



ST PETER'S
ST ALBANS

Yearbook 2022

Contents

Trustees Annual Report p2

Ministry and Worship p4

Children and Youth p6

Church Building p7

St Peter's Community p8

Mission and Outreach p10

PCC Secretary's Report p10

ST PETER'S CHURCH ST ALBANS

Our values

- Everyone is included
- Loving and generous service is celebrated
- Faith is nurtured and developed
- Everyone is inspired to reach their God-given potential.



Trustees' Annual Report

For year ending 31 December 2022

Background

During 2022 we were able to restart many activities that had stopped or been run in a different way due to the previous covid restrictions. One highlight was our Christmas services which we held without people needing to pre-register and without social distancing. Bookings in the church and Octagon increased as external groups and hirers resumed their events. We also held an increased number of weddings and baptisms which took place without restrictions.

The PCC held 2 away mornings to review the Mission Action Plan (MAP) which was previously adopted by the PCC in February 2019. This work will be completed early in 2023 and outlines future plans and priorities for developing activities that express our Vision for Mission and Ministry strategy. Following the impact of covid and resulting changes this is a key time to review our future direction. We continued to implement many of our strategic objectives during 2022 and these are recorded in our annual review of church life, the 2022 Yearbook. The Mission Action Plan annual update was presented at the Annual Parochial Church Meeting on 3 April 2022.

A summary of key achievements and news follows.

Ministry and Worship

During 2022 we were able to hold our three Sunday services in church each week. We have continued to live stream our 10am service enabling people who are not able to come to church to watch this. The services are also available to watch at a later date. During the summer we held our 10am service outside when the weather allowed. Coffee after the 10am service is served in church rather than the Octagon which has resulted in more people staying to socialise after the service. Morning prayer has continued every weekday morning on Zoom and provides companionship as well as worship. By holding it online more people have been able to regularly attend and we plan to continue with this. At Christmas we held a number of community events including school carol services and visits from some of our local schools. We hosted a fundraising carol service for Rennie Grove Hospice Care in early December. We held two crib services on Christmas Eve and two carol services (one on 18 December and one on Christmas Eve). All our Christmas services were well attended. On 17 December we took part in the Live Nativity Trail in conjunction with the Cathedral and other local churches. This was very well attended and we are planning to repeat it for Christmas 2023.

Our Associate Priest, Liz Guest has set up new groups for children including Sunday@7 which runs once a month. Junior church usually runs twice a month and the number of children attending has increased. Attendance at our weekday morning Baby and Toddler groups has also increased and Liz ran two successful holiday club mornings in August.

We are very lucky to have high quality music during our 10am services led by our Director of music Nick Robinson. Our choirs sing at all 10am and Evensong services and our orchestra play once a month for the All Age services. We are grateful to everyone who contributes to this.

Our pastoral team have continued to offer support to members of our community. The strong support networks built during the pandemic have helped facilitate this and strengthen our networks. We were able to hold weddings without any restrictions and during 2022 10 couples were married at St Peter's and there were 2 wedding blessings. We also conducted 22 baptisms and had pastoral contact with a further 24 families through conducting funerals or burials of ashes.

St Peter's Community

We have held several social and community events during the year. Including Tea on Tuesday which is regularly attended by 35-40 people, a parish BBQ, and social events for Shrove Tuesday, Bonfire Night and Christmas. Our Wednesday lunchtime concerts ran during term time throughout the year and we were able to offer refreshments and a chance to socialise afterwards in the Octagon.

We have tried to keep the church open as much as possible to allow people to visit for private prayer, reflection or to talk to a member of staff or the ministry team. In December we joined the Warm Spaces initiative to offer people a space to come to keep warm as heating costs increased.

Wider church links

St Peter's maintains its civic links with the city and the District Council. We continue our ecumenical partnerships with the 6 city centre churches group – St Peter's, Marlborough Road Methodist, Dagnall Street Baptist, the Salvation Army, Trinity United Reform and SS Alban and Stephen Roman Catholic. During 2022 we have continued our close relationship with Marlborough Road Methodist Church and have shared worship and resources. We also support several local good causes, both financially and through members of our congregation volunteering, including Open Door, The Winter Beds Project, The Living Room, Rennie Grove Hospice Care, the Food and Hygiene Banks, Youth Talk and St Albans for Refugees. As well as international charities such as Christian Aid, and Stop the Traffik.

Financial results

The principal sources of income and expenditure are set out in the financial statements for the year. Our income increased in 2022 as activities resumed and the financial position of the church remains secure. The financial support of the SPRING (St Peter's reworked: inspiring new growth) building project will continue to be a financial priority as we start the next stage of the project in August 2023. During 2023 we will need to spend many of our reserves and investments to fund this building project. Our SPRING fundraising team are working on initiatives to raise £150,000 which is required for completion of this next stage. Managing expenditure is a priority for this year as we work to reduce costs where possible.

Our investments were affected by the market conditions but we are seeing some recovery and our income is sufficient to cover our annual expenditure including our Parish Share contribution. Our

approach to expenditure remains cautious in general and we continue to maintain appropriate levels of reserves.

Next Phase for St Peter's

As we move into 2023 we are approaching an exciting time for St Peter's with the next stage of our building project. Starting in the summer of 2023 we will replace the deficient concrete floor in the nave with a stone floor. This work is essential in preserving the supporting pillars in church which are being damaged and weakened by the non-porous concrete around them. We are also replacing the pews with appropriate seating which offers a much more flexible use of space.

2022 has been a busy year and I am very grateful for the prayer and work that many people have put in to develop the life, ministry and mission of St Peter's. We are looking forward to building on the learnings and experiences we have gained as we move into 2023 and plan for the future.

Thank you.



Revd Mark Dearnley
Vicar of St Peter's

Ministry and Worship

During 2022 we were pleased to be back in church for our worship and with the help of our super tech team continued to stream the 10am service. For Easter Day and during the summer, when weather allowed we held our 10am services outside. Whilst being more work to set up the feedback is this arrangement is appreciated by many. Morning prayer continues to be on zoom and is valued by those who attend. The link is on our website and all are welcome to join.

Christmas was a special time as we were able to follow our regular pattern of services in church, which were well attended. The Nativity Trail was updated this year and attracted a lot of people on this busy Saturday morning before Christmas.

Liz Guest's ministry among children and families has developed over this year with a great mix of social and church events being attended and appreciated by all.

High quality music in our worship is part of St Peter's tradition and we have continued to offer musical input in our services thanks to the support of our musicians, choir and also members of the congregation.

The nurture and learning through homegroups continues to be a means of support and growth in faith, and the pastoral teams continue to ensure our care for folk is managed well.

Finally, my thanks to all who give their time and talents to make our ministry and worship at St Peter's special and accessible to all.

Mark Dearnley

Pastoral Ministry

2022 saw more of a return to normality in the pastoral work of St. Peter's. There were regular services at Strathmore, Eleanor House and Davis Court. The latter two involved a shared ministry with MRMC, initially with Rosemary Fletcher and, since September, with Maggie Dodd, the Anna Chaplain, and the Revd, Andrew Prout. Services at Beaumonds, also shared more recently with Maggie, have happened less regularly as, for nearly three months over the summer, the lifts were being renewed which meant some residents were unable to leave their flats. Maggie and I visited individuals as much as possible in that time. As well as special Christmas services, there was a very enjoyable morning of carol singing at Eleanor House.

Tea on Tuesday regained its popular appeal and, on some occasions, has been attended by over 40 people. At our Shrove Tuesday tea we raised money for the Food Bank. We held a special Jubilee Tea in June and a lunch in July, with piano duets from Ann Reid and Diana Catt. That, again, proved very popular and was fully booked well before the date. At the Christmas Treats on Tuesday, we were excellently entertained by the choir of Alban City School and we raised money for the church's effort to help refugees. It is wonderful to have the regular help of Pam, Lynn, Celia and Hilary; thank you to them and to all who contributed dishes and helped to make the lunch possible.

The work of the Pastoral and Bereavement Teams is ongoing but often unseen. Thank you to all who help in this way and especially to Peter Curtis who now regularly takes Home Communion to several house-bound parishioners as well as helping at services in care homes and sheltered housing.

Although Holiday at Home is organised by the Methodist Churches, members of St. Peter's enjoy taking part or helping with that.

Margaret Tinsley

Homegroups

Three Homegroups continued to meet during 2022: one meeting face to face during the day and two in the evening by Zoom. One of the evening groups has now started meeting in person and the other is about to try out combining in person and online participation. The groups decide on their own format, but typically this involves some chat, some discussion focused either on a published home group resource or around a Bible passage and ending in prayer. Fellowship and growth as Christians is the overall objective and if you would like to try one out, please do contact me on r.butler@stpeterschurch.uk.com or by phoning the Church Office. You will be warmly welcomed in an existing group and if there is enough interest, we will be delighted to start a fourth group.

Richard Butler

Music

Music at St Peter's has settled into a firm pattern once again and we are enjoying the various challenges which have arisen from committing fully to a morning and an evening service every Sunday. It has been wonderful to have been able to call upon the services of so many, welcoming in

singers, some of whom have not previously been part of the St Peter's family but have warmed to the task and have felt comfortable returning.

The morning services follow a relatively open formula, with opportunities to learn and perform music in both traditional styles as well as those with a more modern flavour, and once per month the excellent band get together and support the music with appropriate style and vigour.

The evening services follow a comprehensively traditional pattern in the form of the Book of Common Prayer Evensong and many challenges have been set and managed effectively, there being a rich variety of music available to choose from. Within this context, having had - and continue to have - a skilled set of singers available has been (and continues to be) wonderful.

Special services at relevant seasonal times have continued to take place, as has a traditional service of Matins once or twice per term.

The Wednesday lunchtime concerts have continued to flourish. We continue to be thankful to have such thorough organisation from the office through Carolyn which, added to a long list of able, willing performers, has enabled the diary to remain fully booked, often many months ahead of time. I am thankful to have such a skilful and committed team supporting the music, without which we would be much the poorer. I must mention and give especial thanks to Alex and Tim whose dedication, skill and hard work result in so many positives and working lives being made easier.

Finally, we have been delighted to welcome Tomyr Warcaba-Wood as our Organ Scholar. Tomyr has contributed much already to our services under the watchful and caring eye of Alex and we look forward to further contributions over the next few months before he moves to a new role at Bedford School in September.

Nick Robinson

Children and Youth

2022 has seen changes to the children's and youth work. Many of the older youth departed for colleges and University so the SPY group run by Ruth and Lynn was paused, and a new group set up for those in school Years 7-10 was started. This has had mixed attendance, but this will hopefully grow. Family time on a Sunday afternoon failed to attract families and so this was stopped however we now have a regular pattern of Junior church twice a month with a superb group of leaders and helpers to enable this to happen. Messy Church at Christmas and Easter is back on track after the pandemic disrupted meeting. Easter was a low attendance but at Christmas we had a good number of people who came and a lovely Christingle service. During August we introduced 2 family mornings that parents with children of any age could drop in to. We had a bouncy castle and a mixture of toys out. On both occasions we had 50 plus people come. We are looking to do this again next summer. The baby and toddler groups on a Wednesday and Thursday continued to be popular. The baby group is smaller in number than the toddler group, but that is okay as it allows mum, dads and grandparents chance to sit and chat. The children's area in church is a popular place for families who come in to church during the week to play as well as for those on a Sunday.

We have re-established links with our three local primary schools, Aboyne Lodge, Maple and Alban City. We have had groups come over to look around church and been invited into classes to talk about the Christian Faith. At Aboyne Lodge I led a Christingle service with Years 1 and 2 and at Maple we were asked to talk at their Christmas Service held in School. Continuing this connection with the schools is vital as we look to the future.

None of the above would happen without the volunteers and so a huge thank you to them for all they do.

Liz Guest

Church Building

During 2022 we finally received the faculty from the Diocese relating to our remaining plans to improve the interior of the church through implementing what is known as Phase 1c. This is the largest set of works planned so far and is designed to address the progressive, serious damage at the bases of the 15th century nave columns caused by the existing unsuitable concrete floor laid by lord Grimthorpe in the 1890s. Obtaining this faculty brought to an end a lengthy and complicated series of consultations with external stakeholders including Historic England, the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings, the Victorian Society, the Church Buildings Council, the local Conservation Officer and the Diocesan Advisory Committee. In the process of these consultations we have argued and dealt with a whole variety of issues raised to the extent that no formal objections to our proposals were raised and The Chancellor was able to grant us the faculty.

Several factors led to very significant increases in the costs of the planned Phase 1C re-ordering works. First, the time taken to complete the process of external consultations (roughly two years) has led to us facing costs higher than would have been the case if the Diocesan-led consultation process had been more efficient and shorter. Second, unfortunately both the pandemic and the high rate of inflation that the UK has experienced have led to very significant cost increases putting the full proposals for Phase 1c beyond our reach in terms of cost. It became clear during 2022 that some elements of Phase 1c must wait until sufficient funding is available. These elements include the half-glazing of the inner South Door and the installation of a fold-away kitchenette at the West End of the Nave.

The principal element of Phase 1C is the replacement of the Nave's concrete floor with breathable stone while, at the same time, installing underfloor heating although final decisions about the latter await final design and costings. At the same time the pews are to be removed and replaced with award-winning stackable chairs, many of them upholstered. During the year, sufficient additional chairs were purchased and stored ready for the removal of the pews planned for the first part of 2023. Towards the end of the year, following a competitive tendering process, the contract for replacing the concrete floor was awarded to the stonemasons Weldon Stone of Northamptonshire. The works

are due to begin in July 2023. Once the works commence the Nave and Chancel will be largely inaccessible and plans have been made for the continuity of services and related activities using the North transept facilities (including the Octagon Room) and Marlborough Road Methodist Church.

To complete the picture of the re-ordering process so far, the following is a brief reminder of what has been achieved. In 2018 the Nave and Chancel lighting was upgraded. Next the boiler was replaced and in 2019 the toilets were upgraded following sustained complaints to the PCC about the toilets. We then began a new phase of improvements termed Phase 1. The first element of this Phase (i.e. Phase 1a) involved the complete refurbishment of the South-side vestries including the introduction of a mezzanine floor and staircase. At the same time the blue interlocking chairs were replaced, mainly but not only in the Chancel, with award-winning, Trinity Theo stackable chairs. This was the first part of an important plan to replace the remaining pews with similar chairs in order to make the church's interior space far more flexible for users. Because users of the tiny kitchen often complained about lack of space and facilities, Phase 1d was brought forward involving the enlargement of the kitchen and related modifications to the Octagon. Phase 1b will eventually involve improving the car park and South entrance to the church, but although planning permission to do so has been pursued, most of this work cannot be prioritised until it can be afforded.

Den Parker

St Peter's Community

Communications

We have continued to keep our website up to date to inform our congregations and community about the services and events taking place at St Peter's ensuring it is an effective way of sharing news, and information. We also use Facebook to share details of our activities and other related details. If you are not already following us please do so on www.facebook.com/StPeters.StAlbans

Our logo which was designed in 2020 has now been implemented across all our printed and online communications.

During Covid we started to livestream services and we have continued to stream our 10am morning worship allowing people who cannot come to church to access our services each week. We send emails twice weekly to everyone on our mailing list and send additional emails to specific groups for key events. We also print a weekly notice sheet available every Sunday for people who prefer this to email communication.

For Christmas and Easter we produced marketing communication plans to direct our strategy for these key times of year. The church was illuminated again at Christmas with lights around the roof line, top of the church tower and the trees along the south path. The lights also help to connect St Peter's with the high street and the Christmas lights there.

Looking forward our communication focus is around our SPRING building project plans. An additional Communication plan is being developed to inform our stakeholders about our SPRING plans and fundraising targets. We are keen to communicate the changes we are making during the

project to our congregations and local community. As are communicating the changes taking place including our plans for worship with Marlborough Road Methodist Church under the tag line 'Church on the move.' We have a fundraising target of £150000 which is needed to enable us to complete the building project and it is essential that we communicate our fundraising requirements effectively. We continue to focus on developing clear consistent messaging using a variety of different channels to effectively reach our congregations, other church groups and the wider community.

Carolyn Alexander

Events

2022 saw a return to theatre trips, although not as many as before Covid closed the theatres. We did, eventually see the much-postponed *La Belle Sauvage* and *John Gabriel Borkman*, as well as the thought-provoking *Southbury Child*, all at the Bridge theatre. Our trips to the National Theatre meant we watched *The Corn is Green* and *The Crucible* and enjoyed an amusing matinee performance of *Jack Absolute Flies Again*. Our only foray into West End theatre was to see *The Doctor*. We did manage to re-instate a trip to the Proms this year, just managing to make a coach viable.

The Book Group has continued to meet every two months, when we have enjoyed Sheila Green's hospitality and discussed fiction and non-fiction including *Burial Rites* by Hannah Kent, Adam Kay's *This is Going To Hurt*, *The Secret Life of Bees* by Sue Monk Kidd and imagined the far north with Rosamund Lupton's *The Quality of Silence*.

Themed Evensongs, this year on the life and works of Edward Thomas, Thomas Hardy and Philip Larkin, attracted a good congregation and Evensong for Remembrance Sunday included literature of war.

The audience numbers for the Wednesday concerts have been growing gradually and those who have attended have enjoyed many types of music and a variety of performers: schools, quartets, soloists, even a full chamber orchestra. Refreshments have always been available after the concerts. Over the year we raised over £8500 for Rennie Grove charity.

Concerts and Evensongs are advertised in the weekly bulletin but I am always pleased to add more names to the emails sent out about theatre trips and to hear of interest in the Book Group.

Margaret Tinsley

The Friends of St Peter's

In October a group of Friends enjoyed a guided, highlights tour of The British Museum entitled 'Around the World in 90 Minutes'. With the benefit of a knowledgeable guide we were introduced to the intricate detail of the characterful Lewis Chessmen, viewed the ancient texts within the Egyptian sculpture gallery and were able to get closer to many more highlights from the collection. We were then encouraged to wander through the building and visit exhibits of personal interest to round off a stimulating visit.

Following Robin's stepping down from the Chair at year end we are still looking for someone to take the group forward so please do get in touch for more details on what is involved in this challenging and rewarding, role.

Meanwhile Lin, Graham and Robin will bring to members attention any activity that promises to be of interest to our group. Additionally, we plan to support Church events such as St Peter's Fest, the joint venture with MIND in Mid Herts charity, scheduled for June.

Finally, a sincere word of thanks to members for their loyal support of The Friends.

Robin Farrar

Mission and Outreach

Following embedded guidelines built up over several years we continue to give to mainly local charities in our mission giving to others. Time and effort in supporting these charities given by members of the congregation and indeed St Peters in general, is unquantifiable.

In 2022 we gave a total of £14,926.88 to: Youth Talk, Christian Aid, The Living Room, Stop the Traffik, Anna Chaplains and STAR. Within the total was money raised at Wednesday Concerts for Grove House. Specific totals are available on request. Additionally, the local food bank was supported by item donations.

The total raised in 2022 again was still much reduced by the effect of the pandemic reducing the ability early in the year to hold functions and for charities that we support to interact with the congregation. St Peters reduced income also had an impact.

For 2023 a reduced budget of £8500 has been set as we focus on SPRING refurbishment and church on the move after August 2023.

If you would like to champion a local worthy charity, or indeed help the small mission giving team then please contact Peter Court, Gill Taylor or Rev Mark.

Peter Court

PCC Secretary's Report

The Parochial Church Councils (Powers) Measure 1956 states that:

“It shall be the duty of the Minister and the Parochial Church Council to consult together on matters of general concern and importance to the parish.”

The PCC met nine times in 2022. From March 2022 we met, in person, in the Octagon at St Peter's Church.

The main focus of the work of the PCC was SPRING project. This included discussing the financing of the project, it's timing and how St Peter's can continue to be a worshipping community during the time the church building is closed. In addition the PCC amended the Mission Action Plan (MAP) and started to think about what St Peter's will be like the/look like once the church building re-opens.

The PCC plays a vital role in developing the vision and mission for St Peter's. We were pleased to welcome two new members to the PCC in 2022.

The PCC exists to represent all members of the church community. There are vacancies on the PCC and this means not everyone or every view is represented. If you might be interested in joining the PCC please speak to the Vicar, Churchwardens or me.

The work of the PCC is supported by the Church Office and the administrative team. Without them we would not be as effective as we are and I would like to take this opportunity to thank them.

Lynn Cherrill-Teesdale