

ALL SAINTS CHURCH

THELWALL

ANNUAL REPORT

2022-2023



Important

Please bring this report with you to the Annual General Meeting

To be read before the meeting

Charity number 1135426

ALL SAINTS CHURCH THELWALL
ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING AND MEETING
TO ELECT CHURCHWARDENS
26th APRIL 2023

MEETING TO ELECT CHURCHWARDENS

1. Minutes of the last Meeting
2. Vote of thanks to the Churchwardens
3. Election of Churchwardens
4. Notice of the Archdeacons Visitation
5. AOB
6. Close of Meeting

ANNUAL PAROCHIAL MEETING

Minutes of the last Meeting

A.

To receive a report on changes to the Electoral Roll since the last Annual Meeting

To receive a report on the proceedings of the PCC and the activities
of the parish generally

To receive a report on the financial affairs of the Parish

To receive the independently examined accounts of the PCC for the year ended 31st December, 2022

To receive a report on the Fabric, Goods and Ornaments of the Church

To receive a report on the proceedings of the Deanery Synod

B.

To elect Representatives to the Deanery Synod

To elect Representatives to the PCC

C.

To appoint an Independent Examiner

D.

Any matters of Parochial or general interest

Chairman's Report

Other Reports

E. Close of Meeting

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING TO ELECT CHURCH WARDENS

27th APRIL 2022

1. Minutes of Meeting of AGM 2021

The Minutes of the Annual Meeting in April 2021 was agreed, Proposed: Jon Halliday,
Seconded: Pip Horne

2. Vote of thanks to Church Wardens

Douglas addressed the meeting by saying that we have two great Church Wardens Derek and Julie. Regular meetings are held at the Little Manor to support each other and deal with Church

Business. Douglas thanked them for the work last year and the work this next year.

3. Election of Church Wardens

Julie French and Derek Leather
Both duly elected and happy to continue

4. Sidespeople

These are elected at the first meeting of the new PCC.

5. Notice of the Arch Deacons Visitation

This will be held at St James's Church Warrington at 7.30 on Monday 20th June

6. AOB

Nothing to report

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING

27th APRIL 2022

1. Minutes of Meeting held at AGM 2021

These were agreed as an accurate record. Proposed; Pip Horne, Seconded: Frank Whittaker

2. Report on the Electoral Roll since the last meeting

Total at AGM in 2008 = 175
Total at AGM in 2009 = 177
Total at AGM in 2010 = 184
Total at AGM in 2011 = 193
Total at AGM in 2012 = 199
Total at AGM in 2013 = 204 full revision
Total at AGM in 2014 = 221
Total at AGM in 2015 = 237
Total at AGM in 2016 = 248
Total at AGM in 2017 = 256
Total at AGM in 2018 = 264
Total at AGM in 2019 = 244 full revision
Total at AGM in 2020 = 246
Total at AGM in 2021 = 241

People who attend Messy Church to be asked if they would like to go on the Electoral Roll

3. Report on the Financial Affairs

This is Julia's last year as Treasurer. Julia has produced remarkably accurate accounts. Julia is handing the Treasurer's position to Chris Monks.

Below is a list of people who support the Treasurer

Alison London Stewardship Leader
Mike Brewer – Gift Aid plus VAT
Frank Whittaker and his wisdom
Brian Robinson – Independent Examiner

Brian has been absolutely brilliant.

During the Pandemic it was a decision of the PCC not to pay the Parish Share fully – this has now been paid.

Alison London made a vote of thanks for all Julia's hard work. Julia is always cool, calm and a listening ear.

Julia is never phased. Always ready to help the Action Groups regarding finance.

Julia thanked everyone for their support

4. Election to the Deanery Synod

No elections this year.

5. Election of Representatives to the PCC

Retiring Jon Halliday and Julia Young

New Members.

Ingrid Halliday	Proposed: Elaine Whittaker	Seconded: Julie French
Suzanne Williams	Proposed: Kath Mellor	Seconded: Bob Powell

6. Appointment of Independent Examiner

Kevin Walker will stand as Independent Examiner. Everyone was happy with the proposal;

Thanks to Brian for his services. We will thank him appropriately.

7. Church Car Park

Mike advised of where we are up to and said there was a display of the proposed car park at the back of church. £26k so far is a reasonable estimate. 12k donation, 4k from church funds. We have requested 5k from the Parish Council. We need to apply for more grants. It was agreed to do a Just Giving page for the Church Car park or people to put in an envelope at the back of church.

8. Heritage Mission

8.1 The Conservation has been completed but the heritage projects continue

We are able to share our heritage with the community. Thelwall History Group has been formed. The conservation information is on the Thelwall Community web site.

8.2 We now have an online system for the public to access our burial ground information to see where people are buried.

8.3 War Memorials – to be able to share our information with everyone.

Thanks to Mike and Maggie for guiding us through our heritage mission.

9. Unsung Hero Award

Derek Leather spoke about Kath Mellor. Kath has been Secretary to the PCC for over 20 years. Does Tea/Coffee, Reads and leads Prayers in Church, Heads up Outreach, Co-ordinates cakes for various events, member of a Bible Study Group. Through the Pandemic organized Cream Teas, Afternoon Teas and gifts for people in the village. Manager of the Sanctuary Café. Helped with the enveloping and delivering of thousands of letters during the pandemic.

The meeting closed with prayer

ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

All Saints Church is situated in Thelwall. It is part of the Diocese of Chester within the Church of England. The correspondence address is the Vicarage, Bell Lane, Thelwall, Warrington, Cheshire.

The PCC is a body corporate (PCC Powers Measure 1956, Church Representation Rules 2011) and registered as a charity on 9th April 2010 with the Charity Commission (**Charity number 1135426**).

PCC members during 2021/2022 were as follows

Rev Douglas Black
Julie French (Churchwarden)
Derek Leather (Churchwarden)
Pip Horne (Lay Reader)
Colin Horrabin (Lay Reader)

Deanery Synod Elected Members

Kath Mellor
Bob Powell
Mike Horne
Alison London

PCC Elected Members

2020

John Alexander
Malcolm Hague
Karen Tipping
Elaine Whittaker

2021

Caroline Johnstone
Chris Monks

2022

Suzanne Williams
Ingrid Halliday
Helen Speed (co-opted)

Church Architect

Tony Barton, RIBA
Donald Insall Architects, 5 Bridge Place, Chester

Bank

NatWest, Warrington Branch, 23 Sankey Street, Warrington, Cheshire, WA1 1XH

Independent Examiner

Brian Robinson

AIMS and PURPOSES

All Saints' Church, Thelwall Parochial Church Council (PCC) has the responsibility of co-operating with the incumbent, the Reverend Douglas Black, in promoting in the ecclesiastical parish, the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical. The PCC is also responsible for the Parish Hall on Bell Lane Thelwall.

Our mission statement is:-

Growing Up, in our faith by engaging with the bible, prayer & worship.

Growing Together, through team work, encouragement, fellowship & fun!

Growing Out, to our local and global community with practical service and generosity.

Growing More, by sharing our faith & drawing people into the life of the church.

We aim to fulfil this in all aspects of church life.

OBJECTIVES and ACTIVITIES

The PCC is committed to enabling as many people as possible to worship at our church and to become part of our parish community at All Saints. The PCC maintains an overview of worship throughout the parish and makes suggestions on how our services can involve the many groups that live within our parish. Our services and worship put faith into practice through prayer and scripture, music and sacrament.

When planning our activities for the year, we have considered the Commission's guidance on public benefit and, in particular, the specific guidance on charities for the advancement of religion. In particular, we try to enable ordinary people to live out their faith as part of our parish community through:

- worship and prayer;
- learning about the Gospel;
- developing their knowledge and trust in Jesus;
- providing pastoral care for people living in the parish;
- missionary and outreach work.

To facilitate this work it is important that we maintain the fabric of the Church and the Parish Hall.

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE and MANAGEMENT

All Saints' Annual Parochial Meeting is held on the last Wednesday of April and it is at this meeting that church wardens and PCC members are elected. The method of appointment of PCC members is set out in the Church Representation Rules 2020. At All Saints the membership of the PCC consists of the incumbent (our vicar), churchwardens, lay readers and members elected by those members of the congregation who are on the electoral roll of the church. All those who attend our services/members of the congregation are encouraged to register on the Electoral Roll and stand for election to the PCC.

The PCC members are responsible for making decisions on all matters of general concern and importance to the parish including on how the funds of the PCC are to be spent. New members receive initial training into the workings of the PCC.

Given its wide responsibilities the PCC has appointed six permanent action groups, each dealing with a particular aspect of parish life:

- Worship (including Nurture and Prayer)
- Parish Hall
- Young People (ages birth to 18 years)
- Social Events and Communications
- Outreach
- Stewardship

Employment Matters 2023

The PCC employs several part-time employees: a hall caretaker, a hall cleaner and, until last summer, a Director of Music. We also pay organists and a vergers to assist at funerals and weddings. We also pay for a person to dig small graves in the churchyard for cremated remains.

The parishes of the Chester diocese are committed to: "Just Employment – Employing Staff in Faith Based Projects". This policy was compiled by the Church Urban Fund and adopted by the Dioceses of the North West. It contains information on recruitment, documentation, pay and reward, dismissal and redundancy, volunteers and health & safety.

Despite only having a few employees, we are still subject to all the demands of Employment law, including the National Living Wage. In some instances – like paid church choir directors and musicians – employment is also governed by Canon (church) Law. Liz Geddes – the Diocesan HR Advisor – has been an enormous help to us. But legislative demands seem to increase every year.

Employers must notify the HMRC on each occasion that payment is made to an employee. This includes single payments to vergers, organists & gravediggers, as well as the earnings of our part time employees.

Pensions: at the moment, none of our employees are eligible for auto-enrolment on a pension scheme because their earnings are below the required threshold. National Insurance: this becomes payable when our workers earn (currently) £240 per week.

Safeguarding is now a huge responsibility for churches. 'Safer recruitment' requires vetting of anyone who works with children, young people and vulnerable adults. This is particularly the case for paid workers in any parish. They must be screened, trained & appointed every 3 years.

In spite of the ever increasing demands on us as employers, we are still keeping up with our responsibilities!

The Village Green

The 'Village Green' on Thelwall New Road (o/s Gigg Lane) is the property of the church (the diocese & PCC are joint trustees). The vicar and wardens are responsible for the oversight of the land, reporting to PCC when any issues arise.

We are grateful to the Grappenhall & Thelwall Parish Council (G&TPC) for including the land in their local grounds maintenance programme, which means that they are paying for the grass to be cut. The G&TPC employ Countrywide Grounds NW to do this work.

Every 5 years, we are required by our insurers to employ an arborist to inspect the land, especially the trees, and produce a report for our attention and action.

Safeguarding Report 2022/23 Parish Safeguarding Officer (PSO): Caroline Johnstone

Safeguarding is a major part of the life of a church and Bishop Julie is extremely diligent in her role at promoting best practice throughout the diocese. To this end, when fully embarking on the role of Parish Safeguarding Lead, from September, an audit of practice was carried out and an action plan drawn up. We devoted the 10 am service on Safeguarding Sunday (22nd November '22) to exploring what Safeguarding means for our church and that it's not just to do with the clergy, which has definitely raised the profile of safeguarding in our church.

All Saints Church, Thelwall - Safeguarding Action Plan 2022 -23

Action Needed	By whom	When	Outcome
PSO to complete church safeguarding training up to leadership level	Caroline to complete basic, foundation and leadership level	Basic and foundation completed on 7 th November Leadership training 16 th November (certified once follow up activities submitted) On going	PSO greater awareness of the role in a church community and where we need to develop our Safeguarding work
Update DBS check and records for those working with children /vulnerable	CJ maintaining electronic records of who is due to renew – names and the certificate number is kept no other details held		Can be a bit tricky at times due to role descriptions but running smoothly overall Question of Church GDPR record holding needs to be resolved
Raise awareness of the role of safeguarding in our church with the congregation.	CJ to take part in the Safeguarding Sunday service in discussion with Douglas (Resources from Thirty one-eight)	Sunday 20 th November '22	Prompted discussion after the service – PSO had some queries brought up – got people thinking
All PCC to read and initial a copy of the Parish Safeguarding Handbook	-PSO (Caroline)will circulate a copy to the PCC at the November meeting and set up a list of who it is passed on to/make available via e mail. A hard copy to be kept in church which is signed by each PCC member	November '22 PCC	

ALL SAINTS' THELWALL ANNUAL TRUSTEES REPORT 2022/23

All PCC to undergo basic safe guarding training	Safeguarding training information circulated via e mail	All PCC to complete the training by February 2023 and send a copy of their certificate to PSO	
All PCC to be DBS checked	PSO to send the initial declaration form to those PCC members not DBS checked they should be signed and returned to her as soon as possible and then the DBS process can begin for each member	Completed by end of January 2023	All but 3 now complete (March 23)
Paper work and procedures reviewed Risk assessments for all groups/scenarios need to be revisited Recording forms need to be made accessible Procedures need to be made explicit to all Contact numbers need to be displayed of Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser and agencies like Childline /domestic abuse helpline – WBC safeguarding contacts	PSO to undertake this review in conjunction with Douglas PSO to compile a poster with numbers on – should be a designate safeguarding bit of the notice-board as you come in Childline and DV contacts displayed in the toilet as well as on notice board	From January '23 onwards completed by July '23	

All Saints, Thelwall

Safeguarding Policy

Promoting a Safer Church

The following policy was agreed at the Parochial Church Council (PCC) meeting held on 25th January 2023:

In accordance with the Church of England Safeguarding Policy our church is committed to:

- Promoting a safer environment and culture.
- Safely recruiting and supporting all those with any responsibility related to children, young people and vulnerable adults within the church.
- Responding promptly to every safeguarding concern or allegation.
- Caring pastorally for victims/survivors of abuse and other affected persons.
- Caring pastorally for those who are the subject of concerns or allegations of abuse and other affected persons.
- Responding to those that may pose a present risk to others.

The Parish will:

- Create a safe and caring place for all.
- Have a named Parish Safeguarding Officer (PSO) to work with the incumbent and the PCC to implement policy and procedures.
- Safely recruit, train and support all those with any responsibility for children, young people and adults to have the confidence and skills to recognise and respond to abuse.
- Ensure that there is appropriate insurance cover for all activities involving children and adults undertaken in the name of the parish.
- Display in church premises and on the Parish website the details of who to contact if there are safeguarding concerns or support needs.
- Listen to and take seriously all those who disclose abuse.
- Take steps to protect children and adults when a safeguarding concern of any kind arises, following House of Bishops guidance, including notifying the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser (DSA) and statutory agencies immediately.
- Offer support to victims/survivors of abuse regardless of the type of abuse, when or where it occurred.
- Care for and monitor any member of the church community who may pose a risk to children and adults whilst maintaining appropriate confidentiality and the safety of all parties.
- Ensure that health & safety policy, procedures and risk assessments are in place and that these are reviewed annually.
- Ensure that all hirers of our buildings, whether church or parish hall, will adopt this policy as part of their hiring agreement or demonstrate that they have their own equivalent policy.
- Review the implementation of the Safeguarding Policy, Procedures and Practices at least annually.

Each person who works within this church community will agree to abide by this policy and the guidelines established by this church.

This church appoints Caroline Johnstone as the Parish Safeguarding Officer.

Incumbent	Churchwarden
Churchwarden	Date

The Parochial Church Council has also complied with the duty under section 5 of the Safeguarding & Clergy Discipline Measure 2016 (duty to have due regard to House of Bishops' guidance on safeguarding and vulnerable adults).



Vicar's Report

This is my 21st year as vicar of All Saints. My 'brass' or 'nickel' anniversary, apparently!

1. Growing Up in our faith by engaging with the bible, prayer and worship. Slowly, people are returning to church post-pandemic. We are still exercising caution at Holy Communion by offering the wafer with a drop of wine on it. This will be reviewed in the late spring. Felicity retired as our musical director in the summer, concluding a joyous 24 year tenancy. Her 'send-off' was befitting of her tenure. The PCC is busy discussing what/who should follow her. In the meantime, I am grateful to our musicians and singers for rising to the challenge of organising and delivering the music in our services. They're brilliant! Our Bible groups continue to meet for mutual encouragement. And last year's Lent course - Talking Jesus - provided thoughtful studies about sharing our faith. We continue to look for creative ways to help people engage with prayer. Recently, we've been trying seasonal 'prayer project' leaflets.
2. Growing Together through teamwork, encouragement, fellowship and fun! As our calendar of events and activities begin to thrive again, so do the opportunities for teamwork, encouragement, fellowship and fun. Social events, outreach activities, the bonfire etc. present us with wonderful opportunities to be inclusive. Social inclusion is now a major priority for the government and for the charitable sector as they seek to stem the increase in loneliness and mental health issues. How can we include such people in our growing together? The invitation and friendship we offer to others can be transformative. Who could you invite and involve? Let's help people to belong and believe.
3. Growing Out to our local and global community with practical service and generosity. The 'cost of living' crisis has caused anxiety - locally and globally. For this reason, I'm really encouraged by the initiatives and generosity emanating from our church. Remarkable responses to appeals for Christian Aid, Foodbank, Children's Society, Operation Christmas Child, FairTrade, Get Warrington Talking, Macmillan and Papyrus. Our 'Warm Hub' is a response to the rising cost of heating homes - a warm church, soup, a roll and friendship, on offer to all who come.

As ever, our planned appeals and initiatives are accompanied by remarkable individual acts of kindness and generosity to people near and far.

4. Growing More by sharing our faith and drawing people into the life of the church. Open the Book (OtB) continues to thrive in the local primary schools. We have a fab OtB team, enthusiastically led by Peter & Lynda. OtB has also performed in Chaigeley school! With the decrease of residual Christianity in our society, research continues to show the increasing effectiveness of one-to-one friendship evangelism in bringing people to faith and church. The C of E's 'Growing Faith' campaign encourages Christians to share their faith in word and action during the week.

Therefore, in Lent, we will use the "Fruitfulness on the Frontline" course recommended by the diocese.

The C of E has set the parishes a target of 'carbon net zero' by 2030. It has provided an online survey to help churches measure their carbon footprint. Additionally, the 'A Rocha' foundation offers resources that help churches to explore ecological matters and suggests ways - many quite simple - of reducing the carbon footprint. The diocesan body that regulates the care of church buildings will soon no longer grant permission for new gas or oil boilers and other eco unfriendly installations. Even though we have briefly looked at the A Rocha resources before now, PCC will begin planning and acting in earnest in the coming year. Thankfully, we already have LED lighting in the church. It's a start but not a finish!

So much invaluable work is done by so many people at All Saints, which makes it complex to thank everyone individually. But I would particularly like to say thank you to Julie & Derek (wardens), Chris (treasurer), Kath (secretary), Pip, Colin and Bob (Readers) and all the action groups for continuing to adapt to the challenge with such energy and enthusiasm. And, as ever, to everyone I say: 'thank you' and 'well done good and faithful servants'. Keep growing up, growing together, growing out and growing more.

PARISH REPORTS – Achievements and Performance

Electoral Roll Report – Jon Halliday

At the time of writing this in mid-March 2023, the Electoral Roll had been updated and at that stage the numbers were:-

- The number on our Electoral Roll was 231.
- The total last year was 237 (as declared on 8th May 2022).

Of these 231 names, 168 live in the parish of Thelwall and 63 outside. There were 7 new names added to the Electoral Roll with 13 names being recorded as deceased and therefore removed from the Electoral Roll.

Following the Covid pandemic, and the return to normal services, we have seen a resumption of congregation members registering on the Electoral Roll. We have in the period from 1st May 2022 seen a reduction of 6 members of the Electoral Roll equating to a 2.5% reduction in members. This figure may be revised in the coming weeks leading up to the end of April when the formal declaration of numbers is provided for the Diocese and the PCC Annual General Meeting.

I will be able to state the current numbers for the coming year at the Annual Meeting.

Historical Reports and Future Predictions

For transparency I have included numbers for the past few years are below and this does show a trending increase in Electoral Roll numbers but this may be countered by a decrease over the last three years.

Total at AGM in 2007 = 155 (Full Revision)
Total at AGM in 2008 = 175
Total at AGM in 2009 = 177
Total at AGM in 2010 = 184
Total at AGM in 2011 = 193
Total at AGM in 2012 = 199
Total at AGM in 2013 = 204 (Full Revision)
Total at AGM in 2014 = 221
Total at AGM in 2015 = 237
Total at AGM in 2016 = 248
Total at AGM in 2017 = 256
Total at AGM in 2018 = 264
Total at AGM in 2019 = 244 (Full Revision)
Total at AGM in 2020 = 246
Total at AGM in 2021 = 241
Total at AGM in 2022 = 237
Total at AGM in 2023 = 231

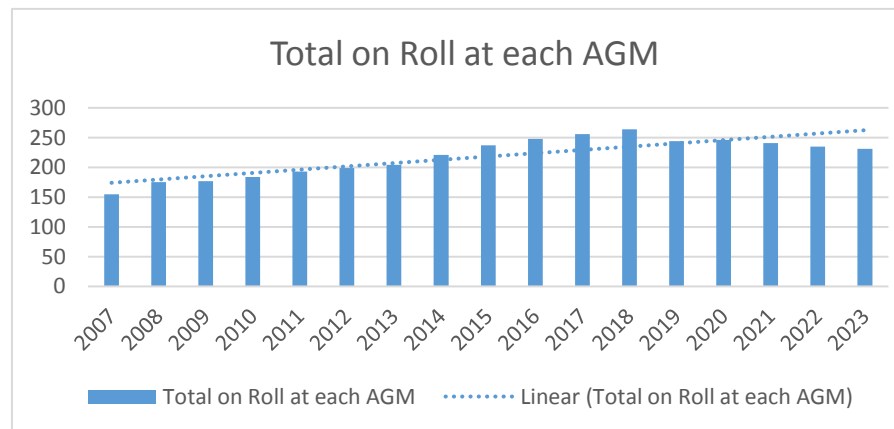


fig a. Visual representation of the electoral roll numbers declared at each AGM

A significant drop in 2019 can be attributed to a full revision of the Electoral Roll taking place and a number of records being removed due to members not re-registering.

For the years 2021 and 2022 a decrease in numbers can, as was previously reported, be attributed to the COVID pandemic and a combination of deaths within the congregation and severe reduction in regular services.

With the resumption of normal services and the relaxing of pandemic restrictions during 2022 it is anticipated, based on the last 5 years statistics, that the number of members of the Electoral Roll will increase over the next 2 years resulting in a return to pre-pandemic numbers (244 or more members) before the end of 2024.



Jon Halliday - Electoral Roll Officer

Secretary's Report – Kath Mellor

The PCC has held six meetings during the year. We have had lots of discussions regarding the Church car Park which we are hoping will be done during 2023. We have been discussing the requirements for a new Musical Director. We are trying to update and start policies for the running of our Church. During the end of 2022 we spent quite a lot of time discussing the budget for 2023 and how we can adapt the budget so we know where we are each quarter against the budget. Our Stewardship Group are looking at this.

Deanery Synod Report

At the February 2022 synod, we discussed the new safeguarding regulations, ideas for Lent, work amongst children and young people, covid recovery and well-being.

In July, we had a visit from Neil Hudson author of 'Imagine Church: Releasing Dynamic Everyday Disciples' and 'Scattered and Gathered: Equipping Disciples for the Frontline'. Neil had us thinking and discussing 'Everyday Faith'.

At the October meeting, we had a 'Vision Café' led by Harriet Roberts, Director of Vision and Strategy for the Diocese. Harriet is a one-year appointment, visiting every deanery, to draw together a vision for the diocese.

To receive a report on the Fabric, Goods and Ornaments of the Church (Churchwardens)

Derek and I feel that this year there has been a greater shift into what now has become the "new norm" within our church and although we still have to be vigilant in our approach to Covid 19, we can give a big sigh of relief that although we still have to have Communion at the Chancel steps and with wafers soaked in wine we no longer have to wear the dreaded masks.

All our much loved activities are back and we have even added extras such as soup and a roll on a Monday which has been much appreciated especially in the colder weather when people have been worried about either eat or heat. Grateful thanks to Kath Mellor for arranging this.

We have had our challenges, having to close the burial part of our churchyard as it is now full, although the cremation side is thankfully still open. Raising monies for and getting permission to renew the much needed car park which we are nearly there with and problems with water getting into the building due to an ill-fitting main door, but God is good and we are slowly overcoming most of them.

So we remain optimistic about the future of All Saints Church and wish everyone a much happier and calmer Church year.

Worship Action Group (Action Group Chair, Douglas Black)

The brief of the WAGs is to develop worship, nurture and prayer in line with the church's mission statement: growing up, growing together, growing out, growing more.

Slowly, but surely, church members are beginning to return to public worship. Most Covid restrictions have been lifted but we continue to administer Holy Communion using a wafer with a drop of wine on it. This will be reviewed by PCC in the late spring.

We are always thinking of imaginative and flexible ways to help people engage with prayer. The prayer booklets from the Prayer Trust have been well received at Christmas and Easter. Also, we have been compiling home-made prayer project leaflets for Advent and Lent, which contain some seasonal prayers and a list of items needing prayer. We will also produce one for Harvest.

Every year, we sign up for the Archbishops' Ascension-tide initiative: Thy Kingdom Come (TKC). TKC encourages Christian to pray for - and share their faith with – family, friends & neighbours. Last year, the C of

E provided the resources for free. However, it looks like we might have to pay for them this year.

The Queen's Platinum Jubilee in June and her death in September took us through the full range of emotions. But the church responded to these occasions with dedication and focus. We were very grateful to Judith Biggin for coordinating and preparing us for 'Operation London Bridge' - the code name for the Queen's death.

Our Bible study and Lent groups continue to build up the people who attend and they, in turn, build up others.

Last year's Lent Course was 'Talking Jesus' - studies in sharing our faith. This year's course is "Fruitfulness on the Frontline" - reflections on how God can and does work through our daily lives.

Last summer, Felicity stepped down as our Director of Music after 24 years in the role. We resisted the temptation to give Felicity the traditional gift for a 24th anniversary - a musical instrument! The PCC is currently discussing what a post-Felicity world might look like. In the interim, the WAGs are grateful to the singers and musicians for their enthusiasm in rising to the challenge of providing for our public worship.

Choir & Music Group Report – (Elaine Whittaker, choir member)

Last year we saw Felicity step down as musical director which she held for the past 24 years. Our heartfelt thanks goes out to her for everything she did with the worship at All Saints.

It has been lovely to see singers and musicians join together and sing at the front of church. We now have four new members join us in our worship each week - Gordon, Geoff, Beverley and Ingrid. Thank you to all the singers whose commitment, enthusiasm and dedication has continued throughout the year. We also could not achieve all that we do without the support of Trish, Julia, Felicity and Peter with the playing of the piano, organ and guitars during our services each week - so thank you to you all.

Finally, we would appreciate your prayers as we move forward to the next step of worship at All Saints.

If anyone would like to join us in our singing at All Saints or would like any information on the hymns we use, or have any suggestions for new hymns then feel free to speak to any of the singers or musicians who will be happy to help. Thank you.

Parish Hall Action Group (Action Group Chair, Helen Speed)

Our church family, via the Hall Committee members, continues to serve our community through the provision of the Parish Hall for many community groups and large and small village events, plus outreach, parties and fund raisers of many sizes for people who live locally and from a wide area. It is particularly popular for large faith events and for the two major village events of Rose Queen and the Bonfire.

Income from hall lettings have been steadily increasing from 2020 through to 2022 – though is not yet back to pre-pandemic levels. The unaudited accounts suggest a slowly improving income stream.

The Hall runs at a small profit through a mixture of; the support from our regular users who provide services to all ages, occasional users who choose the hall for their parties and weddings, good stewardship of our funds and amazing support from our Hall Management Committee who commit their skills and a lot of time to ensure that regulations are met, income is received, financial stewardship and the Hall is maintained. We would also like to take this opportunity to thank other volunteers who are willing to help clean chairs, tables and windows at our Hall Working Party Days plus sundry other jobs such as reorganising the kitchen cupboards and painting the shed and Bonfire signs.

This small profit has been achieved despite running costs going up. As everyone is fully aware, utility costs have increased and the move to the Hive system to manage the heating has proved wise.

We have also had several ongoing projects, including finishing the car park project by adding new fencing and gates, maintaining the septic tank and improving the play area at the rear of the hall. This included applying for planning permission to remove a small tree inside the play area to enlarge the playing surface, part of which will be covered with artificial grass and to the appropriate safety standard. Planning permission has recently been received and the tree will be replaced nearby outside the play area.

Examples of other work undertaken include adaptation and improvement of the hall & CCTV after consultation with regular users, replacement of the water heater and regular repairs to the floor cleaner.

Some projects remain incomplete. These include the fire alarm system, which has been delayed due to discussions with a regular user to ensure the system is both compliant and enables them to continue with the services that they offer and the bike shelter, which has proved too expensive to refurbish after it was damaged in a storm. Alternative arrangements are in hand and will be funded by the budget set aside for small projects and replacement equipment.

A previous survey of hall users identified several areas for improvement. First on the list was the toilets and we have prioritised refurbishment of the toilets, as they are unchanged since the hall was built. Members of the Committee have become adept at viewing public toilets for ideas for the new ones at the hall. We are in the process of applying for grants to fund the work. The Hall has a reserve fund and PCC has agreed for us to use this as matched funding (often required by grant bodies) for the replacement of the toilets.

Other areas for improvement identified by hall users included replacing the kitchen and refurbishing the heating system. These will be addressed as funds allow.

Pastoral Care and Community Outreach

During 2022 there were 14 baptisms, 12 funerals at All Saints and 3 funerals at the crematorium only, 6 burials and 8 Burials of Ashes

Baptism Preparation – A church member visits the family before the baptism to get to know the family and explain what's involved. This person is at the service and the baptised child is given a children's Bible as a baptism gift from the church.

Bereaved families are visited before and after the funeral by the vicar. We have a 'Memorial Service' of remembrance once a year, at All Saints-tide, to which all who have been bereaved during the last year are invited.

Our Counselling Referral service has been able to help a good number of people again this year. We are very grateful to the Diocesan Counselling Service for accepting our referrals. In addition, we are now providing one-to-one help for people struggling with 'officialdom' i.e. form filling, bureaucracy, HMRC, benefits etc.

Mike Brewer kindly runs the ***“Dealing with Officialdom”***. Help and advice is offered on the following topics:

1. Dealing with deceased persons' estates e.g. completing probate forms and financial matters
2. Completing attendance allowance claims
3. Entitlements to pension credits, housing benefit, council tax support
4. Problems arising from unmarried couples when one is bereaved and the other is not named on the house deeds.
5. Private and state pension entitlements, understanding complex paperwork and decisions needed. But not investment advice.
6. Universal credits entitlements and explaining the complexities of how they are calculated and the consequences of claw back when circumstances change.
7. Completing Power of attorney when one partner suffers serious illness and their affairs need to be managed by family members. There have been several requests for help.
8. Personal Independence Payments dealing with appeals to official decisions on entitlement.
9. Income tax queries and entitlements.
10. Driving licence notification for ill health
11. All of the above were resolved.
12. This free service is regularly advertised in the parish news and conducted in the privacy of peoples' homes. Contact Douglas Black or Mike Brewer, details can be found in the parish magazine.

Food Bank Donations are left at the church and then taken to the Warrington Distribution Point by a church member.

Harvest Gifts – the gifts of tinned and packet food are given to the Warrington Food Bank and the gifts of flowers are distributed to the sick, bereaved and elderly of the parish.

Outreach Action Group (Action Group Chair, Kath Mellor)

Our first large event was the Queen's Jubilee. On the Sunday morning we celebrated with cake and drinks. In the afternoon over 90 people came to Afternoon Tea in the Parish Hall.

During the year Chill and Chat have been along to the Sanctuary Café for Bacon Sandwiches or similar breakfast foods. We have enjoyed fellowship with each other. We held our service for “Remembering the Loved Ones” and we had lots of families coming. As in recent years people were invited to bring a flower to put in the vase when they light a candle. After the service refreshments were served so families can spend time together.

We had activities in the Church yard during Remembrance time and children from the local schools came along.

In December we started the Warm Space initiative and have a three week rota of helpers. We offer home-made soup, bread rolls, cake and tea/coffee. We all sit together and enjoy people's company.

In March 2023 we held our annual lunch which came under the name of Food and Fellowship. 70 people came and enjoyed a three course lunch and entertainment. Everyone enjoyed themselves and all the ladies received a plant and the men a bar of fair4all chocolate.

“Open the Book”

Open the Book in Thelwall started in the Autumn term 2016. Since then we have made 301 presentations of Bible stories in the Junior and Infant schools, plus one to Chaigley school last Christmas. We have also done about 7 other presentations at All Saints, Lymm Baptist Church, Sanctuary Cafe and a Lymm Churches Together committee meeting. Since covid, we go to the Junior School fortnightly and the Infant School monthly. Recently Douglas has been sending images of the team as attachments to his weekly *All Saints Notices* emails. Sadly he can't show images containing children taking acting parts due to safeguarding rules.

The Children and Young People Action Group (Action Group Chair, Caroline Johnstone)

Praise and Play continue their twice monthly sessions in church on Thursday afternoons. The sessions are led by Janet Black, Elaine Whittaker with Liz Taylor. We continue to be a small group of 3 to 4 children with their parent/carer. We have had some families attending for short periods before returning to work. We have been able to signpost people to Messy Church and family services. Going forward we are taking a look at resources: what might need replacing and the repair of storage under the back pew.

Messy Church celebrated Mothering Sunday and Easter at the end of March 22, and had a 'Messy' Picnic at the Parish Hall in July. We had changed the format, due to Covid-19, to have families stay together and do the activities at one table but in September we reverted to families visiting different activity tables again, which is much more sociable and allows everyone to get to know each other better. Messy Harvest looked at the environment and what we can do to take care of God's World ...this was followed up at the Harvest Festival. Messy Advent / Christmas took place in church due to the hall being in use, and was a lovely 'twinkly' event and a small group of leaders helped with the Messy Carols and Cake later in the month. In January we started the year with an energetic family sports event and purchased almost £300 worth of equipment for this and future events – that was great fun and blew post-Christmas cobwebs away!

At Messy Easter in Early March 23 we looked at the Easter story and welcomed Jack as a young leader for the first time which was great.

We average about 22 children and 22 adults at these events which is good to see and have gathered new families as the year has gone on.

Our core team is made up of Caroline Johnstone, Janet Black, Karen Tipping, Linda Hutchinson, Kath Mellor, Jean Fisher, Felicity Speed and Elaine Whittaker with Richard Speed, Frank Whittaker and others helping out too.

The Social and Communications Action Group (Action Group Member Trish Powell)

2022 saw a return to a full calendar with a considerable number of events reinstated and new items added to our repertoire. The regular events included our ever popular Fairtrade Coffee Morning (March), Easter Egg Hunt (April), Wine Tasting (May), MacMillan Coffee Morning (September), Bonfire Night (November), our Christmas Fayre (November), and a Christmas concert by the Warrington Male Voice Choir in our church (December). Throughout the year the Book Group met monthly and returned to meeting in person in the community area at the rear of the church. Our newer events included a Car Boot (May), BBQ at the Parish Hall to mark Felicity's leaving (July), Laskey Farm Cream Tea (August), and a Quiz Night (October). These were added to further by the development of a monthly village market at the Parish Hall. The Markets have proved to have a wide appeal and attract many who don't traditionally attend Parish events. They have also wonderfully brought us a new member to the SCAG. Diane is full of ideas and we all feel energised by her enthusiasm and can-do attitude. All the events continue to generate much needed and appreciated funds, both for the church and for the designated charities we choose to support.

The Parish News continued to be a source of communication and company within the village; it is edited by a member of SCAG and is distributed ten months of the year free to every house in Thelwall. This publication is very much appreciated in particular by members of our community who do not 'do digital', ensuring they remain informed, invited and included in all that we do. Significantly it provides a vehicle for communicating the legacy work from the National Lottery Heritage Fund with excellent articles about the history of the village and its people. This year has also seen a concerted effort to maintain an up to date digital presence including our website and social media platforms. We are pleased to see this developing and have many ideas to build on the solid foundation that we have now established.

The weekly pew sheet has been reinstated providing a much appreciated 'at a glance' summary of services, events and activities for the congregation.

The year has seen two stalwarts of SCAG retire and we would like to thank Martha and Freda for all their hard work and enthusiasm over the years, they were both very much appreciated and we wish them well and a well earned rest!

Finally a big thank you to everyone who has supported any of our events in any way at all, organising, advertising, attending, participating whatever role you played we are extremely grateful for your support and look forward to seeing you at our events over the next twelve months.

All Saints' Church Conservation & Community Heritage Project

The project has now been completed but we are still enjoying the legacies it has left in our church and the wider community. The story of the project has been shared in talks to the Thelwall History Group and Thelwall WI (Sept 2022 and Jan 2023 respectively). The Burial Ground Management System and work of the Memorials Group continue to provide helpful information to families and visitors via publicly accessible websites and enables us to share the stories of our War dead on school visits for Remembrance.

To mark the conclusion of this project, a Thanksgiving Service was held on 30th October 2022. This was an opportunity to view the conservation work posters and dip into some of the materials produced by our schoolchildren and volunteers on the various community projects.

The Thelwall History Group now plays a major role in disseminating our local and community heritage to a wider audience. THG's talks and walks and publications (Thelwall Railway Memories) have been well received. Tony Warburton (Chair) and others contributed with displays at events in 2022: Thelwall Rose Queen, the Jubilee Tea Party in the Parish Hall and Warrington History Day.

We were able to support Thelwall Junior School in the assessment of history teaching and learning by the Historical Society. They achieved the Silver Quality Mark. Some amazing exhibits representing inventions and events during the reign of Queen Elizabeth II were on display at the Jubilee Tea. Work continues with Chaigeley, Thelwall Infants and Juniors on Thelwall 1100 projects in 2023.

Mission Support

During the year we gave grant support to the following charitable organisations direct from church funds: Church Urban Fund; Papyrus; Prison Fellowship and Get Warrington Talking. We are also giving financial support to Christ Church, an adjacent parish to ours.

In addition the following funds were raised directly for the following.

The Christian Aid the door to door collection raised £660

Samaritan's Purse was supported through the donation of filled shoes boxes for Operation Christmas Child brought to our "Toy Service" in December.

SureStart was supported through the donation of wrapped gifts given at the Christmas "Toy Service" and taken to SureStart, Halton where the charity distributed them to their local family centres.

The Children's Society is supported with donations from our Christingle service. This amounted to £840.52 from our 2022 service and from carol singing at the local pubs.

MacMillan Cancer Fund – a coffee morning was held to raise funds.

Fairtrade Foundation

All Saints' is a fully registered Fairtrade church (our Fairtrade status was renewed in July 2020) and Fairtrade tea and coffee is used whenever refreshments are served. We hold a Fairtrade stall in church after the services every 1st and 3rd Sunday as well as on other ad hoc occasions, including at Thelwall's annual Rose Queen Festival.

The popular All Saints' Wine Tasting event in May 2022 again featured Fairtrade wines and we hold a very well supported Fairtrade Coffee Morning during Fairtrade Fortnight each year, drawing in around 70 people and raising funds for Transform Trade. Three church members are dedicated volunteers at Warrington's own Fairtrade shop, Fair 4 All.

Ecumenical relationships

All Saints is a member of Lymm and District Churches Together (LDCT).

We hold around 7/8 meetings a year. Last year we held our service at the Cross on Good Friday. We had our annual early rise at the Dam on Easter Sunday followed by bacon sandwiches at the Sanctuary Café. We had a Songs of Praise outside the Sanctuary Café during the Lymm Festival. In September we had Hugh Osgood to speak at the Lymm Community Centre. Each year we have our breakfast during the week of Christian Unity.

The Sanctuary Café is a Community Interest Company that began as an idea developed by CTLD and is supported by them. The café is really busy at present with lots of people coming for breakfasts/lunches/cake and our wonderful drinks. We have a great group of young people helping on a Saturday. We also have four youngsters coming for an hr each week to do their Duke of Edinburgh award. We have a great book shop selling books, gifts and lots of cards. Please come along and visit us. If anyone would like to come on a rota to help with washing up please email kathlmello@gmail.com.

The Stewardship Action Group (Action Group Chair Alison London)

We advise on matters referred to us by the PCC and seek to support the treasurer and church wardens. We also seek to encourage giving based on Biblical principles. Since the pandemic we have maintained contact by email in order to discuss stewardship issues and have met together in person after church services to talk and continue discussions. Documents are shared between group members. In this way we have avoided taking up an evening from those who are already very busy.

Encouraging Stewardship: Our membership are of considerable importance as they provide the majority of our funding and give valuable volunteer help, particularly with fund raising events. Those who have committed to regular giving by envelopes or standing order have continued to support us.

At the annual Stewardship service, in 2022 we highlighted the financial fall our finances had taken during the pandemic. We urged our church members to continue to give as generously as they were able, not just with monetary contributions but also with volunteering. Our stewardship secretary, Trish, is responsible for the weekly giving envelopes and is available to give more information on these. Details of the church bank account are available from myself or the treasurer for those who want to give by standing order or to make a one off donation.

Church Budget: A budget for the coming year was prepared and presented to the PCC for approval. The PCC have asked for a regular update on the way the budget is being met.

Maintenance: The group is responsible for the maintenance of the church yard and supports the church wardens in implementing the church maintenance plan.

"Friends"

This group was set up to accept donations from those who wish to support the maintenance of the church building and churchyard but may not support the church in any other way. There are currently 16 "Friends" one of whom is a life member. A significant donation will be made from the "Friends" funds towards the re-surfacing of the church car park.

FINANCIAL REVIEW (Treasurer)

The picture is mostly positive.

The church and parish hall are showing signs of recovery following the pandemic:

- Collections at services have increased, most likely due to people returning to services, and are back to pre-pandemic levels
- Users of the parish hall have increased so the hall has brought in more money.
- Our fund raising activities have been fruitful. Among others we've had the Queen's Jubilee Tea, the Laskey Farm Afternoon Tea, Male Voice Choir, and of course the Bonfire, which takes in most of the income from events.
- In the second half of the year, we've had the introduction of the Markets at the Parish hall, which have so far taken in around £2500

We have also improved the position on our outstanding liabilities. We have paid off a large portion of the outstanding balance on the Parish Share from 2021, and because we have been paying 100% of our Parish share since the start of 2022, we haven't accrued any more liabilities there.

We also have some new avenues for donation. With help from the diocese digital giving advisor we have set up electronic payments and the QR codes that you can see on the back of your service leaflets.

We had a card reader that Julia set up previously, and we have purchased several more, which were key in taking payments at the bonfire and other events.

However, there are some things we need to be aware of.

Planned giving has stayed about the same as last year, and is still down compared to pre-pandemic levels

As for everything else, costs are increasing across the board.

The parish share has increased. We continue to pay 100% of this, and I feel it is important that we do, but this does represent an increase in outgoings

Fortunately we are on a fixed tariff for our gas and electricity, and have been since January 2022, but this cost will eventually come back to us

Mike Brewer has been doing an excellent job managing the car park project and applying for grants to support this, but costs are increasing and the quotes Mike obtained earlier in the project have now gone up.

We are heavily reliant on our fund-raising events. Large amounts of our annual income are from fund-raising events, and it is important that we continue with them. However, we have to consider that, for example, the weather at the bonfire last year was very good; if that goes against us and this year we have a wet night, that could be a serious financial hit. The work that Philip, Frank and everyone else does is fantastic, but they can only do so much, and we need to reduce our reliance on this to ensure we have a stable future.

In what is hopefully a lighter note as a summary, the church and the parish hall are currently in a good position financially. Our liabilities are minimal, money does continue to come in and we are able to pay our parish share. If I have one message to take away, it is this: what we need to do as a community is to come together to reduce our risks going forward.

RESERVES POLICY

We now have four reserves policies agreed by PCC. These cover both the church and the Parish Hall. Firstly they set aside a sum of money to enable the church / Parish Hall to continue should income dwindle. Secondly, they reserve monies for larger projects

13. Allocated reserves policy for the Church

"The Treasurer maintains sufficient funds (agreed as £20,000) in an agreed Investment Fund that would allow the church to continue to function financially for a period of 12-18 months assuming unchanged receipts and expenditure."

14. Allocated reserves policy for the Parish Hall

"The Treasurer maintains sufficient funds (£15,000), that would allow the PCC of All Saints Thelwall to continue to manage the Parish Hall for a period of 18 months assuming unchanged receipts and expenditure."

15. Unallocated reserves policy for the Parish Hall

A sum of £10,000 should be made available by the PCC of All Saints Thelwall as unallocated reserves for project requirements of the Parish Hall, identified by the Parish Hall Management Committee and agreed by the PCC of All Saints Thelwall.

16. Unallocated reserves policy for the Church

A sum of £15,000 should be made available by the PCC of All Saints Thelwall as unallocated reserves for larger long-term projects identified as a result of the Quinquennial Inspection.

It was proposed and agreed that the allocated amounts and policies should be reviewed by PCC every 3 years with the next review taking place in May 2023.

The 200 Club acts as a working reserve for the Parish Hall.

INVESTMENT POLICY

We invest the allocated reserves for Church and Parish Hall in COIF funds, a low risk investment that, hopefully, will give a better return than a savings account. Since these funds are unlikely to be required at short notice, the risk is acceptable. The unallocated reserves for the Parish Hall are also in COIF funds, the remainder are in savings or current accounts.