care*

Pastoral visiting and support was provided by our Vicar Rev. Miriam Mugan and her clergy team of Revd Paul Palmer and Revd Anne Shaw, supported by members of the congregation, keeping in contact with parishioners who are elderly or housebound, for example by providing transport to services, deliveries of the Parish Magazine, transport to church activities including the Friday Cafés and afternoon teas and delivery of frozen cooked meals upon request by parishioners.

### *Mission*

All Saints' continued to follow the Mission Action Plan for 2022-24 based on the themes of Transforming Communities, Making New Disciples, Going Deeper into God and Stewardship.

## *Safeguarding*

All Saints' Parish is committed to the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults and to supporting those who have been victims of abuse, as well as those who may present a risk to others. The PCC continued to comply with its duty under section 5 of the Safeguarding and Clergy Discipline Measure 2016 to have due regard to safeguarding guidance issued by the House of Bishops. It has adopted all the House of Bishops' Safeguarding Policies and practice Guidance, as well as "Promoting a Safer Church" (child protection and vulnerable adults policy) and the Domestic Abuse Statement. We have a Parish Safeguarding Officer/Lead Recruiter and an Assistant Safeguarding Officer. We are committed to safeguarding all within our church and those who use our church hall, whether as church members, visitors or regular users of the church hall.

The following Safeguarding business was conducted by the PCC during 2023:

- Annual review of the Safeguarding Policy
- Serious Incident Report policy reviewed
- Policy for Safe Use of Images reviewed
- Guidelines for Lone Working adopted
- Safeguarding Agreement for Hall users adopted
- Youth Leaders' Role Descriptions amended

Parish clergy continued their safeguarding training under the Diocese, the Parish Safeguarding Officer renewed her Safeguarding Leadership training and the Assistant Safeguarding Officer and PCC members commenced or updated their training profiles. DBS checks were successful for those requiring three-year renewals.

During 2023 All Saints' Church made good progress in fulfilling the Parish Safeguarding Dashboard requirements for Level Three.

Concerns can be raised by contacting Anne Oke the Parish Safeguarding Officer, Sam Jones the Assistant Safeguarding Officer or the Vicar, Revd Miriam Mugan, or via the secure email address [safeguarding@croxleygreenallsaints.org](mailto:safeguarding@croxleygreenallsaints.org)

## *Finance*

The financial outcome showed that against a projected deficit of £10,000 the end-year outcome was a surplus of £894.00.

## *Reserves Policy*

The PCC's policy is to maintain a level of reserves equivalent to three months' cash flow, which for 2023 equated to £29,695. The actual end-year amount was £47,396.

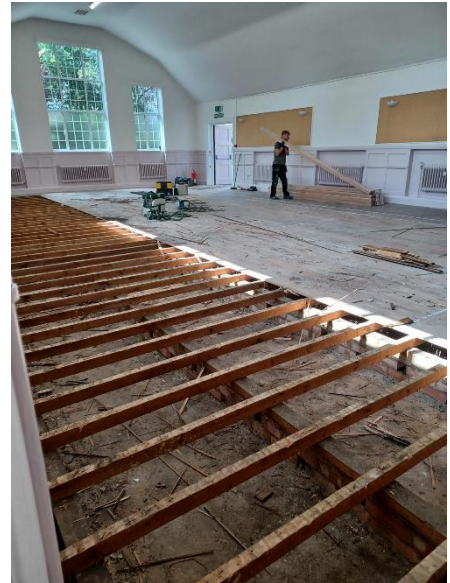
## *Buildings*

The Buildings Committee deals with general maintenance and improvement to the church and hall. The Quinquennial Inspection and Report in 2022 identified a number of matters of maintenance and repair requiring attention. During 2023, missing tiles on the south porch and the north hall roof were replaced, the uneven tarmac path between the church and the hall was replaced, air vents were cleaned and moss was cleared from drains. A church signboard facing the main road was replaced following a car crashing into it.

In addition, an automated clock winding mechanism was installed in the church tower to remove the need for manual winding which had raised issues of health and safety and lone working. It was funded by a generous private donation. An additional CCTV camera was installed in the sacristy to enhance security in the church. The Committee also produced a procedure for verification, appointment and monitoring of contractors undertaking repair and maintenance works to ensure All Saints' complied with the Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015. The PCC adopted the Committee's proposals.

### *The Hall*

The Hall Committee manages the Church Hall, which is used extensively for parish activities and is also hired by a number of local organisations for dance, drama and exercise activities for adults and children. A bid for National Heritage Lottery support for a full refurbishment having been rejected, the Hall Committee during the Spring developed a revised scheme with costs for the main hall space and hall entrance lobby which the PCC adopted. The work, which included laying a new beechwood floor, was undertaken and completed during August. An appeal for donations and a number of special fundraising events were spectacularly successful. Parish funds contributed £10,000 towards the total cost of £30,000 and the hall now looks transformed.



**Hall Refurbishment**

### *Social and Fundraising Committee*

During 2023, the Social and Fundraising Committee organised a number of successful fundraising events, including the annual Christmas Market and its associated Grand Prize Draw, a table-top sale and a stall at the annual Croxley Revels held on the Green. Members also provided refreshments for a number of services and social events, including two orchestral concerts, the Advent, Christingle and Carol Services and a Hymns and Pimm's evening. Members also staffed a mulled wine stall at the Christmas Market and another at the Croxley Green Civil Parish Council Christmas Market. In September the Committee organised a combined Harvest Festival and Parish Barbecue.

In addition to earning a considerable amount of income, these events served to welcome newcomers and visitors to All Saints', to publicise church services and activities and to provide enjoyable social activities for parishioners. Committee members also assisted at the Beer Festival in November. Financial outcomes of the fundraising activities are set out in the Annual Accounts.

### *Parish Activities and Outreach*

Activities included the Monday Toddlers' Group, Friday drop-in Cafés, two afternoon Community Teas and a Youth Group for children aged 8-11.

Other Church groups continued to contribute actively to parish life, notably the Church Choir accompanied by visiting organists Simon Dunn and David Heath and the Flower Group whose work adds greatly to the ambience at services and to the beauty of the Church.

### *Friday Drop-in Cafés*

The Cafés took place weekly from 10.30am to 12 noon in the church hall. Coffee, tea, soft drinks and home-baked cakes were provided free of charge, although voluntary donations could be made. The Cafés attracted a regular clientele every week and numbers increased throughout the year. A lively buzz of conversation filled the hall and generous donations were made to the fundraising for the hall refurbishment and also to the Earthquake Appeal in Turkey and Syria, the British Legion and the Children's Society. Most attendees were not members of our church, which indicates that the Cafés are valued within the Croxley Green community.

### *The Youth Group*

Run by two enthusiastic and committed church members, the Youth Group held eight sessions during 2023. Its numbers increased to eight members between 8 and 11 years old. Sessions involved a mixture of games, fun activities and discussions. The children were able to develop friendships, increase their social skills and grow in their personal confidence. The members helped to run a children's games room during the Parish Christmas Market in November.

### *The Beer Festival*

For the second consecutive year a Beer Festival was held in the church over the weekend from Friday 20th to Sunday 22nd October, without affecting our usual Sunday morning service. It was organised in conjunction with a local publican. The Festival attracted a large number of people, including a number of families with children. Games, including table tennis and table football, were well-used and the atmosphere was sociable and pleasant throughout. Many attendees saw the interior of our listed building for the first time and expressed appreciation for the experience. Income was raised from sales of food prepared in the hall kitchen, a donation from the publican and from sales of tickets for the Parish Prize Draw, made at our Christmas Market.

### *Deanery Synod*

All Saints' is participating with eight other Parishes in the Rickmansworth Deanery Synod in holding joint services, developing common Mission Action Plan goals and launching joint activities, e.g. the Deanery Quiz Night. Synod Meetings were addressed by external speakers who explored with members the topics of Vocation and the Sabbath. The Synod also received reports on the Trinity Project, which works with local schools to address aspects of negative mental health and welfare experienced by young people.

### *Ecumenical Relationships*

All Saints' is an active member of Churches Together in Croxley Green, of which Revd Miriam and our Curate Revd Paul Palmer are joint Chairs. It supports a local food bank run on behalf of Churches Together in Croxley Green, which operates from the Baptist Church.

The Parish has continued its active participation in a project initiated by Churches Together in Croxley Green to employ two Parish Nurses to work part-time in Croxley Green, to support the existing health services. Our Vicar Miriam is a trustee of the Charitable Incorporated Organisation set up to manage the Parish Nurse project, which has attracted additional external support and finance and has been well-used by the local community.

## *Charitable Giving*

The PCC supports a number of local, national and international charities chosen each year for the following year. In 2023 the chosen charities were the Red Cross, Watford Mencap, New Hope and Action for Children. Additional grants were made to the Mothers' Union, Crisis UK, the Children's Society, Action for Children and Dementia UK. These grants were funded by donations at church services, post-service refreshments and the Friday drop-in Cafés. The total amount of donations given in 2023 was £3,905.89



**Eco Church Award**

## **Structure, Governance and Management**

The Parochial Church Council is a corporate body established by the Church of England. It operates under the Parochial Church Council Powers Measure 1956 and is registered as a charity with the Charity Commission.

The method of appointment of PCC members is set out in the Church Representation Rules. All Church attendees who qualify as baptised members of the Church of England aged over 16 years are encouraged to register on the Electoral Roll and they may stand for election to the PCC.

The Annual Meeting of Parishioners to elect the Churchwardens was held on 23 April 2023, followed by the Annual Parochial Church Meeting which conducted elections to the Parochial Church Council, appointed the External Examiner and received the Annual Report and Accounts.

## **Membership of the PCC**

Membership during 2023 is shown below.

### *Ex officio:*

Revd. Miriam Mugan, Vicar and Chair of the PCC (appointed November 2007): Revd. Paul Palmer, Curate.

Anne Oke and Lyndon Palmer (Churchwardens).

### *Deanery Synod Representatives*

Fran Bennett and Shirley Ford until the APCM on 23 April. At the APCM Fran Bennett and Andrew Nobbs were elected to serve until 2026.

### *Lay Members*

Jane Bates

Sam Beard

Nik Bennett member and lay Vice-Chair until 23 April

Chris Fagan

John Galloway

Sam Jones

Janet Martin



Gillian Main from 23 April

Andrew Nobbs until 23 April

Ann Palmer, lay Vice-Chair from 23 April

Wendy Shafe was co-opted on 3 November to fill a casual vacancy

One vacancy from 23 April until 3 November.

Following the Annual Parochial Church Meeting, Ann Palmer was appointed by the PCC to serve as an Assistant Churchwarden during 2023/24.

### **Meetings during 2023**

The PCC held eight ordinary meetings and five extraordinary meetings during 2023, with an average attendance at the ordinary meetings of 85%. The extraordinary meetings were held on Sunday mornings after the communion service to determine single matters of business, mainly acceptance of quotations for the hall refurbishment works.

### **Advisers**

**Bankers** Barclays Bank PLC

**Independent Examiner** Mrs Dorothy Reynolds

### **Organisation and Structure**

The principal committees and groups are set out below, with memberships appointed by the PCC on 3 May 2023. Most committees include a mixture of PCC and non-PCC members. Chairs of the Committees were either appointed by the PCC or elected at the first meeting of those Committees after the APCM.

The Finance and Standing Committee meets in alternate months between scheduled PCC meetings with delegated financial powers and exercises oversight of the management of the Parish. Members: Revd. Miriam (Chair), Anne Oke and Lyndon Palmer (Churchwardens), Churchwarden Ann Palmer (Assistant Warden), Andrew Nobbs (Treasurer), Janet Martin (Planned Giving Officer), Sam Beard (lay PCC member) and Chris Fagan (Secretary). Owing to the large number of PCC meetings, the Committee did not meet during 2023.

The Buildings Committee acts as stewards of the Church, the Hall and the grounds and is concerned with their maintenance and appropriate improvements. Members: Lyndon Palmer (Chair), Anne Oke, (Secretary), Nik Bennett (until 23 April), Janet Martin, Revd. Miriam, Chris Oke and Ann Palmer.

The Pastoral and Evangelism Group is focussed on ensuring that All Saints' has sufficient arrangements in place to meet the pastoral and spiritual needs of the Church members and to enhance the spiritual life and numerical growth of the Church. Members: Revd. Miriam (Chair), Revd. Anne Shaw, Jane Bates (Secretary), Sam Beard, Fran Bennett, Sister Mary Bittles, Sam Jones, Andrew Nobbs, Anne Oke and Ann Palmer.

The Hall Committee exercises oversight of the use, maintenance and improvement of the Church Hall and Kitchen, which are used both by church groups and a large number of community groups and external leisure activity operators. It recommends levels of hiring fees. Members: Sam Jones (Chair until 7 September), thereafter Wendy Shafe, (also Secretary) Jane Bates, Judith Man, Janet Martin, Anne Oke and Peter Rennoldson.

The Music Maintenance and Development Committee oversees the musical content of services and other matters relating to the Choir and visiting organists. Its membership in 2023 was Revd.. Miriam (Chair), Sarah Guest (Choir Director-until her resignation), David Heath (Organist) Sam Beard, Chris Fagan, Anne Oke and Ann Palmer. We welcomed Organist David Heath as a Committee member in September. Following the Choir Director's resignation in September Revd. Miriam, Anne Oke and Sam Beard co-ordinated the Choir's music with David the Organist.

The Communications Team oversees All Saints' social media platforms on the website, Facebook, Twitter and other forms of internal and external communication. Members: Lyndon Palmer (Chair), Sam Jones and Revd. Miriam.

The Magazine Team produces and organises distribution of the monthly parish magazine which is an important means of communication within the church community. Members: Wendy Shafe (spokesperson), Fran Bennett and Shelagh Booth. During 2023 it was published online and paper copies were hand delivered to housebound parishioners. It was a very important means of keeping all parishioners in touch with All Saints'.

The Garden Team maintains the Church Garden with help from other congregation members. Members: Janet Martin and Andrew Nobbs.

The Eco Church Group established in 2021 continued its projects to increase recycling and to qualify for a bronze award from the A Rocha Church Eco Charity. Members: Janet Martin, Jane Manning and Revd. Miriam.

## **Parish Charities**

At the start of 2023, All Saints' had three charities registered with the Charity Commission. All were managed by trustees, namely the Vicar and the Churchwardens, and operated independently of the PCC. Their registered charity numbers are stated. The Vicar and the Churchwardens are Trustees ex officio.

1. The Reverend David Kenneth Williams Trust (803706). The objects of the Charity are to support such Christian religious and charitable purposes either within or outside the Parish as the Trustees consider proper. The Clerk to the Trustees has been appointed by the Trustees as an additional Trustee of this Charity. Most of the financial assets are invested for capital growth. In 2023 the trustees granted funding of £10,000 to the PCC towards the refurbishment and modernisation of the church hall, which is used by church groups and by a number of community and commercial leisure and exercise organisations, who hire it for their activities and thereby contribute to the PCC's income.
2. The George Gurney Charity for the Sick Poor (212964). The object of the Charity, established in 1923 following a bequest, was to provide a qualified trained nurse for the benefit of the poor inhabitants of Croxley Green. Following the launch of the NHS in 1948 this object was amended by discussion with the Charity Commission to:  
"The use of the money from the trust to help individual cases of hardship as a result of illness, and to provide amenities such as invalid chairs for the use of people in the parishes of All Saints' and St Oswald's. The income from the bequest remains to provide help for special deserving cases as well as enabling Christmas gifts to be given to some elderly and sick persons"
3. The Croxley Green Annuity Fund (212965), established in 1920 following a bequest, had as its object to provide pensions for three aged poor residents or former residents of Croxley Green.

The major event of 2023 was the merger in June, with the agreement of the Charity Commission, of the Croxley Green Annuity Fund with the George Gurney Charity, to which its assets were transferred on the grounds that there was a substantial overlap in their objects, namely the relief of poverty. The trustees intend during 2024 to combine the merged charity with two other separate charitable bank accounts, to change the name of the George Gurney Charity to the All Saints' Croxley Green Parish Church Charity and to amend its current charitable purposes to comprise the relief of poverty and the advancement of health.

Anyone resident in or having links to Croxley Green who has financial or health needs is welcome to apply in confidence to Christopher Fagan, Clerk to the Trustees, for assistance.

*Revd Canon Miriam Mugan, Vicar of All Saints' Parish*

*Christopher Fagan, PCC Secretary*

## **2. ELECTORAL ROLL**

All Saints', like all other Anglican parishes, maintains an Electoral Roll, which is revised annually. Inclusion on the Electoral Roll is voluntary, but inclusion is a sign of commitment and entitles those on the Roll to vote in elections of lay members to the Parochial Church Council (PCC) and the Deanery Synod and to stand for election to these bodies and to the Diocesan Synod. Every six years a full new Roll is produced and this was last done in 2019. To qualify for inclusion on the Roll you must be:

- aged 16 or over
- a member of the Church of England and a resident of All Saints' Parish, or
- a non-resident of the Parish who has habitually attended worship at All Saints' during the last six months or
- a member in good standing of another church which believes in the Holy Trinity who declares her/himself a member of the Church of England and who has habitually attended worship at All Saints' during the last six months before enrolment

Immediately following the 2023 revision the Electoral Roll had 90 names, a reduction of 2 from 2022. However later additions raised the number to 92. We remember fondly Reg Dee, Jean Spencer and Jo Sterk who died during 2023, while the names of Mabel Creer, Zoe Goddard and Judith Muir were removed as they had moved away. We welcomed as newly enrolled members Sue Middleton, Janice Mills, Peter and Wendy Rennoldson, Marjorie and Tom Stevenson and Lin Welch. In their different ways they are all contributing positively to the life and worship of All Saints' Church.

Those on the Electoral Roll can ordinarily be expected to attend services and participate in activities of the church, including giving financial support to defray its costs of operation. Numbers on the Electoral Roll are used as one factor in determining the amount of the annual Parish Share which the parish is expected to contribute towards the expenses of the Diocese. In special circumstances, such as sustained ill health, an individual may not be able to continue to attend services or contribute financially and these circumstances will be taken into account when the Roll is revised.

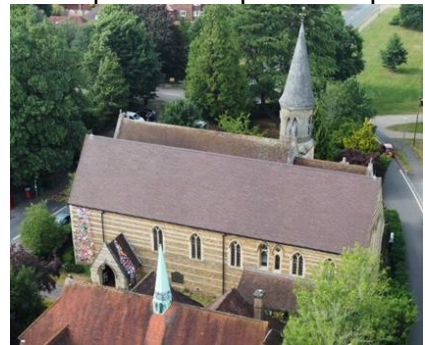
The 2024 annual revision of the Roll will be carried out during the week of 1-5 April. The names of qualifying applicants will be added to the Roll. I would ask anyone who qualifies to seriously consider enrolment on the Electoral Roll. Please speak to me or to Rev Miriam if you wish to obtain further information or an application form.

*Chris Fagan, Electoral Roll Officer*

### **3. CHURCHWARDENS' REPORT ON THE FABRIC OF THE CHURCH AND BUILDINGS**

#### **Church Fabric**

We had a Quinquennial Inspection conducted in June 2022. The Quinquennial inspection report gives an overview of the condition of the church, what needs doing and what is most important. These five-yearly snapshots show how much and in what way a building has changed over time. Quinquennial inspection reports give a solid, professional basis for making decisions about maintenance, repairs and managing the building. Above all, they are intended to help parishes look after their churches and churchyards. The findings of the report are handed to the Buildings Committee who look at the items from the report and prioritise any work that is required to be carried out.



**Ariel View of the Church**

#### *Quinquennial items progressed by Buildings Committee during 2023*

- Missing tiles to the south porch and north hall roof were replaced.
- Tarmacadam path to the entrance to the Church and from the hall youth room fire exit door to the road was replaced.
- Cleared moss, air vents and checked drains around the outside of the church.

#### *Other items progressed by Buildings Committee during 2023*

- Replacement of the church sign on the corner facing Watford Road mini roundabout.
- Installation of auto-wind mechanism for the church tower clock.
- New CCTV camera was installed in the sacristy.

Routine maintenance has continued to be carried out inside and outside of the church during 2023 which includes the roof gutters / valleys.

#### **Church Inventory**

No items have been added or removed from the Inventory.

#### **Faculties**

One faculty has been applied for and granted during the year:

- Installation of an Auto-wind mechanism for the Church Clock

## **Statutory Compliance**

The safety checks for fire extinguishers, electrical/gas appliances, fire alarm system and the lightning conductor were conducted during 2023.

## **Thanks**

A big thank you to all who help to keep All Saints' Church in such good condition be it inside or outside. There are so many different jobs undertaken by a very small number of dedicated volunteers such as gardening and all kinds of maintenance around the church and hall. In church, welcoming people on Sunday mornings, reading the lesson, or leading intercessions, serving, helping prepare activities for the children, arranging flowers, working the projector, helping with refreshments, baking cakes and helping at the Friday Cafés. If you would like to be involved in any of these activities you can speak to us the churchwardens, Revd. Miriam or Revd. Paul.

On behalf of everyone at All Saints', we would like to record our thanks for the excellent and very dedicated Pastoral Team we have at All Saints' – Miriam, Paul and Anne.

*Lyndon Palmer and Anne Oke, Churchwardens*

## **4. ARCHDEACON'S ANNUAL INSPECTION**

The 2023 Archdeacon's annual inspection took place on 14th August and this year we were visited by The Revd. Simon Cutmore, Rural Dean of Rickmansworth.

This year, the focus is primarily on registers, inventories and Net Zero planning. There were some other issues briefly addressed, and we were given the opportunity to raise issues of concern or discuss new ideas or initiatives that we are working on.

The topics and matters that were discussed during the inspection, with our replies, were as follows:

- **Church Mission Action Plan (MAP)**  
*How are you progressing with your MAP? What are the achievements and have there been any barriers to progress? Have you renewed or redone your MAP in the last 2 years?*  
Achieved most of the current plan. Pausing to prayerfully seek God in what next. Map renewed in June 2023.
- **Fire Risk Assessment**  
*When did you last complete a Fire Risk Assessment for the church? Assessment carried out April 2022. The churchwardens have been updating the Fire Risk Assessment this current year.*
- **Safeguarding**  
*Is the Safeguarding blue poster displayed in the church? Are safeguarding details on the front page of the church's website, or a one click away, and on A Church Near You website?*  
*Do you have any concerns about the management or practice of safeguarding?*  
The safeguarding publicity and management of safeguarding matters are up to date.

- Church Insurance**  
*Is the Employers' Liability Insurance Certificate on display and do all members of staff, employed by the PCC, have contracts of employment?*  
 Liability insurance provided by Ecclesiastical Insurance is displayed in the church and hall. All members of staff employed have contracts of employment.
- Registers and Inventory**  
*Has the Church Property Inventory been seen by the inspector? - Yes*  
*Church Property Inventory Comments.* – Online. Absolutely model document that should be replicated and shared.  
*Has the Baptism Register been seen by the inspector? - Yes*  
*Has the Confirmation Register been seen by the inspector? - Yes*  
*Has the Burial Register been seen by the inspector? - Yes*  
*Has the Service Register been seen by the inspector? - Yes*  
*Service Register Comments.* - All physical registers completed in black ink  
*Have the old marriage registers been returned to the appointed registrar's office? Yes*  
*Does the church have a Marriage Service Book? - Yes*  
*Marriage Service Book Comments.* – None
- Energy and Net Zero Carbon**  
*Have you completed your church's energy footprint information? - No, awaiting diocesan support*  
*Has your PCC discussed the Practical Path to Net Zero Carbon for Churches? If not, when do you intend to? - No, to review Autumn PCC*  
*When will your heating system need to be replaced? - Will not need replacing before 2030*  
*Are your energy bills causing you problems? – Yes, but we are managing to cope with the increased costs*  
*Where would you most appreciate help and support? - Understanding energy bills, Net zero carbon 'quick wins', Renewable energy*
- Other Matters**  
*How are things generally? - Generally good all round. Wardens, ministry team and the church community in good heart. Numbers largely back to pre-COVID levels.*  
*Is there anything else you would like to raise? - Aware that they are running a deficit budget. May apply for pastoral support going forward.*

Time was made available for us to raise any matters of concern about the life of the Parish, Deanery or Diocese.

*Lyndon Palmer and Anne Oke, Churchwardens*

## 5. TREASURER'S REPORT ON THE ACCOUNTS

For the year ending 31 December 2023 the accounts show that against day-to-day income and expenditure the church made a small surplus of £894. Receipts into the general fund in 2023

stood at £118,780 compared to expenditure of £117,886. Given that the budget for 2023 forecast a deficit of £11,286, this was a very satisfactory result.

The accounts have been prepared on a receipts and payments basis and have been independently examined.

The financial year was dominated by rising energy prices, along with high inflation, both of which impacted the running costs of the church. There were also concerns as to how the cost of living crisis might impact the generosity of our church community and the support for our fundraising events. In the event, the offertory income finished the year ahead of budget. Our main fundraising event is always the Christmas Market and this produced another excellent result. The Beer Festival had not been budgeted for and provided an additional income stream as well as drawing a large number of people into All Saints'.



**Ascension Day**

The saving against gas and electricity costs was offset by an overspend against repairs and maintenance and the overspend on office costs. However, most of this overspend was accounted for by the creation of provisions towards the future cost of a required upgrade to the lightning conductor and the eventual redecoration of the church interior. There was also a comparatively small overspend of £741 against the hall refurbishment charged against repairs.

### **Restricted and Designated Funds**

The church holds a number of funds where money has either been given for a specific purpose or else the PCC has decided to set money aside for a particular project.

In 2023 the main focus was on the project to refurbish the hall. The cost to 31 December was £38,123. £8,500 of this came from money that had been set aside by the PCC towards it. The balance of £29,623 was funded through grants, fundraising and the generosity of the wider community through donations. The balance of £1,420,

held in the Hall Fund at 31 December 2023, covers the cost of the redecoration of the hallway.

Thanks to a most generous donation, the cost for automating the clock winding mechanism was largely funded, with the balance of the cost met from the David Williams Legacy.

In 2023 the PCC took the decision to bring the accounting for the Toddler Group under the umbrella of the church. The receipts and payments for the group are now held in the Toddler Group Restricted Fund.

A further generous donation was received towards the replacement sanctuary carpet and this is held in the Vestment and Sanctuary Restricted Fund awaiting the completion of the project.

### **Employees**

In 2023 the church employed two members of staff. A pension scheme is available to employees through the NEST Pension Scheme. Contributions are paid by the church on behalf of one employee.

## **Reserves**

At the end of 2023 the reserves in the general fund rose by £894 to £47,396.

It is incumbent on the PCC, as trustees of the charity, to maintain a reserves policy and it is the policy of All Saints' to retain three months cash in reserve.

The budget set by the PCC for 2024 forecasts a deficit of £3,720.

The PCC is also in the process of investigating the condition of the organ and at this stage there is the potential for an unknown cost.

## **Acknowledgements**

My sincere thanks go to Janet Martin for the counting and banking of the weekly offertory income during the past year. My thanks also to Judith Man for her management of the hall bookings.

*Andrew Nobbs, Treasurer*

## **6. DEANERY SYNOD**

We began our meetings this year with a visit from Ruth Dennigan who is the Growing Vocations and Lay Ministry Officer. Ruth lives in Southwark and is a licensed reader. A keen musician and Hospice Chaplain, she was a teacher then became a Discipleship Officer in Ipswich.

She talked to us about how she believes everyone has a vocation but they are all different. She shared an interesting statistic that 90% of ministry is by lay people and it would be good if we all shared our thoughts and ideas about this within our own congregations, and, as we do here at All Saints', making sure that there is always an open invitation to everyone to take part and help in all that happens in our church. No matter how much or how little can be offered, all of it is very much valued by Miriam and our clergy team and helps us to have a culture of growing our faith.

We also had a talk later in the year from Professor Nicola Slee who is a professional research fellow at Queen's Foundation for Ecumenical Theological Education. She spoke to us about how she came to write a book about the 'Sabbath' and gave us an interesting and thought-provoking insight into the different meanings of the Sabbath.

The Trinity Project, which has been set up as Rickmansworth Deanery mental health and welfare project for young people, has made great progress in the last two years. Charlotte Barton who is the project worker has been spending time at Rickmansworth schools interacting with children with several activities as they explore ideas and ask and answer questions. There are prayer evenings held throughout the year to which everyone is invited to attend. There is a website that has up to date information about how the project is working with children in local schools and children's groups.

It was good to welcome two new clergy to our Deanery this year. Revd. Sarah Collins was installed as Rector of Chipperfield in July and Revd. Gary Norman was installed as Vicar of St Mary's Rickmansworth in October.

We look forward next year to coming together to celebrate all that we achieve in supporting and caring for all the people in the Deanery and to plan for the future.

*Fran Bennett, Deanery Synod representative*



## 7. PARISH SAFEGUARDING

The Church of England is committed to ensuring that Safeguarding is given high priority in all aspects of church life, and we at All Saints' Church have striven to keep the same standards. This means keeping up to date with our awareness of real and potential safeguarding matters through the training of our PCC members and those with specific roles involving children, young people and vulnerable adults, and sharing this with the wider community. We follow advice in preparing new procedures to ensure that children, young people, vulnerable adults, and those working with them, are protected whether as church members, visitors or as users of the church hall on a regular basis.

- Safeguarding - awareness and information:  
We started the year with our first 'Safeguarding Sunday' service which put safeguarding each other as a key responsibility for every Christian.  
Posters are displayed in the Church Porch and in the Hall with contact information about Safeguarding Officers, both in the parish and in the diocese, as well as contact numbers for the Church of England's Safe Spaces initiative and for charities which help people in difficult situations .  
At the end of the year we designed a child friendly safeguarding poster.
- Training:  
Our clergy continue their safeguarding training under the Diocese. Your Parish Safeguarding Officer renewed her Safeguarding Leadership training in the autumn, and Sam Jones and PCC have started or updated their training profiles.  
DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) checks have been successful for those requiring their three yearly renewal.
- Policies and Documents presented to the PCC:  
May – Serious Incident Report policy reviewed; Youth Leaders Role Description amended.  
July - Safeguarding policy: annual review  
September - annual approval of the list of Church-related activities (Toddlers, Youth Group, Friday café, Afternoon Tea and the Choir) and relevant risk assessments reviewed  
November - Safeguarding Agreement for Hall Users, set up by the Hall committee in 2021, was formally adopted.  
December - Policy for Safe Use of Images was reviewed with no change.  
- Guidelines for Lone working were adopted.

As a result, we are pleased to report that during 2023 All Saints' Church made good progress against the Parish Safeguarding Dashboard requirements for Level Three.

If at any time you have any safeguarding anxiety or concern, please report it immediately. Contact with the Safeguarding Team – Anne Oke, Sam Jones or the Vicar, Revd. Miriam Mugan, or via the secure email address [safeguarding@croxleygreenallsaints.org](mailto:safeguarding@croxleygreenallsaints.org).

*Anne Oke, Safeguarding Officer and Sam Jones, Assistant Safeguarding Officer*

## 8. BUILDINGS COMMITTEE

The work of the Buildings Committee is guided by the report which followed the Quinquennial Inspection that was carried out in the middle of 2022. The report is a detailed assessment of the condition of the church building, undertaken every five years. In the context of church buildings, this inspection is crucial for ensuring proper maintenance and repair of the building. The following work has been undertaken during 2023:

1. Missing tiles to the south porch and north hall roof were replaced.
2. The main tarmac path to the entrance to the Church from the hall / parish office and the pathway to the church from the hall youth room fire exit door to the road was replaced as these were uneven and becoming hazardous.
3. In the summer, after a Sunday communion service, a working party got together to clear moss, clear air vents and check drains. This was well attended and another date will be set for autumn 2024.

On top of the Quinquennial report the Committee deals with the general maintenance and improvements of the church building and the surrounding areas. The following was undertaken during 2023:

1. Replacement of the church sign on the corner facing Watford Road mini roundabout which was badly damaged when a car crashed into the sign.
2. Installation of automated clock winding mechanism in the church tower to stop the need of manual clock winding and the health and safety / lone working issues that are involved in the carrying out of manual clock winding. A generous donation was made to help cover most of the costs of this work.
3. To enhance security in the church a new CCTV camera was installed in the sacristy.
4. Production of a procedure that sets out All Saints' PCC arrangements for the verification, appointment, and monitoring of Contractor(s) working on the refurbishment, repair and maintenance of All Saints' Church and Church Hall infrastructure and ensures compliance with the Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015.



**Church Clock Tower**

During 2023, and after many years on the Buildings Committee, John Galloway, Nik Bennett and Janet Martin stepped down. We now only have five members of the Committee so if you think you would like to get involved in the valuable work that is carried out by the Buildings Committee please contact me, Anne Oke or Miriam.

*Lyndon Palmer, Buildings Committee Chair*

## 9. HALL COMMITTEE

2023 started with the disappointing news that our Lottery Funding Application, submitted in September 2022, had not been successful so we had to come up with a different plan if we were going to improve the Hall.

Many meetings were held to come up with an alternative plan to prioritise the work that was essential, and time outside meetings was spent writing job specifications, meeting with contractors to find out more about what each job entailed and then gathering quotes to compare. Each setback made us more determined to find a way to refurbish the Hall to the tight timescale



**Hall Before Refurbishment**

we had set ourselves. We had decided that August was the best time for work to be done as the Hall does not have as many lettings then, and the work would cause the least disruption.

Alongside this, we had to find a way of raising the money to pay for it to happen. We had a small amount of money in the Hall Account from money we had been putting aside and from a previous Quiz Night, but we needed to raise a substantial amount of money if we wanted to fully refurbish the Hall. Fundraising events, big and small, were organized; we had a Virtual Balloon Race, Tea Dances (thank you Sue

Fenton), sales tables at Friday Café, Hymns and Pimm's, Grant Applications for various funds and an Eleventh-Hour Gig and Curry Night (thank you Steve Martin) to name but a few. We also received a lot of money through donations from people who wanted to support us in our aim to improve the Hall, for which we are very grateful.

Finally, we had chosen the contractors, chosen the colour scheme, completed all the relevant paperwork and had funds to begin. The preparatory work began in the last week of July so that decoration could begin at the start of August. There was a lot of problem solving along the way (some at very short notice) but week by week progress could be seen. After the ceiling, walls, woodwork and radiators had been painted and the new wall and ceiling lights had been fitted, the old floor was taken up and a new wooden floor was laid. What a transformation! The new curtains were hung a few weeks later, 100 new chairs were delivered and the Hall refurbishment was complete -nearly!



**Hall After Refurbishment**

By the end of 2023 plans were in place for the stage carpet to be replaced (by kind donation of Steven Penney) and for the entrance to the Hall to be redecorated. There are still some more, smaller jobs that we plan for 2024 to complete the refurbishment of the Hall.

None of this would have happened if it had not been for the work and commitment of the Hall Committee. Sam Jones, Wendy Shafe, Jane Bates, Anne Oke, Janet Martin, Jude Man and Peter Rennoldson have all been part of the Hall Refurbishment Project and our thanks go to all of them.

And, of course, thank you to everyone who has supported our fundraising and made donations to make our Hall a much brighter place to meet.

The Hall continues to be a place for numerous keep-fit groups to work out, for children's drama and dance groups, for adult dance groups, Tai Chi, Friday Café, Toddlers, family parties, quiz nights, charity fundraising events, local U3A meetings, badminton, training sessions and meetings as well as it becoming a Polling Station or Blood Donation Centre when necessary. It really is a place at the centre of the community in Croxley Green.

Our disappointing start to the year turned into a very positive conclusion.

*Wendy Shafe, Hall Committee Chair*

## **10. PASTORAL AND EVANGELISM (P & E) GROUP**

There were 7 P & E meetings during 2023. The purpose of these meetings is to provide planning and oversight to the worship and liturgy in church and also explore appropriate courses and other opportunities to enable people's spiritual growth and development. Aspects relating to worship and liturgy in church, which are discussed and reviewed by the P & E group, are addressed in the report on Worship at All Saints'.

### **Spiritual Growth and Development**

Building on the success of the Lectio sessions in 2022, there were 4 further sessions held on Sunday evenings in January/February 2023 focussing on the Gospel readings.

There were four Quiet Church evenings across the year which were attended by an average of 8 people.

We participated in the Churches Together in Croxley Green Ecumenical Lent course on Prayer. We focussed on the Lord's Prayer using the principle of Quiet Church and prayer stations. It was well attended and well received by member of all the churches.

### **Living in Love and Faith (LLF) Course.**

Recognising the discussions taking place at the General Synod around issues to do with gender and identity we agreed to use the Church of England course 'Living Together Well' which is a follow on course from Living in Love and Faith, to enable us to broaden our own understanding and engagement in becoming a church that is fully inclusive for everyone. There were 5 sessions held in June and July. Attendance was a little disappointing but the PCC has resolved that we continue to pursue registration with the Inclusive Church network. It has also been agreed by the PCC that we will offer Blessing Services for couples of the same gender.

### **Mission Action Plan (MAP)**

The MAP was reviewed by the P & E group in July as we recognised where God has been at work in our church over the last year. It was felt that we needed to pause and take stock of where we are as a church and reflect on where God is leading us. Along with the PCC, we are keeping this under review.

*Revd. Miriam*

## **11. WORSHIP AT ALL SAINTS'**

During 2023 we have continued to build on the ethos of intergenerational worship, inclusion and building community.

Our pattern of regular services continues to be as follows:

### **Sunday mornings:**

8am service from the Book of Common Prayer on the First Sunday of the month

9.45am Parish Communion Service

11.30pm Family Service on the Third Sunday of the month

### Thursday morning

8am Morning Prayer in church

9.30am Said Service of Holy Communion

### **Monday, Wednesday and Friday**

Livestream Daily Reflection available on our Facebook page from 8am

In addition to these services, we have also held the following:

Holy Week Services

Sung Evensong at Harvest and All Saints' Day

Service for All Souls' to remember loved ones who have died

Civic Service on Remembrance Sunday

Blessing of Animals service

Advent Service

School Carol Services.



**Palm Sunday**

### **Lent and Holy Week**

To enable a greater feeling of journeying through Lent towards the cross, we introduced the concept of Lent Candles (similar to the Advent Candles that mark the coming of Jesus during Advent). There were six Lent candles, one for each week of Lent. Using a short liturgy each Sunday, one candle would be extinguished, along with a set of lights being turned off in church. This was received very well and the congregation agreed that it is something that we should repeat each year.

At the start of Lent each member of the congregation was given a Lent Bag which contained a booklet of prayers and reflections for each week of Lent and an object correlating to the readings (sand, rock, human figure, candle, cross). There were images for each week by the artist Sieger Koder.

The children were given a Lent bag each week that was based on the same themes as the adults with the objects for reflection, a 'think about' sheet and other activity sheets.

Feedback from adults and children was very positive and people had appreciated something to focus on at home each week during Lent.

At the start of Lent we also introduced Prayer Buddies to encourage members of the congregation to commit to praying for another congregation member during Lent. This also proved popular and enabled a greater feeling of community and connection.

Services and Activities in Holy Week were well attended.

### **Advent and Christmas**

Special services during Advent were:

Advent Sunday Service of Reflection

Christingle Service and crafts

Carol Service

Crib Service

Quiet Church

Livestreamed Compline on Thursday evenings

These were all very well attended and valued by a range of people.

We also hosted carol services for five local schools.

Sam Jones and Kelly Buckle organised an angel display with angels created by the children who regularly attend church and from a couple of the local schools. These were all hung from the light fittings in church making a wonderful display which was appreciated by everyone who came to the various services and events.



**Advent Angels**

### **Admission to Communion**

We were delighted to welcome Nerys Jones and William Hilton-Dennis into communion at our morning service on Advent Sunday.

### **Clarendon Lodge Care Home**

We have a small team of people (Revd. Miriam, Jane Bates, Val Hunt and Sheila Newman) who have continued to provide an act of worship every other week at Clarendon Lodge. This is very much appreciated by the residents and the staff.



**Admission to Communion**

### **Occasional Offices**

#### **Baptisms**

There were 9 children baptised during 2023. Whilst we have seen a slow but steady increase in the number of children being baptised over the last 3 years, it is still below the numbers pre covid.

## Weddings

There were no weddings in church during 2023. All in one events at hotels and other venues are becoming the norm for most people.

## Funerals

During 2023, there were 4 funeral services held in church and 6 services at local Crematoriums. Over recent years we have seen a reduction in the number of requests for clergy to take funeral services at the crematorium and this is evidenced in churches across the Diocese and indeed the country. The introduction of secular ministers who will incorporate some religious elements into the services they take and more recently the model of direct cremations where the deceased person is cremated without a service or ceremony have both impacted on the number of services we are asked to be engaged with. Interestingly there has been a slight increase in the number of requests to take a service for the Burial of Cremated Remains both in our Garden of Rest and at other cemeteries. It is also worthy to note that our annual Service of Remembrance for loved ones who have died continues to be very popular and very well attended.

## **Annual Statistics**

Each year, in January, I am required to submit an annual statistics form to the Diocese which is then passed to the Church of England. This information provides information on the overall church attendance and activities and the general state of church growth (or not).

Along with figures for the Occasional Offices listed above we also submit figures in relation to Christmas and Easter services and attendance numbers at all services during October.

On the whole the figures that we have submitted for 2023 are positive...

We have had 7 new people join our worshipping community.

We have an average of 8 children who attend our Sunday morning services each week.

The number of people attending church over the course of the year is increasing and is slightly up on the numbers pre-covid. There are many churches that are still struggling to get back to their pre-covid attendance numbers so we have done well to achieve what we have.

*Revd. Miriam*

## **11. FIRST SUNDAY SERVICE**

We began the year in true Family Service style enjoying singing, especially the action songs where we have a good workout. We shared our favourite stories, one of which was 'Jonah and the Whale.' What an adventure Jonah went on. It helped us to think about doing things that we really don't want to do. We wrote prayers on the legs of an octopus about helping and sharing with others.



We had great fun trying to balance on a 'wobble' board the next month and thought about asking Jesus to help us to have a firm foundation when we have a

wobble. We painted a rock to take home to remind us that Jesus is our strong foundation and is always there to help us.

In October we changed the service from the hall to meet in the church on the first Sunday of the month at 12 o'clock, renaming it 'The First Sunday Service'. It was great to have so much space to move around in. We begin each service with an activity, usually of 'search and find' around the church, then we gather together to collect a t-light and place it anywhere in the church that we would like our light to shine. We always end the service with a craft activity designed for all ages and while the children create it's been a really good time to have a chat over a cup of tea or coffee with the adults that bring them and an opportunity to build a firm relationship. Although our numbers remain small we know how much the parents and children enjoy coming and taking part.

*Fran Bennett*

## 12. COURSES AND LEARNING

2023 saw a range of learning opportunities with activities that were aimed to widen our spiritual experience being available.

During Lent we participated in an ecumenical Lent Course alongside other churches in Croxley. These took place on Wednesdays in the afternoon, with the session repeated in the evening. The course focussed on prayer with different aspects explored by each church. The All Saints' day was very well attended and had different interactive prayer stations themed on the Lord's Prayer, allowing participants to reflect on the words, meaning and impact in their own lives of the prayer used most often.



Our Living Well Together Course ran in June and July and allowed us to explore issues around sexuality and gender. A small group met over five weeks and conversations have helped to inform our decisions on making sure that we offer an inclusive welcome at All Saints' and our decision to offer blessings to same-sex couples, if asked.

Since the end of the Parish Hall refurbishment project we have intentionally tried to focus on discernment of what God has planned next for All Saints' and during September and October we ran a series of prayer evenings asking people to simply 'Come and Pray.' The sessions yielded some interesting insights.

In September and October we also ran a five-week course entitled 'Exploring Faith.' Through this we were encouraged to explore different elements of our faith; how we can become better disciples, growing with our church family, how we grow through and interact with worship, our own growth in faith and the importance of the Holy Spirit. The course was attended by relatively small numbers but interesting and varied conversations helped all to explore their faith.

On 3<sup>rd</sup> December it was wonderful to welcome Nerys and William to receive their first Holy Communion following a morning of learning with Revd. Miriam and Revd. Paul. It has been a real blessing to see our church family grow and flourish in this way.



During the year we have spent time with some of our children who have been trained to assist with serving at the altar. We would like to thank Ian, Emily and Carys, and their families, for adding this to our ministry at All Saints.'

Our online reflections on Monday, Wednesday and Friday have continued throughout the year and with a regular audience and good numbers of daily views of the posted videos.

We continue to run Quiet Church through the year and would encourage people to come along and spend a quiet hour with God in the peace and beautiful surroundings of our church building.

A varied year has given us much to think on and if you have any ideas on other events we could run please contact Revd. Miriam or Revd. Paul.

*Revd. Paul*

### **13. ALL SAINTS' CHURCH CHOIR**

All Saints' Church choir is a small but enthusiastic group of singers whose desire is to enhance the worship in our church. We meet on a Monday evening about twice a month to practice the hymns and to learn anthems appropriate to the church season. We greatly appreciate the commitment given by our keyboard/organists, namely David Heath and Simon Dunn. David has led our choir practices, teaching us new music with patience, encouragement and plenty of humour!

For the first time in a number of years, the choir sang the 'Cross of Christ' on Palm Sunday evening supported by additional singers. On Ascension Day, the Rickmansworth Deanery Service took place at All Saints' and the choir was augmented by singers from several churches in the deanery. The collective sound encouraged us to plan to sing together again, and some singers returned for a joint Harvest Evensong and for the Advent Sunday Evening Service.

We have been keen to encourage children to join the choir, and we were very pleased to have a small group sing for Mothering Sunday and again at the Christmas Carol service. The challenge has been finding a convenient time for the children to practice when an accompanist is available, but we have enjoyed having children choosing to come and sing with us on Sunday mornings.

*Anne Oke and Sam Beard*

### **14. THE FLOWER GROUP**

The Church garden has continued to provide plenty of greenery for our flower arrangements this year although we had a slight panic when we went to gather the greenery for the Easter flowers only to find that one of our main stay of greenery, the lovely yew archway in the back garden, had had a severe trim and there was very little for us to cut. However, with a little help from our own gardens and a variety of bushes in the church garden we managed to find enough to complement



**Carol Service**

the beautiful oranges and yellows of the roses and tulips that we had used for the displays. And once again, we had many people admiring the Easter Garden outside the front of the church.

We were very pleased to welcome some budding flower arrangers when we set up a flower workshop at the Friday Café in September and asked people to make any arrangement that they liked for our Harvest displays in church. It was very rewarding to see the fun that people had in making the displays and the surprise that some of them had at the lovely displays that they had created. The church was full of a wonderful variety of flowers and greenery not forgetting all the people who came along to this exciting, busy service with all their harvest goods to share.



**Harvest Flower Preparation**

For the Christmas afternoon tea that we had at All Saints', Alice Tims and her mum offered to provide some flowers to decorate the tables. They arrived with lovely decorated pots full of great winter foliage, baubles and beads and the delicate little white flower, gypsophila. Not only did they really cheer up our tea tables but after the tea we took them into church, where they became part of our Christmas decorations.

If you'd like to have a go at providing some floral decorations in church please speak to Wendy Shafe or myself; we would be very grateful for your help.

Many thanks to the people who have donated to the flower fund this year. This has meant that we can continue to help make the church a bright welcoming place for everyone at special times of the year.

*Fran Bennett*

## **15. THE GARDENING GROUP**

This was another busy year keeping the grounds around the church tidy, colourful and looked after. The weather continued to challenge this work: heavy rain, extreme heat or strong winds. Thank you to Andrew Nobbs, who again spent many, many hours clearing, planting and watering the flower beds and cutting hedges throughout the year. Alick Burge continued to cut the grass, both at the front and back of the church, keeping it all looking very tidy – thank you for all your hard work Alick! Margaret Paddick and her husband continued to look after the colourful flowers and shrubs by the choir vestry which always look beautiful – thank you to them. Alice Tims took on the very important job of filling the bird feeders and water baths which are always well used by the many small birds that inhabit the church grounds. Thank you to Alice and anyone who has donated feeders or food to enable us to do this.



**Garden Maintenance**

The Parish Council Rangers have continued to help us by cutting the hedges several times; this

is such a help to us and is much appreciated. Chris Fagan does a wonderful job collecting the litter very regularly in the garden, such an unglamorous but valuable job!

The church grounds are not the easiest to look after. The flower beds in the back garden are very dry due to the moisture being taken from the ground by all the trees, so we are thinking about how we can develop this area in the coming years to cope with these conditions, as well as climate change. If you have any thoughts about this and would like to share them, or become involved, please come and talk to Andrew or myself, we are always keen to have more people to help us. We did not do anything with the wildlife area this year but we have been thinking about how we can develop this to encourage wildlife in the future. Again, any ideas - please talk to us!

*Janet Martin*

## 16. COMMUNICATIONS TEAM

The Communications Team continues to oversee the main social media platforms used by All Saints' being the website and Facebook. The team also looks after other forms of communication within and outside the church.

A Diary of services and events is maintained throughout the year by the team and is used to identify what is taking place at All Saints' and helps us to plan the various means of communication to promote the church, services, and events to the congregation and the wider public. These can take the form of noticeboard displays, calendar every two months, service and event posters, information leaflets and information emails.



The live streaming of Morning Prayer continues three times a week.

A new display was created using the large red mobile noticeboard at the back of the north side of the church. This can also be used at events such as the Croxley Revels and the Beer Festival. The display covers the 'Life Events' that happen in church as well as special services, church events and information about the hall. This has also been replicated on the noticeboard in the hall.

Our Facebook page is a useful way of showing and advertising what is happening at the church to a wider audience and continues to increase the number of followers that are interested in our page.

You can follow what is happening at All Saints' via our Website and Facebook page using the links below: -

**Website** - <http://www.croxleygreenallsaints.org/>

**Facebook** - <http://www.facebook.com/croxleyallsaintschurch>

*Lyndon Palmer*

## 17. SOCIAL AND FUNDRAISING COMMITTEE

2023 has been yet another successful year for fundraising and social events at All Saints'.

We started the year holding another Table Top sale in April followed shortly afterwards by providing the refreshments for the Ascension Day Deanery Service which was held at All Saints' in May.

In June we introduced a new event of Pimm's and Hymns where people were invited to nominate their favourite hymns to sing along to which was then followed by serving Pimm's, along with soft drinks, to enjoy. This proved to be a lovely social event and we have more planned for 2024.



**Classical Music Concert**

June also saw us in attendance as usual with an All Saints' stall at Croxley Revels; as always this was a great community event to be part of and having the chance to chat to many familiar faces was wonderful.

In July Vicky Iveson organised another wonderful concert of light classical music performed by 'The Festival Chamber Orchestra' made up of local professional and semi-professional musicians for which we provided interval refreshments of Pimm's, Prosecco and soft drinks.

In September we decided to revive the Parish BBQ and to hold it to coincide with the Harvest Festival. It was lovely to see so many people enjoying a shared lunch once again which we plan to repeat in 2024.

The Christmas Market was once again held in November. As usual the day was a great success, with a lovely variety of stalls and lots of people from the wider community visiting.

December as always was a very busy month with events taking place every weekend up to Christmas. We provided refreshments for the Watford Community Orchestra's Christmas Concert, for the Advent, Christingle and Carol services. We had our usual stall selling mulled wine at the Parish Council Christmas Market and organised the Parish Christmas Post Box.

Thank you as always to the Committee's members for all their hard work over the year. We have now become a very small group, who are kept very busy over the course of the year, so if you think you might like to join us (or even find out a bit more about what we do) please do speak to either myself or Miriam. We would love to have you on board!

*Ann Palmer, Committee Chair*

## 18. CHURCH MAGAZINE

During 2023, the number of Magazines being printed and distributed each month increased. The Magazine continues to be free of charge as part of our Outreach Programme and is available in Church and at the Friday Café. It is also delivered by hand locally and by post to those who have

moved away but still want to keep in touch with what is happening at All Saints'. Thank you to Fran Bennett who organises the distribution and to all those who help by delivering. The Magazine is also available on our website.

The Magazine continues to provide a record of life at All Saints' and copies are bound and archived for future reference. Photographs bring the reports to life and I would like to thank the people who have been our 'roving reporters' and have sent photos and articles in for the Magazine. We try to have a variety of articles, poems, prayers and reports, as well as information, and are always keen for members of the congregation to send in their contributions. This year's monthly 'Pet Corner' articles, organised by Fran Bennett, have allowed us to get to know the pets of members of our congregation better and how important pets are to us. We do have a lot of positive feedback about the Magazine, so thank you to everyone who has contributed to make it interesting and enjoyable to read.

Thank you also to Tony Booth, our proof-reader, who provides a very valuable service by checking the Magazine before it is printed. This is greatly appreciated.

*Wendy Shafe*

## **19. CHURCHES TOGETHER IN CROXLEY GREEN**

All Saints' has always been an active participant in all of the annual Ecumenical events Churches Together have organised. The Walk of Witness on Good Friday was again very well attended. The Civil Service at All Saints' on Remembrance Sunday, followed by its observance at the War Memorial, was again well received with an increased attendance this year. A new venture during the year was the introduction of the Ecumenical Lent Course which was widely appreciated and a similar venture will be undertaken next year.

During the current economic climate our Food Bank in Croxley Green is a much-appreciated asset. We give active support, both by way of donations, and practically through our participation in running the weekly drop in, for receipt of donations and issue of much needed food support. More information can be found at <https://Rickmansworth.foodbank.org.uk> where the wider involvement in the area can be found.

The Parish Nurse project in Croxley Green goes from strength to strength where our two part-time Nurses and volunteers provided care for the community during the year. The main areas dealt with are long-term health conditions, mental health, social isolation and loneliness. There will be a concentration on Dementia and general mental well-being for this coming year. A Service of Celebration was held at St Oswald's in June and a further service will be planned for next year. The project works alongside other community services including debt agencies, drug, alcohol and domestic abuse services. Further details can be found at <https://croxleyparishnurse.org>

*Nik Bennett*

## 20. FRIDAY DROP-IN CAFÉ

We have had another very successful year at our Friday Drop-in Café. We have welcomed newcomers to the area as well as long term residents of Croxley Green and beyond, who have heard on the grapevine that this is the place to be for fellowship and friendship, and where excellent home-made cakes are served every week. For many, coming to the Café is a regular fixture in their week; something that they really look forward to.



Behind the scenes is a dedicated team of bakers (baking a super variety of cakes, gluten-free ones included), furniture-movers, coffee makers, servers, washer-up-ers and clearing away-ers! A big thank you goes to each and every one of you.

The Café is open virtually all year round and even when the hall was refurbished in the summer the Café transferred to the Church. This was not particularly easy for the serving team, but they don't give in easily!

There is no charge for refreshments, but we are most appreciative of the generous donations made through the year. In 2023 we also supported the following charities: The Earthquake Appeal in Turkey and Syria, Christian Aid, the British Legion and the Children's Society.

### **Café the day before the Coronation**

Nikki the local PCSO comes along every month making a really important link with the local community. Her presence has made a really positive impact on the folk there (and not just for the brainteaser puzzles she provides!)

We are particularly grateful for the support given to our big fund-raising initiative for the Hall Refurbishment Project. The Café clientele were some of the first to enjoy the wonderfully enhanced surroundings. *Anne Oke*

## 21. YOUTH GROUP

2023 was another fun year at Youth Group. We ran 8 sessions where our regular young members were joined by newcomers taking our total to 8 members. It has been lovely to get to know everyone through fun activities and discussions, seeing the characters of each young person come out and for the relationship between us all grow.

We were thankful for a grant that was obtained alongside the support of the church, which meant we were able to invest in some new games equipment. The young people have enjoyed playing with the new mini pool table, arcade basketball game and air hockey table as well as existing table football and table tennis. All these have been popular and used at other church events including the BBQ, Beer Festival and Christmas Market.

The games are a core part of our sessions in addition to Giant Connect 4 and badminton, with everyone becoming better at each game over time. We had fun celebrating Pancake Day with a scavenger hunt to find the ingredients then getting our inner chefs out making, cooking, and eating the pancakes. We created an Easter themed crazy golf course and an Easter treasure hunt around the church, garden and hall. We also toasted marshmallow over tea lights, making

S'mores after creating our 3D painted flames to contribute towards the church Pentecost decorations. A lot of fun was had at our summer session where many of us went home soaked following a water fight with water balloons and water pistols. In the lead up to Christmas we got creative again making angels that were part of decorations hung from the lights in church. We also brought back the much loved pompom snowball fight.

We were overwhelmed that all our young members were keen to support us to run the activity room in the committee room for the Christmas fete. We had the arcade basketball, air hockey and giant connect 4 out along with running play your cards right, pick out straws, ping ball game and some Christmas themed crafts. Our members chose the games, every member of youth group did a shift, each taking a turn to run the different games. We are super proud of their efforts. There was something for everyone, all ages and it was busy for the whole fete.

Here's to continued fun and laughter for 2024 with the group and would be lovely for new members.

*Kelly Buckle and Sam Beard, Youth Group Leaders*



**Enjoying Basketball Game**

## **22. MONDAY TODDLERS**

Monday Toddlers continues to be very popular with thirty children regularly attending and fifteen on the waiting list. There is a big increase in Grandparents and Dads coming which seems to be a reflection on the cost of childcare at present. In addition to many different play activities, the children especially enjoy different crafts presented each week. One focuses on painting while another is sticking and colouring. Parents and carers are very happy to do the messy activities at Toddlers rather than at home! Other messy favourites include cooked spaghetti, which the children can cut or stretch, and shaving foam creating patterns in the foam. The children enjoy their snack time when they sit on the mats all together and there is a lovely atmosphere and a feeling of togetherness. Group singing time is always enthusiastically received, favourites being "Greedy Crocodile" with puppets, "Row the Boat" with slinky elastic band and new verses made up each week, with the parachute to finish.

Two members of the church regularly run the group with one or two extra volunteers from church and the local community each week to support. We are also fortunate to have a lovely young lady with autism and learning difficulties who helps us out. She knows everyone on the register and has a natural ability with the children. She is an enthusiastic singer in our song time!

At the end of the session Shirley, one of our volunteers, stands at the door to make sure there are no escapees but wishes each member as they leave "God bless, have a good week". It feels that we are truly blessing each one as they go out into the week ahead.

We encourage the members of the group to join us at different church services and a few have attended the special services such as Mothering Sunday and Crib service but it is rare that any come to the first Sunday service. It seems that Sundays are busy with different sports activities

or simply catching up with family. However, feedback from special services has always been very positive.

The members of the group have said how much they love coming to the group and appreciate the care they receive. The adults supporting the group take time to talk and support the members and we are always sad when it is time for them and their children to leave for preschool and nursery.

Our desire is to love them until they ask why? Recently a few members have asked why the sessions are so caring and it is wonderful to explain the reason.



A big thank you to everyone who helps set up, support the sessions, clear up and put away. We couldn't do without you!

*Jane Bates*

### **23. ALL SAINTS' BEER FESTIVAL**

Between the 20-22 October 2023 we held the second All Saints' Church Beer Festival. The aim was to get people into the church space and to allow them to see it in a less formal and more inclusive way, which was very much achieved. We again partnered with The Anchor, Tap and Bottle, with them providing all the drinks, including 30 real ales and most of the serving staff. We provided the location, all food and helpers for the bar and kitchen.



The church was converted to tables and chairs, and it was lit with fairy lights and candles. We sold food over the weekend from pulled pork baps and sausage rolls to mixed veg and halloumi baps. All went down

**Getting Ready to open the Beer Festival**



well by everyone and we even sold out of food each day!! We also took the opportunity to sell Prize Draw tickets for the Christmas Market.

Games were set up in the church for all to play from table tennis to air hockey. Beer mats were printed and there were also details of upcoming church events on display. Members of the congregation were present to talk to people throughout the event.

We trialled live music in the church on the Saturday evening. It ran for 1 ½ hours and was received well. We would look to have live music again but only for some of the time.

The event was hugely successful and was hugely enjoyed by all who attended. There were up to 250 people in the church on the Friday and 100 people most of Saturday and Sunday. We suffered with sporting and social events that clashed with the Festival but the sessions were still well attended. Everyone loved the atmosphere and how friendly and welcoming the church felt. We aimed to bring people into the church and achieved this with great success. Whether it was people who had never been to All Saints' or hadn't been for a long time, they were all very impressed by what we had done.

Thank you to all those who helped during the weekend and the hard work put into making this event a success, from cooking and selling food to helping behind the bar, selling Draw tickets and general help, to talking to those who came in.

*Sam Beard and Ben Guest*

## **24. ALL SAINTS' CHARITIES**

### **THE REVEREND DAVID KENNETH WILLIAMS TRUST**

#### **Registered Charity No. 803706**

*The Reverend David Kenneth Williams Trust was established in 1989 in accordance with the wishes of Reverend David Kenneth Williams as expressed in his will dated 4 February 1989. The income from the sale of his house at 36 Winton Crescent, Croxley Green provided the capital, which was invested. The objects of the charity are such Christian religious and charitable purposes whether parochial or outside the Parish of All Saints' Croxley Green as in all respects the Trustees shall from time to time consider proper.*

The focus of the Trust has been to use its assets to support the mission and outreach of All Saints' Parish.

In past years the capital assets of the Trust were used to purchase equipment for church services and youth work, employment of youth workers, support for the church choir, construction of the Parish Office and Youth Room, installation of CCTV and part-funding of an administrative post, now the Parish Administrator, and the purchase and operating costs of a new computer software system to hold relevant data and enable members of the congregation and others with links to All Saints' to be contacted with information about church services and other activities. In addition to other benefits, this has facilitated the computerisation of Church Hall bookings and fee collection,

which has increased church income. The arrangement was changed to part-funding of the costs, with the balance paid for from the parish accounts, but the Trust's contributions ceased in June 2018.

This spending substantially reduced the capital of the Trust and its income, which consisted of interest on a bank account. Following the recession of 2008 and subsequent years, the amount of bank interest paid annually shrank to very little and eventually the Trust was not able to make any financial contribution to parish income. To seek to increase the capital of the Trust, in 2017 the trustees invested most of the remaining capital in Accumulation shares of the Church of England Central Board of Finance (CBF) Investment Fund, with the aim of growing the capital over time. This investment has been maintained and will continue in 2024. In addition to a 2001 grant of £3,368 towards the cost of new double-glazed windows, in 2023 the trustees provided grants of £10,000 to All Saints' PCC towards the costs of the Hall refurbishment programme and £5,500 for the purchase of 100 new stackable chairs for the hall, to replace old and deteriorating chairs. As the Trust's financial year runs from April to April, the year-end accounts for 2023/24 will be prepared in April 2024.

The Vicar and Churchwardens of the Parish of All Saints, Croxley Green, Rickmansworth, Herts. are the ex officio Trustees and have the right to nominate and appoint all new Trustees of the Trust. They appoint the Clerk to the Trustees, who is also a Trustee of this Charity. During 2023 the Churchwardens were Anne Oke and Lyndon Palmer. The current Clerk to the Trustees is Christopher Fagan of 75 Windmill Drive, Croxley Green, Rickmansworth, Herts WD3 3FB.

*Chris Fagan, Clerk to the Trustees*

## **PARISH CHARITIES**

**THE GEORGE GURNEY CHARITY FOR THE SICK POOR, Registered Charity No. 212964**  
(previously registered as The George Gurney Bequest )

**THE CROXLEY GREEN ANNUITY FUND, Registered Charity No.212965**

(previously registered as The Cameron Bequest Annuity Fund )

**ALL SAINTS' CROXLEY GREEN CHARITIES ACCOUNTS (current and deposit bank accounts)**

**All Saints' Parish Church, Croxley Green, Rickmansworth, Herts,  
Year Ending 31 December 2023**

The major development of 2023 was the merger of the two registered charities, the George Gurney Charity for the Sick Poor and the Croxley Green Annuity Fund.

The George Gurney Charity for the Sick Poor was established using a bequest in 1923 following the sale of "The Hawthorns", in order to provide a qualified trained nurse for the benefit of the poor inhabitants of Croxley Green. Following the establishment in 1948 of the National Health Service the Charity Commission approved a change of object to relieving individual cases of hardship resulting from illness and providing amenities such as invalid chairs to elderly and poor people in All Saints' and St Oswald's Parishes, with Christmas gifts for elderly and sick people.

The Croxley Green Annuity Fund was established in 1920 by the Misses Cameron to provide pensions to three poor and aged residents of Croxley Green or Rickmansworth Parishes. This fund was established in memory of the late Thomas Woods of Durrants.

All Saints' Croxley Green Charities Bank Account was established in 1990 using later legacies and donations. There are now two accounts, a current account and a deposit (interest earning) account. Trustees of all the Charities are the Vicar and Churchwardens of: All Saints' Church. The current Churchwardens are Lyndon Palmer and Anne Oke.

The two registered Charities operate in conjunction with the All Saints Croxley Green Charities Account to provide additional financial support to less affluent parishioners on a one-off or regular basis, and to provide a financial supplement at Christmas. Starting in 2018, the Trustees have also approved grants to the Charitable Incorporated Organisation set up by Churches Together in Croxley Green to run the Parish Nurse Scheme and the Croxley Food Bank.

The trustees wish to amalgamate these separate charities into a single parish charity, changing the existing charitable purposes to improve their ability to respond to the needs of people today by assisting individuals with insufficient income or particular cases of need and to support local health provision, including support for the Croxley Green Parish Nurse scheme. In June 2023 the Croxley Green Annuity Fund was merged with the George Gurney Charity with the consent of the Charity Commission. The next steps will be to change the name of the George Gurney Charity to "the All Saints' Croxley Green Parish Church Charity", to change its charitable purposes to relief of poverty and support for health services in Croxley Green and to enable the Parochial Church Council to appoint additional trustees, with a new scheme of governance. Some of these changes will require the Charity Commission's consent. Following this, the two bank accounts of the All Saints Croxley Green Charities will be transferred to the single parish charity.

Anyone living in Croxley Green or who has a past or current connection who needs financial help is welcome to contact (in confidence) the Clerk to the Trustees, Chris Fagan, tel. 01923 720319, Email: bardwell29@virginmedia.com.

*Chris Fagan, Clerk to the Trustees*

## **25. VICAR'S REPORT**

I am always amazed when I reflect back on the previous year at how much we are able to pack in as we seek to service God and our community together. It has been lovely to watch our church community grow closer together in prayer, worship and in supporting one another in practical ways. The sense of God's love and presence that permeates through our building is brought to life in and through all of you who worship at All Saints'. The warm and friendly welcome people receive as they walk through the church doors for services and other social events is so often commented on. Thank you all for the part you play in enabling our church to be a place of love, peace and sanctuary for those who come.

In our Mission Action Plan we are focussing on prayer for God to show us where and how he wants our church to grow and develop. The former Archbishop of Canterbury Rowan Williams said that mission is about seeing what God is doing and joining in, and over the last year I have felt God really drawing us together as a loving and faithful community. He has equipped us to reach out to others to encourage, nurture and journey with them as they take the tentative steps

to exploring faith and being part of a worshipping community. He has blessed us in so many ways and this is evidenced in the various reports that are included in this Annual Report and he has so much more in store for us. It is very exciting to explore where he will lead us next.

As always, everything that we have achieved this year is thanks to the team of volunteers who are the scaffolding that holds life at All Saints' together. Whatever the role, big or small, visible or



**Pentecost**

behind the scenes, I cannot emphasise enough how grateful we are for your time, commitment and cheery smiles. I pray that in all you have done and will continue to do you know God's love and joy as you serve him through serving the life and community of All Saints'. Thank you so much!

Whilst it is unwise to try and name everyone and every contribution because I will inevitably leave someone out, I would like to thank Sam Jones and Wendy Shafe and the Hall Committee for the hard work they undertook in fundraising for, and managing the hall refurbished during the summer. I am sure you will agree that the hall is now a beautiful space and a joy to use. It was amazing how everyone pulled together to raise the funds. It was especially moving that Sue Fenton along with her friends Alex, Barbara and Bob (who are all regulars at the Friday Café) organised two tea dances raising well over £1,500 for the Refurbishment fund. A concert organised and led

by Steve Martin (who attends the Toddler group each week with his grand-daughter) also raised around £1,800; we had donations from individual hall users as well. This to me reflects the love and support those in our community have for All Saints' which has been nurtured by the love and welcome they have received from us. A Balloon Race and monthly craft stalls with some beautiful crocheted blankets by Wendy, other church organised fundraising events, a local grant and funding from the All Saints' Charitable funds all provided the funds to cover the costs of what needed doing in the hall.

I would also like to thank our Churchwardens, Lyndon Palmer and Anne Oke, for the sterling work they do in public view and also behind the scenes to keep the church running smoothly and being an important link to the Diocese. They are supported by our Assistant Churchwarden, Anne Palmer. I greatly value and appreciate all that they do, their support, wise guidance and encouragement.

My thanks also to our ministry team, to Reverend Paul our Curate, soon to be licensed as Assistant Priest here, Reverend Anne, celebrating the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of her Ordination as Priest and Reverend Ron. They all give so generously of their time and gifts. I value their wisdom, encouragement and support. Thankyou also to Reverend Tayo who still helps out at our Thursday morning services and some Sunday mornings too.

We are fortunate to have a very active, interested and engaged PCC and I am so grateful for their commitment and all that they contribute to the life and work of All Saints'.

Chris Fagan, our knowledgeable and efficient PCC Secretary, continues to keep us all focussed by his gentle guidance and timely reminders for ensuring reports to the PCC and the writing of the APCM report are completed in the required timescales. I am very grateful for his knowledge,

attention to detail, the support and guidance (and yes even the corny jokes that often make us groan!) that he provides to myself and the PCC. Thank you, Chris!

Andrew Nobbs our Treasurer oversees our finances, prepares excellent reports for the PCC and provides measured and sensible guidance on all matters relating to finance. I really appreciate, and am grateful for, his wise financial counsel and the amount of work that he puts into this important role.

It is wonderful to have the musical expertise of David Heath and Simon Dunn as they play the organ and clavichord at our Services. We are very blessed to have them on a regular basis. I would especially like to highlight and thank David Heath for all of the additional support that he provides for us. He leads choir practices, contributes really helpful ideas for music to be used especially in special services. He has supported our fundraising through Hymns and Pimms. His gentle encouragement, wisdom, sense of humour and commitment to All Saints' is so greatly valued and appreciated. Both David and Simon have also been very supportive to John Galloway who is leading on a review of the organ. Thank you to both of them.

Looking ahead to what 2024 might bring, I am confident that God will continue to bless and guide us as long as we always seek to do His will.



### Christingle

I have already mentioned that we have an active band of volunteers who work jolly hard and to whom I am immensely grateful. However, if we are to continue to flourish as a church and Christian community serving God and the people of Croxley Green, then we do need to bring more volunteers on board. There are so many opportunities for people to be involved and most of the roles are easy and straightforward. Please pray about this and seek God's will for you. Perhaps he has something in mind for you to do; please feel free to chat with me about what roles are available. Our God is a God of surprises; I wonder what surprise he has in store for you and for us all at All Saints' in 2024.

*For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future. (Jeremiah 29 verse 11)*

With my love and prayers

*Miriam*