

ST PETER'S CHURCH HERSHAM



**Annual Parochial Church Meeting
19th May 2024**

St Peter's Church Hersham - Annual Parochial Church Meeting 2024

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Introduction

I am pleased to report that 2023 was a time of both spiritual and numerical growth in the life of St Peter's church.

During the year, we continued to be blessed by a growing congregation and an increased appetite to deepen our spirituality and worship in St Peter's, which I describe in more detail in my Vicar's report.

Many thanks to the ministry team, the Church Wardens, Deputy Warden, the standing committee and PCC. Thanks also to our administrator, those who help to keep our church and our worshipping life in good order, the congregation, and the wider community for your continued support and encouragement. St Peter's is a great church to lead, because of each of you.

I am confident that the effort that everyone has put in to grow the church numerically and the enthusiasm to grow in discipleship will continue as we share our vision for 2024 and beyond later in the year.

² Devote yourselves to prayer, keeping alert in it with thanksgiving. ³ At the same time, pray for us as well, that God will open to us a door for the word, that we may declare the mystery of Christ, for which I am in prison, ⁴ so that I may reveal it clearly, as I should.

⁵ Conduct yourselves wisely toward outsiders, making the most of the time. ⁶ Let your speech always be gracious, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how you ought to answer everyone.

Colossians 4: 2-6

Jackie Richardson
Vicar

AGENDAS

Annual Meeting of Parishioners & Annual Parochial Church Meeting Sunday 19th May 2024; to be held in the church.

Annual meeting of Parishioners

1. Welcome and Prayers
 2. Appointment of Clerk
 3. Minutes of the meeting held on 21st May 2023
 4. Election of Churchwardens for 2024-2025
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Annual Parochial Church Meeting

1. Minutes of the meeting held on 21st May 2023
2. Reports that must be legally presented
 - I. Electoral Roll.
 - II. Report on the proceedings of the Parochial Church Council.
 - III. Care Team Report
 - IV. Share Team Report
 - V. Grow Team Report
 - VI. Report on the Fabric, Goods and Ornaments of the Church
(Churchwardens' Report)
 - VII. Deanery Synod
 - VIII. Safeguarding Report
 - IX. Financial statements for the year ended 31st December 2023
*(see separate report – Parochial Church Council's Report and Unaudited Accounts
for the year ended 31 December 2023)*
3. Elections and Appointments
 - 3.1. Members of the Parochial Church Council
 - 3.2. Appointment of Independent Examiner
 - 3.3. Deputy Churchwardens
4. Vicar's Report
5. Health and Safety Report
6. AOB

St Peter's Church Hersham
Minutes of Annual Parishioners' & Parochial Church Meeting
Sunday 21st May 2023
Held in Church

Annual Meeting of Parishioners

1. Welcome and Prayer

The Chairman, Jackie Richardson, welcomed everyone and opened the meeting with a prayer.

2. Appointment of Clerk.

Karen Richards was proposed by Jane Anderson to be the Clerk; this was seconded by Malcolm Reid and approved unanimously.

3. Minutes of the Meeting held on 29th May 2022

The minutes of the meeting held on 29th May 2022 were agreed and signed as a true record.

4. Election of Churchwardens for 2023-2024

Jackie thanked the churchwardens, Andrew Strong and Lynne Watson, both of whom are standing for re-election for a fifth year and fourth year respectively. Andrew was proposed by Gillian Coates and seconded by Katherine Ind, and Lynne Watson was proposed by Jane Anderson, seconded by Alisa (Lulu) Button. There being no other candidates, Andrew and Lynne were both re-appointed. Jackie extended her thanks for their commitment to this vital role, and there was a round of applause.

St Peter's Church Hersham
Minutes of Annual Parishioners' & Parochial Church Meeting
Sunday 21st May 2023
Held in Church

Annual Parochial Church Meeting

1. Minutes of the Meeting Held on Sunday 29th May 2022

The minutes of the Meeting held on 29th May, 2022 were agreed and signed, following one amendment in section 2. I Electoral Roll: "...62 out of the Parish" amended to "...52 out of the Parish"

2. Reports that must be Legally Presented

I. Electoral Roll

In Sarah Tourell's absence, KR presented the figures for the Electoral Roll which were as follows:

Number on the Electoral Roll in April 2022, 160

- 103 residents within the Parish and 57 out of the Parish.

Number on the Electoral Roll in April 2023, 165

- 104 residents in the Parish and 61 out of the Parish.

Jackie acknowledged the dedication and hard work Sarah Tourell put into this roll and thanks were extended.

II. Report on the Proceedings of the Parochial Church Council

There were no questions and Karen Richards was thanked for compiling the report.

III. Care Team Report

No questions were raised. Thanks were extended to the whole team for all its work.

IV. Share Team Report

No questions were raised and the team was thanked for all they have achieved this year.

V. Grow Team Report

No questions were raised and members of the team thanks for their contributions.

VI. Report on Fabric, Goods and Ornaments of the Church

Lynne Watson confirmed that the Quinquennial inspection has been undertaken and the written report is awaited.

VII. Deanery Synod

Thanks were extended to Lulu for compiling the report. Both she and Lynne Watson were thanked for the three years representing St Peter's Church, Hersham, on the Deanery Synod.

VIII. Safeguarding Report

Lynne was thanked for the continuing good work she does on Safeguarding for St Peter's.

IX. Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31st December 2022.

MR began by thanking Stephen Ind for his work on the accounts, Jen Dady for administering hall bookings, and David Gay for reclaiming Gift Aid.

MR summarized the figures for the year on a power-point graph noting that the giving element of income is increasing again following the pandemic. There will be a stewardship programme later in the year focusing on legacies, which have declined since the high amount received from this source in 2021. Hall income is recovering. Thanks were extended to Tony Skrzypecki and Sue Burke for all their work with Vauxmead, which provides a valuable income stream. Ministry expenditure has increased due to the employment of Katrina as curate. The Parish Share will not be increased this year. The diocese is funding LLM training. Team and Administration costs have increased, but will go down due to Rachel's Gaster-Woods' departure; MR requested all to pray for a replacement Children and Families' coordinator to be found. Church and vicar costs have increased slightly. We will run a deficit this year. Responsibility for the Foodbank was transferred to Walton Charities, with the concomitant transfer of £130,000.

MR concluded that whilst our reserves are being depleted, we are blessed compared to some churches who are struggling to pay their Parish share.

3. Elections and Appointments

3.1. Members of the Parochial Church Council

Re-appointed for a further 3-year term:

- Jane Anderson; proposed by Clare Warne and seconded by Andrew Strong
- Katherine Ind; proposed by Karen Richards and seconded by Lynne Watson
- Clare Warne; proposed by Jane Anderson and seconded by Lulu Button

In addition, Susan Mahon was elected to the PCC; proposed by Lulu Button and seconded by Margaret Hicks.

3.2. Deanery Synod Representatives

Lulu Button and Lynne Watson were thanked for all their work and input as Deanery Synod Representatives over the years.

Two new representatives were elected for a new 3-year term:

- Margaret Hicks; proposed by Martin Horsey and seconded by Gillian Coates
- Suzanne Barrett; proposed by Jane Anderson and seconded by Paul Adams

3.3. Appointment of Independent Examiner

Malcolm Reid proposed that Frances Wilde (of Warner Wilde Ltd) be reappointed as the Independent Examiner, which was unanimously agreed. Seconded by Tony Skrzypecki.

3.4. Deputy Churchwarden

Tony Skrzypecki was re-appointed as Deputy Church Warden, proposed by Jackie Richardson and seconded by Karen Richards, and thanked for all the work he does "behind the scenes".

4. Vicar's Report

Jackie began by thanking: the "fabulous" church wardens, Andrew Strong and Lynne Watson; deputy church warden Tony Skrzypecki; treasurer Malcom Reid and all who assist with the finances; PCC secretary Karen Richards. Lynne Watson was thanked again for all the work she does on safeguarding, and thanks were extended to the whole PCC team.

Jackie also acknowledged and thanked: Sarah Tourell, Katrina Jenkins and Deborah Locke; the occasional preachers; the pastoral assistants; Rob Stafford, Lynn Skrzypecka and the whole music team; Sunday School leaders; Breakfast Praise leaders and helpers; mission support team; bell ringers, health and safety people; coffee makers; flower arrangers; Vauxmead team; those who kept the toddler group going; the readers; servers; chalice assistants, and all who pray.

Thanks were also extended to all those who work behind the scenes to ensure the smooth day to day running of the church, the hall, and grounds: Andrew Strong; Margaret Hicks; Mark Hover; John Cramp; Martin and Dawn Howells; Heather Moxon; Lynne Watson and all who worked so hard in the churchyard and Garden of Remembrance.

Those standing down from the PCC at the end of their term; Julie Whing and Lorelie Staines, were thanked, as was Lulu Button, who was also a Deanery Synod representative for many years.

Apologies were extended to anyone not named, but whose contribution in whatever capacity, is very much appreciated.

Jackie then went on to mention some key highlights from her written report.

Attendance grew again during 2022, mostly due to the increasing number of families attending Breakfast Praise. The Alpha and Bible courses, prayers after services and the Prayer Group, have all contributed to our spiritual growth.

The churchyard project has really taken off, fostering engagement with the local community, and transforming the churchyard into a beautiful and well-kept space.

Jackie then spoke about her hopes for the future, under three headings.

Under Growing Church, she shared her vision for helping the 50 or so Breakfast Praise congregation to grow in faith, for example by offering an evening Alpha or prayer course for parents on zoom to avoid babysitting issues, and by coming together with other church members at particular services, such as the pet service.

Under Spiritual Growth, Jackie talked about setting up small groups following on from the success of the Alpha courses, and the positive experiences of those involved in the Leading Evangelism Hub.

Under Buildings and Churchyard, Jackie mentioned the forthcoming launch of a "Friends of St Peter's" scheme, the plan to redevelop the kitchen and toilet facilities at the back of church, and the desire to update the AV system to facilitate live streaming, which evidence show, improves attendance at those churches who offer it.

Concluding her talk, Jackie again thanked all for their part in growing the church numerically and spiritually over the year and stressed what a privilege it is to be the vicar of St Peter's in Hersham.

5. Health and Safety Report

There were no comments from those present and Mark Hover was thanked for all he does.

6. AOB

Thanks were extended to Jackie for such a successful year of growth at St Peter's Church and in the community.

The meeting closed with the Grace at 12:31

Agenda Item 2

Reports, which must legally be presented

- I. Electoral Roll.
- II. Report on the proceedings of the Parochial Church Council.
- III. Care Team Report
- IV. Share Team Report
- V. Grow Team Report
- VI. Report on the Fabric, Goods and Ornaments of the Church
(Churchwardens' Report)
- VII. Deanery Synod
- VIII. Safeguarding Report
- IX. Financial statements for the year ended 31st December 2022
(see separate report – Parochial Church Council's Report and Unaudited Accounts for the year ended 31 December 2022)

I. Report on the Electoral Roll

The number on the electoral roll in April 2024 was 145

Resident within the parish accounted for 84

Out of parish = 61

The number on the electoral roll in April 2023 was 165

Resident within the parish accounted for 104

Out of parish = 61

Sarah Tourell
Electoral Roll Officer
May 2024

II. Summary of the Proceedings of the Parochial Church Council

Overview

The PCC held seven scheduled meetings in 2023, including the short meeting following the APCM, which was held on 21st May.

Six members came to the end of their term in 2023. Of these, three were re-elected to the PCC at the APCM, one was elected to the Deanery Synod and two did not stand for re-election. Both Deanery Synod members came to the end of their terms this year, and a second person was elected to the Deanery Synod, who has previously served in several roles at St Peter's. One new member was elected, but subsequently stood down in November, to concentrate on other church activities. As of November 2023, the total number of members was 15 comprising: 7 lay members, 2 co-opted members and 6 ex-officio members.

Safeguarding continues to be given a high priority and is on the agenda at every meeting. The Safeguarding Dashboard is being maintained effectively, diligently and in a timely manner. The PCC is kept updated with any new information or documents requiring review and adoption, such as the Church of England's, "Promoting a Safer Church".

The PCC continued to review, revise and prioritise the Project List, in conjunction with the Church Development Plan, to ensure prudent use of diminishing funds, and to maintain financial vigilance of the accounts.

Highlights

- The PCC Tonight course was undertaken by all members over the six main PCC meetings held throughout the year.
- Negotiations were completed on the Women's Institute (WI) Hall, transferring ownership from the WI to the PCC.
- A very successful pancake event was held as part of "Love Hersham" and attended by Bishop Andrew.
- War Grave signage has been erected at each entry point to the church.
- The Friends of St Peter's was inaugurated.
- A well-attended Coronation event was held at the Vicarage.
- A new Children and Families' coordinator was employed after many months of prayer.

The smooth day to day running of the church and all that goes on "behind the scenes" relies on many volunteers giving their time and talents to the service of God. Their commitment and dedication was acknowledged with a Volunteers' Tea in the church hall, in November, and we give thanks for their continuing support.

Karen Richards
PCC Secretary

III. Care Team Report

During 2023 our Care Team continued to oversee the worshipping and pastoral life of our congregation at St Peter's and the wider community. Thank you to all who generously give their time and their talents to ensure that we keep Jesus' command to Love the Lord our God and love each other.

Worship

The Worship Team met four times to review and plan services, exploring new ideas and music. In January we revisited the constitution of the group and agreed to include those with an active role in shaping worship: the clergy team, music leaders, an 8am representative and lay leaders involved in discipleship. Thank you to Sue Gray and Sylvia Frances who stepped down from the team at this time.

Highlights of the year included the reintroduction of Rob Stafford's sung Gloria, Sanctus and Angus Dei into our services. The Tenebrae service in April, where the story of Christ's Passion is told through readings and music, was well attended with over 75 people, including a number from other local churches. For the first time, our Palm Sunday service started on Hersham Green before we walked to church, enabling us to show our faith in the community. The Coronation of HRH Charles III in May was marked by a service, which included a special liturgy, and a celebration in the vicarage afterwards. Members of all congregations, including Breakfast Praise, were able to come together to mark the occasion.

A four-part Sermon Series based on The Apostles Creed took place in June, ending on our Patronal Festival. It gave us time to think more deeply about the creed we say every week and incorporated learning a sung version, Hillsong's "This I believe," which is now sung regularly during services on the first Sunday of the month.

This year's summer music workshop featured music from Karl Jenkins' "The Armed Man." It was our most successful year to date in attracting singers from outside the church to join us. Three pieces of the powerful, uplifting work were sung at a service in September. Since October God and Friends have chosen the last hymn, linking it with what they have been learning. This allows them to teach us all Makaton, (a communication tool that includes a signing system) and makes the children feel included in the service and an important part of our church family.

Following on from the Leading Evangelism Learning Hub, we have been encouraged to think about our own faith journeys and discuss questions during the service. This has enabled us to grow a faith-sharing culture and give us courage to talk about and share our faith outside church.

The last three months of the year saw the annual Memorial and Remembrance services. Christmas services had increased attendance with a schedule of services suitable for all ages.

We continue to keep the AV system on our agenda as we explore ways to find a solution that meets our needs.

Prayer

We thank all those who lead the intercessions during church and those who meet to pray for the needs of our church and others.

Our Sunday Morning Prayer Ministry took a break during the summer, with the team, and others, considering different ways of approaching this essential means of serving the community. The hope was that more volunteers would come forward to populate the rota, meaning that Safeguarding considerations could be honoured whilst the "workload" could be spread more widely. Following a very successful evening of exploration, during which we discussed approaches to prayer and how and where we pray as a team, regular Prayer Ministry was re-launched in September, with Katrina Jenkins taking the lead. With an enlarged rota, and encouragement to the congregation to come and join in, the Ministry has continued, albeit quietly.

Key to the success and purpose of the Ministry is its visibility, so, whilst still gathering in the Lady Chapel, the team now remains in view of the congregation. Another good practice that has been adopted is that the team's whole conversation within the Ministry time is wrapped in an envelope of prayer, rather than there being a period of talking together before prayer is instigated. This has meant that the time spent together is more focussed and intentional. The team would love to see more members of the congregation (those not on the regular rota) also join in. All are welcome. A vote of thanks to Sue Gray who led the Prayer Ministry group until July and Katrina Jenkins, who took over in September.

Also, during 2023 Circle of Prayer met regularly on the last Monday of the month in the WI Hall, led by Katherine Ind. This small group of usually five, spends time discussing and reflecting on the stimulus material, followed by a period of silent prayer. Over the year they have used poems by RS Thomas; the Daily Examen of St Ignatius of Loyola; Lent reflections; an exercise in visualisation of the healing of the paralytic man; a desert father's version of the Lord's Prayer; reflections on hymns and religious writings; and a Celtic liturgy for peace. They would be pleased to have others join them for this peaceful, prayerful afternoon.

Pastoral Care

The pastoral team continues to provide pastoral care for those members of our community who have been bereaved or are suffering from illness or have any particular needs. As a team we hold regular zoom meetings, which include overseeing the home communion

arrangements, and it is noticeable that the number of people requesting home communion has increased over the year. During the year we held the annual memorial service for those who had lost loved ones during the year, and this was very well received and attended. We also arranged a very successful afternoon tea for those who found it harder to get out and meet others, and we hope to make this a regular event in the future.

Bells

Throughout the year the bells have been rung for the 10am communion, on the Tuesday 7.45 practice night and for weddings, when required. They were also rung for the King's Coronation. The team has lost several ringers recently and can only ring all eight bells when there are visiting ringers, often they can only ring four or five. The bell ringers would welcome new recruits to join them. Tower bell ringing is a service to the Church but also a fascinating hobby for young and old, male or female.

Flowers

Everyone appreciates the floral displays in church through the year and especially on special occasions such as Easter, Patronal, Harvest and Christmas. Young and older members display their floral skills and new arrangers are always welcome. Thank you to Margaret Hicks and all our talented volunteers.

The Deanery Report will be a separate report.

We would like to thank everyone who contributes to the rich worship and pastoral care of our church, including those who lead services, welcome people, write intercessions, read the Bible, distribute communion, both at church and to the housebound, those who contribute to the musical life of the church and those who ensure our church looks its best for all.

We are excited to see what 2024 brings.

Jackie Richardson

IV. Share Team Report

The groups within the Share Team develop relationships with communities beyond St Peter's. We meet people where they are and share God's love through our care, commitment, and prayer.

Women's Breakfasts

Following their launch last year, the Women's Breakfasts have continued into 2023, with four having been held, in February, May, August and October. As in 2022, the average attendance was 30+ women, some of these being new faces, of which one or two have gone on to become members of the worshipping community. Since it is not always the same 30 or so each time, the actual number of attendees is nearer 50.

Thanks must be extended to the dedicated band of volunteers which makes sure the Breakfasts happen: Debbie Bradley, Sue Burke, Lulu Button, Linda Convery, Sara Holland, Sue Mahon, Vicki Routh, Trish Stone and Clare Warne.

The Women's Breakfasts were always intended as legacy events, that would continue after Katrina Jenkins's curacy came to an end, so it is with great pleasure that the team can say that, from 2024, the Breakfasts will be managed by Sue Mahon, who has very graciously agreed to take over from Katrina.

Hersham Churches Together

The World Day of Prayer service organised by the women of Taiwan was held at Whiteley Village this year. St Peter's and Hersham Baptist Church (HBC) coordinated a number of activities for Love Hersham, including afternoon tea, play sessions, dog walking, flower arranging and helping with the churchyard project. All three churches participated in the Good Friday Walk of Witness, finishing with hot cross buns provided by St Peter's. Katrina led the Remembrance Service in the Memorial Garden, Paul Fellows (HBC) gave the talk and Jackie led the prayers. Members from HBC and Guides, Brownies and Rainbows joined the congregation at St Peter's for a short service beforehand. The Christmas services at all three churches were advertised on the Hersham Together website.

Mission Partners

The Mission Support Team met by Zoom five times this year and disbursed £2700 to Hersham Youth Trust, £2700 to Mission Aviation Fellowship and £5400 to Casa Reom. We made no payment this year to the Peace and Hope Trust, as Casa Reom's building programme urgently needs extra funds. Church collections also raised further funds for Elmbridge CAN, Hersham Youth Trust, Christian Aid and Casa Reom. We also helped build and dismantle the Mission Aviation Fellowship's aircraft on their hands-on visits to Burhill

and Bell Farm schools and to the church: these visits were part of MAF's high-impact presentations about their work in developing countries.

Publicity

Sarah Tourell updates the Facebook and X pages and produces all publicity material, both printed and social media, for the congregation and the wider community. She has continued to update and maintain the Churchsuite database to ensure the ministry team has accurate data for their use. Sue Burke updates the website regularly. They would really welcome a Publicity Officer to head up the team.

St Peter's Fellowship

The Fellowship is for all people in the community, men and women, young and old. We try to provide an interesting afternoon with speakers and presentations on a wide variety of subjects. We had speakers from charities, and speakers on subjects including hats, Europe in Space, the plight of the Bumblebee, the history of Brooklands, and Ernest Shackleton's 1914-16 Antarctic expedition. Occasionally we entertain ourselves with a Quiz or listen to readings of our favourite poems. Members are always welcome to give a talk and in 2023 Viv Guichard told us about the Amish and their Quilting. We were also pleased to hear Katrina, our curate, reading some of her favourite poems. We enjoy music afternoons and we had entertainment from Peter Toth on the piano, Charlie and Ronnie with 60s - 80s music and pupils from the Yehudi Menuhin school. In the Spring we had two very popular tea/coffee cake afternoons as part of the 'Love Hersham' initiative. Up to the Autumn, Fellowship had always been in the church building but from September we have been in the WI hall which we all love. It is a smaller building so it is easier to hear and it is warmer and more comfortable. The kitchen is also more suitable. We finished off the year in December with Christmas lunch in the Church Hall. We were blessed to have our Vicar in attendance and all enjoyed themselves. We thank our Parish Secretary, Sarah Tourell, for promoting Fellowship on social media and in the pew sheet. We also thank Jen Dady for her help with the booking of the WI Hall as we moved in. Attendance at the Fellowship has been between 20 – 27 persons.

Schools and Uniformed Groups

We continue to have a strong relationship with both our local primary schools. Jackie and other members of the ministry team take weekly online assemblies and monthly face to face assemblies in Bell Farm and fortnightly face to face assemblies in Burhill. We also hold Christmas, Easter, Harvest and End of Year services at St Peter's for the schools and we offer support and help with the RE curriculum on an ad hoc basis. In 2023 Sarah Dunn also visited Burhill and talked to the children about being a Christian and she led a creative prayer session on prayers for peace at Remembrance. With the help of our mission support team, we also managed to facilitate a visit by Mission Aviation Fellowship, who took a small aeroplane into the playground of each of the primary schools and led several assemblies to

explain the amazing work they do. We look forward to new opportunities to support the staff and share our faith with the children in 2024.

The local Cub Scouts visited St Peter's for a tour of the church and the Bell Tower and the Brownies and Rainbows joined us for various activities including re-wilding the churchyard, bat spotting in the churchyard and church tours. The Rainbows also helped make our Christingles and the Guides, Brownies and Rainbows joined us for our Remembrance Service and our Christingle Service. It was encouraging to see the increasing numbers of young people from our uniformed groups joining us for these services.

Friends of St Peter's Hersham

During the year, the PCC established Friends of St Peter's Hersham to promote projects relating to the more practical needs of St Peter's Church. It was hoped that projects undertaken by The Friends would appeal to people from within the Church Family and beyond in the wider community. Initial projects included repairing the damaged Victorian Mural in the Church, planting a wildflower meadow in the Churchyard and expanding the 'Adopt a Grave' initiative. Since its inception, over a hundred people have signed up as members, sufficient money has been raised to cover an initial survey of the damage to the mural, the Borough Council has been consulted about the wilding of part of the Churchyard next Spring and many more graves have been 'adopted' by local residents. Whilst the team charged with getting things up and running is small, those involved have worked extremely hard to ensure that much positive progress has been made in a short space of time.

Katherine Ind

V. Grow Team Report

Having spent the latter part of 2022 and the early months of 2023 with no Children and Families' Coordinator, it was a delight to welcome Sarah Dunn into the role during the summer, with her formal start date being in September. Under her enthusiastic and infectious expertise this area of work has expanded both in number of attendees and in Christian depth.

Sunday School – now called God and Friends – has regular attendance by a number of children, including a few new ones, and takes place in the WI Hall (which makes getting back to church for the end of the communion service much easier). During the year they have made good use of the Church Mice that have been knitted for them by members of the St Peter's Family, with a new Mouse Nativity set proving very popular.

Breakfast Praise continues to grow, with several new families attending. It was recognised that this congregation needed more time, not for worship but to grow their sense of community and get to know each other better. Following consultation with the congregation of the 10:00am service, it was agreed that, from 2024, the start time of that service would move to 10.30am, allowing more time for the Breakfast Praise congregation after their service. This decision was welcomed, and we look forward to the opportunities that it will offer. The addition of a separate story time for older children attending was trialed, and proved popular, but providing the extra staffing this initiative required was difficult. It was further appreciated that God and Friends and/or regular attendance at the first Sunday's All-Age service would be a more appropriate space for these older children; they and their families have been encouraged to consider this.

Pre-School Praise, a weekday initiative replacing Morning Stars, was inaugurated in September, with a regular Thursday morning slot. Providing a space for those with preschool children from newborn to 4-year-olds, the morning follows a pattern of singing and signing worship songs, hearing a Bible story, and praying, closing with an opportunity to play together and enjoy a bubble disco. Tea, coffee, and cake are provided by a team of volunteers. Numbers have grown over the few months that the group has been going, and it is greatly appreciated by all who attend, with one mum describing it as “a real treat” to have someone else make her a cup of tea and feed her some lovely cake.

All our children's groups have been learning new worship songs with Makaton signs, as well as learning the signs for old favourites.

Following requests from people who visit our garden of Remembrance, the child (and adult) friendly prayer station has been re-instated, giving visitors the opportunity to physically engage with prayer as they remember their loved ones.

There continues to be a steady core of young people attending TAG and contributing to the life of the church by serving at morning services. Once a month, we've regularly met during term time for time of evening prayer then for fun, food and fellowship. These evenings have mostly been spent chatting and playing indoor or board games, supporting one another and sharing news. Although the youth-led Sunday evening service has been running through the

summer and autumn terms, the weekly commitment was tricky for the young people, so 2024 will see a trial of Evening Prayer on only TAG evenings (the second Sunday of the month). Many of the young people were involved in the Nativity service on 24th December, leading and performing with energy and enthusiasm, despite the strong winds of Storm Pia.

Following last year's introduction of admittance of young people to communion, we were delighted to present a further two candidates in 2023. They and their families attended the preparation sessions and were, as in 2022, admitted during the 10.00am service on the day we celebrated our Patronal Festival.

There have been 12 baptisms from 10 different families in 2023, reduced from the numbers of 2022 since the Covid induced backlog of baptisms has been largely caught up with. Of these, one family was already actively engaged in Breakfast Praise and a further four families began coming, with eight children between them. It is a joy to see this growth in the St Peter's family.

Christian Development and Discipleship

Building on the work done during 2023, further Alpha courses were run. The spring term one was in-person and followed the interspersed video/conversation option, since the group was smaller. The autumn term course took place over Zoom and also used the smaller group version of videos; the Zoom course was primarily for Breakfast Praise families.

After 2022's introduction of further biblical study, a course on Romans, a study of the film *The Way*, and a deeper exploration of the summer's sermon series on the Creed all filled the Bible Study Group's time. Following consideration of the example shared by the Diocesan led Small Groups workshop, the Study Group and the vicar agreed to develop this initiative. A short pilot was conducted in late 2023, which will lead to the establishment of Home Groups, adopting the Swedish Method of Bible study, in 2024.

Intergenerational (established congregation)

Our plan to continue being intentionally intergenerational continued throughout 2023. Once again, the Church Family was invited to help decorate the building for Easter and Harvest, and Christingle preparation was a hive of intergenerational activity.

Our major events in the year were our Light Party on 29 October and our visit to the Wintershall Nativity on 18 December. The Light Party saw a service in church, where congregational members of all ages were able to join both the worship and activities. It began and ended with worship and, in the middle, attendees of all ages circulated around four activities based around the theme of Jesus as Light of the World. Activities included bubble fun, drama, prayer and craft and designing posters. After the service, we moved across to the vicarage garden for hotdogs and fireworks. The Wintershall Nativity was attended by 28 people ranging in age from 4 to 84; happily we were largely able to stay together throughout the evening, so a truly corporate time was had.

Summing Up

The past year has provided the St Peter's Grow Team with challenges, joys and encouragement, most particularly as we welcomed Sarah Dunn to the Ministry Team. Thanks must go to the people, both paid and volunteer, who stepped up during the vacancy filled by Sarah Dunn to ensure that our Children and Families work did not grind completely to a stop. We are grateful too that they, with a number of new volunteers, continue to share their time and expertise to make all of the above happen. We look forward together to a 2024 of learning and fun, as we continue to pray, discern and listen to needs and suggestions that arise from meeting together on what we, as a Team, can offer to help the St Peter's family grow its faith in Christ.

Katrina Jenkins

VI. Report on the Fabric, Goods and Ornaments of the Church

1) General

- a) Mark Hover did great work not only as the Fabric Officer but also as the Health and Safety Officer. He organised various inspections and servicing visits for a variety of services across all the buildings. We are very grateful to him for his hard work.
- b) The Health and Safety policy is available to read both at the Parish Office and on the website.

2) The Church

- a) Heating
The boiler continued to work well during the year, but there were radiator leaks. These were fixed, and it had been hoped to replace the troublesome valves, however the engineers we engaged felt that this was a near impossible task. Consequently, future leaks may well result in the whole pipework system having to be replaced which would be a great expense.
- b) Quinquennial inspection
 - i) This inspection was carried out in March 2023 and the report followed 3 months later. The report is very thorough though essentially the church is in relatively good condition. However, some roof repairs are relatively urgent. A faculty and quotes have been obtained, and we are currently waiting for a grant application to be approved so that the repairs can be progressed.
 - ii) There were a number of minor issues in the church that a team of volunteers addressed in the autumn, and our thanks goes out to those involved.
- c) Windows
A broken stain glass window was repaired, and a matching piece was created by a specialist.
- d) Column
Some damage was sustained by a stone column in the north aisle, and this has been repaired by a stone mason.

3) Energy

Energy costs continue to be very high.

4) The Churchyard

- i) Progress in the Churchyard has been very satisfactory this year. We have established a very good working relationship with Elmbridge Borough Council and

are constantly in communication with those in the Council Offices who have responsibility for the Churchyard. This relationship is proving most beneficial to improving the appearance of the Churchyard.

- ii) Our volunteers have worked through the summer to keep things neat and tidy and regular strimming by the Council has made a noticeable improvement. Perhaps the biggest challenge this year was to ensure that the plants in the Garden of Remembrance survived the extreme weather resulting in volunteers watering at least twice a day during the extreme heat. We were joined this year by a dedicated group of D of E students who tackled a lot of the excess growth in neglected graves with persistence and care.
- iii) Nesting boxes were added in the Churchyard to provide shelter for both big and small birds and a birdbath was repositioned to cater for them as well.
- iv) Finally, our 'Adopt a Grave' initiative allowed local residents and interested parishioners to commit to the care of one or more graves on an ongoing basis and this has proved a very helpful way of sharing the task of maintenance going forward.
- v) We are extremely grateful to all who have offered their time and support and hope they have found being involved a rewarding experience. Their contributions have provided a tranquil and restful place for people to go and find peace and comfort.

5) The Church Hall

a) Projects

Whilst there were projects to replace flooring in the kitchen and office area, and windows in that area, these did not take place because of lack of funds. The same applied to a major clean and resurface of the floor in the main hall.

b) Repairs and maintenance

- i) Gutters were cleaned and repairs commissioned.
- ii) The door knob disappeared and was replaced!
- iii) Taps were replaced and other plumbing issues resolved.

c) OPM

The oak tree at the front of the hall was treated for Oak Processional Moth (OPM)

6) St Peter's Lodge

Some necessary guttering repairs were carried out during the year.

7) Vauxmead

- i) The church is very grateful to the members of the Vauxmead committee who work hard to maintain this beautiful green space. They continue to maintain the site, including its mature oak and other protected trees, and invest in upgrading the site subject to the needs of its users and available funds. The open space is used for sports, games and community events. The buildings are let to the Burwood Preschool, the Foodbank, and the Guides also rent the land for their building.
- ii) Last year, an application was made to the Charity Commissioners to confirm the charitable status of Vauxmead and to bring its stated aims and powers up to date. This application was approved by the Guildford Diocese and the Charity Commissioners and, following a further application, the Vauxmead Trust is now treated as a linked charity to the PCC and its financial results reported within this report.

8) WI Hall

There were a number of small projects undertaken to carry out work highlighted in the survey reports obtained in 2022.

9) Goods and Ornaments

On 23rd January 2024 Lynne Watson and Andrew Strong checked the Church Property Log Book and NADFAS book which constitutes our inventory.

Generally the property was found and in good order.

There were a number of items which we were unable to locate, and we suspect that has been the case for some time, namely:

NADFAS number 518, 520 Old photographs

NADFAS numbers 528 A & B Bellboards

We discovered that the Bellboards were only held by our church for one year.

Unless the old photographs are found in the next few months we will mark them lost in the log book.

The log book was noted and a photograph provided of the recently acquired contactless cash machine.

*Lynne Watson and Andrew Strong – Churchwardens
Tony Skrzypecki - Deputy Churchwarden*

VII. Deanery Synod Report

Deanery Synod is part of the system of governance for the Church of England. It meets to consider, discuss and make decisions about the life of the Church, representing parishes in the deanery. Members include all parish incumbents, clergy who hold a licence and elected parish representatives. Lulu Button and Lynne Watson have been our parish representatives for over 20 and 15 years respectively. They stood down in May and we thank them for their many years of service and commitment.

The first of the 2023 Deanery Synod meetings took place in March and it was Lulu Button's last as St Peter's rep. Ray Lee, Director of Strategic Planning at Elmbridge Borough Council (EBC) spoke about how his budget supports a wide variety of work within the community. He explained that his priority was to ask the question "what are the needs of the community?" as opposed to "what does the community want?" He talked about how he could spend his budget more fairly on the various different activities the council supports e.g. community centres, youth clubs, toddler groups and libraries. Ray commented that EBC wants to support people within the community but noted that the numbers volunteering to help with programmes is down post Covid. After considering who could help deliver the services within the community, he decided to encourage churches, synagogues and other organisations, to work with EBC. For example, St Peter's West Molesey, where the council gives the church a community space at a nominal rent and in return they run toddler groups, youth clubs, warm hubs, groups for the elderly and when necessary, the council can still hold clinics, therapy sessions and other sessions. St Peter's also run the night shelter, a food bank and have a community support worker. It works extremely well as it both gives the church a significant presence and profile within the community, as well as ensuring the council target groups are served.

Suzanne Barrett and Margaret Hicks were elected to Deanery Synod in May and attended their first meeting in June. Revd. Richard Lloyd, head of the Diocesan Mission Enabler Team, spoke about the Parish Needs Process (PNP). He explained how it has been modified, as the deanery was about to start the next iteration. The PNP supports parishes as they listen to God and identify their top priorities for mission and growth, which will form the heart of their Church Development Plan. Richard also spoke about how small groups (or home groups) can be effective in growing churches in discipleship. We learnt how small groups can impact the whole church ministry, as gathering together helps everyone to grow together in faith. We explored the Swedish Bible study method that begins with a time of shared fellowship over a meal. A biblical passage is then explored using questions that prompt discussion, helping people to discover truth for themselves and relate it to their everyday life. We have used this model successfully for the basis of our home groups at St Peter's.

In October, David Senior from the Diocesan Enabler Team talked to us about stewardship and evangelism. He stressed the importance of preaching about stewardship as part of an annual stewardship, ideally biannual, campaign. He stressed that people are motivated to give more to the church if they understand the impact of their giving. Giving and generosity are at heart of gospel, with 2300 verses referring to it. Jesus spoke frequently about wealth and possessions, and we were left with the message to “trust God and try giving.” We also had an update on a new diocesan youth strategy, which aims to create a programme to support young people who want to explore faith. The project has received funding from the Church of England and is planning to recruit a youth ministry team that will set up hubs, including one at Esher High School. This will enable them to run youth events locally, train volunteer youth leaders and help to create a church that welcomes and empowers young people.

Suzanne Barrett and Margaret Hicks – Deanery Synod Representatives

VIII. Safeguarding Report

Since the Church of England introduced The Safeguarding Dashboard, we at St Peter's have worked hard to ensure that what we do with regards to Safeguarding complies with the various components which make up the Dashboard.

Level One focuses on ensuring the Church complies with all aspects of the programme designed to ensure Safer Foundations have been laid within the Safeguarding procedures we follow at St Peter's.

This section covers policies and action plans, procedures and safeguarding roles, and includes a strong focus on appropriate training for all involved. We have also covered the importance of displaying informative and appropriate Safeguarding Information wherever possible. The final section of this level considers how Safeguarding is reviewed and reported within St Peter's.

Level Two focuses on ensuring the safety of Church activities from the perspective of young people and vulnerable adults. Here we have produced policies and an action plan for instances where an ex-offender volunteers their services. We have also agreed on a list of Church Activities that St Peter's is committed to provide. Within this brief, attention is always given to PCC authorisation of each activity, together with the provision of an appropriate risk assessment for the activity and a check that the activity has the correct and appropriate insurance cover. Close attention is continually paid to ensure that any appointments, whether paid or voluntary, are made in accordance with the Safer Recruitment Guidelines. Records are continually scrutinised to ensure that all necessary DBS checks have been carried out and that the appropriate safeguarding training for each person has been successfully undertaken.

I would like to record my appreciation for all the support and assistance I have received during the past year.

Lynne Watson – Safeguarding Officer

Vicar's Report

⁴⁴ All who believed were together and had all things in common; ⁴⁵ they would sell their possessions and goods and distribute the proceeds to all, as any had need. ⁴⁶ Day by day, as they spent much time together in the temple, they broke bread at home and ate their food with glad and generous hearts, ⁴⁷ praising God and having the goodwill of all the people. And day by day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved.

(Acts 2: 44-47)

It is useful to look at the wider attendance trends in the Church of England when evaluating 2023 in St Peter's church.

Last year, the Church of England published a report on church attendance trends. The report looked at the national October count figures (attendance on Sundays during the month of October) from 5 dioceses nationally (including Guildford) pre-COVID and post-COVID. It concludes that attendance has recovered since 2020, but it is still nowhere near 2019 figures. The national report states that adult Sunday attendance is still down by 21% since 2019 and children's attendance is down by a whopping 29%.

To compare, in 2019, over a 4-week October period, 378 adults and 69 children attended Sunday services at St Peter's. Whereas, in 2023 we had 489 adults and 102 children.

Even without the backdrop of the national decline, this would be quite an achievement and it is down to the hard work and commitment of our ministry team and volunteers. So, I would like to start with a huge thank you to everyone who contributed to the life and ministry of St Peter's in 2023.

It would be impossible to comment on every activity or service that happened at St Peter's, so I will simply give you a flavour of the year by picking a few highlights.

Highlights in our ministry and mission as we grew in discipleship together include ...

In 2023 a group of people from St Peter's joined a regular Evangelism Hub with other churches in the diocese and CPAS, which we launched by sharing our own faith journeys with the congregation to encourage our congregation to grow in confidence and share our own faith stories.

We launched a new home group, using the simple Swedish Bible study method, where members meet fortnightly to share a simple meal and study the bible together, and the monthly prayer group continued to share new ways of praying.

Our Easter services and our Christmas services were very well attended by the whole community, and all enjoyed a wide variety of services, from the beautiful and moving Tenebrae service to a joyful Sunrise service and family communion during Easter week, and from nine lessons and carols and Midnight Mass to the Christingle, Nativity and Crib services over the Christmas period. Thanks in particular go to the music group who worked hard to produce some beautiful music and for the work they put into the summer workshop.

And to Deborah Lock and our youth and their families who rehearsed in the cold December weather for our very popular Nativity (although as normal the donkey was the star of the show!)

Another highlight was the re-introduction of the very popular 'Music to Calm the Soul' evenings on the last Sunday of the month, run by Sarah Tourell.

Thanks to the pastoral team we also re-started our afternoon teas for the housebound of our community, which had been paused since COVID. These were greatly appreciated by those who attended.

Also, during 2023 Sara Holland was accepted and began training to be a Licenced Lay minister.

Highlights in our intergenerational worship and fellowship include ...

Our Youth group started an intergenerational evening prayer service at 5 pm before they met for their TAG youth sessions.

Other highlights of 2023 include recruiting Sarah Dunn, our children and families minister, who along with Deborah Lock and the team of volunteers has brought a fresh enthusiasm for our Sunday worship amongst younger members of our congregation. During 2023 Sarah also launched a weekly Pre-School Praise session for under 5's and their carers, with praise and signing and even a bubble disco on Thursday mornings. Sarah also led prayers for peace during Remembrance in a local primary school. In October Deborah and Sarah led a light service, followed by hot dogs and fireworks at the vicarage, which was enjoyed by all ages.

In October Sarah opened up the church as a space for bereaved parents during baby loss awareness week. This was a very emotional evening, but greatly appreciated by many who attended.

Highlights in reaching out to our community include ...

Working with our mission partner MAF we were able to facilitate a visit by the MAF team to each of our primary schools during 2023. The children learnt of the essential work that MAF do in isolated communities and each child in both schools was able to go into the light aircraft they brought along.

During November, the ministry team put on an afternoon tea for all volunteers, both from the church community and the community, to recognise all the work that is put in behind the scenes to make St Peter's the welcoming place it is.

Other highlights of the year were some great Love Hersham events during Lent, including a pancake throwing competition that Bishop Andrew joined us for, coming joint 2nd in the adult throwing competition! This was organised and run by the St Peter's men's group, who did a

great job providing pancakes for all who attended. And our popular women's breakfast continued, made possible by Katrina and the team of volunteers.

Our Churchyard project continued to reach out to the local community and church members thanks to Lynne Watson and her team of gardeners.

Finally, we began the year with the transfer of the deeds of ownership of the WI hall to St Peter's and the deeds of Vauxmead were updated to bring them in line with the charity's objectives. The WI hall provides a welcoming and comfortable space for our God and Friends Sunday school, and a more comfortable space for PCC meetings, and both these venues give us greater opportunity to reach out to our community. Many thanks to Tony Skrzypecki and the Vauxmead committee for all the work that was involved to make this happen.

I am confident that during 2024 we will continue to grow in faith, in spiritual depth and in number as a community and I give thanks to all who play a part in the life of St Peter's.

My special thanks go to...

The Wardens, Deputy Warden, Treasurer, PCC Secretary and the PCC, who continue to be an asset to St Peter's.

To all in our ministry team and our parish administrator.

To the occasional preachers.

The music team.

The pastoral assistants.

All those who work behind the scenes. To Mark Hover for his work on health and safety, the fabulous cleaners, coffee makers, talented flower arrangers and bell ringers and the hard-working Vauxmead team and Jen Dady, who manages our hall hires and hiring for Vauxmead.

Also, those who play a part in the services. The readers, servers, chalice assistants, and those who pray both during the service and after.

It takes an army of volunteers to play their part to keep our ministry thriving and my grateful thanks to all who contribute.

Jackie Richardson, Vicar

April 2024