

**The Parish Church
of
St Thomas à Becket, Pagham**



**Report
of
The Parochial Church Council
to
the Annual meetings 2023**

'For all that has been, THANKS; for all that is to come, YES!'

Swedish diplomat and second Secretary General of the United Nations, Dag Hammarskjöld

Dear Friends,

As I sit here in my study having enjoyed a somewhat delayed Easter break, it has been a joy to return refreshed by time away and to read the reports of the activity of the parish over the last 12 months. I ended last year's report with the quote from Dag Hammarskjöld above, and in reviewing the reports of the parish and reflecting over the last 12 months I have found great need to give thanks to God for his faithfulness to us over the past year, in this place.

What a joy it has been to return to familiar activities and to enjoy some new ones in the life of the parish whilst continuing to be a steady and prayerful presence in the community, and to be a place sought out in times of celebration and sadness. Alongside our regular calendar of festivals, feasts, and celebrations we have been at the heart of National periods of celebration and mourning in the Parish and for the Parish over the last 12 months. First with the celebration of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II Platinum Jubilee in June, and then on her death in September. It goes without saying, that which we have seen on a national level has been likewise repeated on a near daily basis in the parish, as we have been the place and body of people sought out to help those who are in greatest need and who visit from further afield.

I remain extremely grateful to my colleagues Alex Brockhurst and Mike Wake Churchwardens- without whom it would not be possible to maintain the church buildings and liaison with the community. And to other office holders on the PCC- MO as Secretary, Trudi as Treasurer and Jan as Parish Safeguarding Officer, for their continued hard work. Thank you to you all, and to the full PCC.

Thanks must also go to my ministerial colleagues: The Rev'd Canon Colin Wood, The Rev'd Bill Meyer and The Rev'd Clive Ashley for their continued contribution to the community and for their personal support. In the course of the year, we have said farewell to Roland Eil LLM who is now exercising his ministry in Felpham.

As we look forward to the next year, I hope the words below from St Paul might provide some food for thought for us all. They are the words I will commission the new PCC with, that we and they might grow into this new year full of gratitude and enthusiasm for serving God in this place and all his children who find a home here.

Mthr Lucy

Priest-in-Charge St Thomas à Becket, Pagham &

Chair of Pagham PCC.

"Finally, beloved, whatever is true, whatever is honourable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is gracious, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things."

Philippians 4: 8

Parochial Church Council 2022-2023

PCC Membership

The Revd. Lucy Sullivan	Priest-in-Charge and Chair of PCC
Mike Wake	Churchwarden and Vice Chairman
Alex Brockhurst	Churchwarden
Maureen Hatzfeld	PCC Secretary
Trudi Kearsley	Treasurer
Janice Brockhurst	Safeguarding Officer
Alex Brockhurst	Health & Safety Officer
Margaret Sherwood	Electoral Roll Officer

PCC 2020-2023

Chris Buckenham, Maureen Hatzfeld, Trudi Kearsley, Margaret Sherwood and David Smith.

PCC 2021-2024

Jan Brockhurst, and Stephen Cox-Rusbridge.

PCC 2022-2025

William Mitchell and Sue O'Neill

The full PCC met 6 times during the past year. The overall attendance was 93%. The Standing Committee, which consists of the Chairman, Churchwardens, PCC Officers and two elected members (elected annually from the PCC) met twice during the year with an overall attendance of 100%. The PCC take their responsibilities seriously and make every effort to attend meetings, although it is inevitable that absences will occur for a variety of reasons.

Five new members are elected each year to serve for three years, after which they are required to stand down, but they may stand for re-election if they wish. Chris Buckenham, Maureen Hatzfeld, Trudi Kearsley, Margaret Sherwood and David Smith will be standing down this year having served their term of service. The Chairman thanks them for their efforts so willingly given. St Thomas a Becket is represented on the Deanery Synod by three members, Maureen Hatzfeld, Trudi Kearsley and Linda Tempest each serving for three years.

We have been grateful to our two Churchwardens Mike Wake and Alex Brockhurst for their hard work and vigilance in keeping the church matters running smoothly,

and are always grateful to Revd Clive Ashley, Canon Colin Wood, and Revd Bill Meyer, for their continued and faithful support.

Following the pandemic the PCC and Standing Committees returned to face to face meetings in 2022/23.

During 2022/23 the PCC continued to work with the diocesan pilot programme "Great is Thy Faithfulness" including a visit from Archdeacon Luke in March 2023. The visit was to gain feedback from those who took part in the GITF course from our church and gain an understanding in what had been communicated to the PCC. The Archdeacon gave an overview of why the course had been started as a pilot scheme, to encourage the revitalisation and renewal of Church life after COVID. As part of the parish commitment to GITF we were to start a course for Christian explorers after Easter.

Being closely linked to GITF, the PCC looked again at the Mission Action Plan with the sub-committee reporting that the Welcome Pack was soon to be finalised.

The PCC were also informed, this year, of the closing of the Paghams Playgroup and that they would be vacating the Church Centre in the summer of 2022, but they are also pleased to report that the Wittering Pre-School hoped to be able to rent the Church Centre in order to open a new site for their already established Pre-School.

Maureen Hatzfeld
PCC Secretary

Electoral Roll

At the APCM in May 2022 the Electoral Roll stood at 232. Since then there has been very little movement, with three additions and one person being removed. The revised total is therefore 234 as of 10th April 2023.

Margaret Sherwood (Electoral Roll Officer)

Fabric Report

The good news is that the church is not falling down and the roof is still weathertight. We did have a few broken tiles when part of the weather vane came down in a storm and damaged the new roof tiles these were quickly replaced.

The rainwater gutters downpipes and groundwater gutters were cleaned and free from debris in October 2022.

However, although not urgent there are some parts of the building that will need attention in the future.

Our 1970s heating system requires updating to something more efficient, environmentally sustainable and suitable for the 21st century.

The sounds system is showing its age and would benefit us all from being updated.

In recent years some of the stained glass windows have been restored with others now showing signs of deterioration.

The cracks in the columns and plaster continue to be monitored and have not shown signs of further movement over the past year.

The doors leading out onto the patio from St Andrews chapel require some urgent attention due to the effect of the inclement weather over the years.

The wardens have no wish to present an expensive shopping list. But we do have to be realistic if the church is to be maintained as our forebears have done over the centuries.

Routine work in and around the church continues, often unnoticed. The wardens would like to take this opportunity to thank all those who volunteer and give their time so generously to keep our beautiful church looking the way it does and appreciated by all who come here.

Alex Brockhurst, Mike Wake
Churchwardens

Financial Report

Looking back through previous reports given at APCMs it is clear that all Treasurers seem to say very much the same thing, and this year is no different. It is a real challenge to try to manage the finances in a way that allows us to continue to function as a church efficiently and meet all our commitments.

The PCC's long-term aim is to be able to meet our day-to-day running costs and to pay our full ministry costs from our regular planned income. This is no easy task as our expenditure increases each year, whilst our regular income does not to keep pace. This has been particularly true this year, with the general increase in the cost of living and in particular the high cost of gas and electricity. We continue to run at a loss, and we remain all too dependent on the reserve funds which have been accumulated as a result of the generosity of past benefactors who have provided donations and legacies. It is these funds that allow us to balance the books. It is not a comfortable position to be in, and of course ultimately this is untenable, as our reserves will run out.

Our greatest item of expenditure is the Parish Share, which for a Parish such as ours would have been £74,960 for 2022. However because we share our Priest-in-Charge with St Richard's, Aldwick we were given a credit, which equated to half a stipend, and meant that we were only asked to pay £52,824. However all parishes were asked to consider giving generously and were asked to pay what they believed they could afford, not just what they are asked for, so as to help those parishes which were struggling. The PCC therefore took the decision to pledge £55,000 for 2022. This meant that we paid 100% of our full ministry costs.

It should be recorded, and we do give thanks, that we are blessed by so many who give so generously to support the church. Our planned giving, through the envelope scheme, standing orders and the Parish Giving Scheme (PGS), together with the Gift

Aid we are able to reclaim on this, accounts for approximately 75% of our unrestricted freewill offering.

Wherever possible we continue to encourage people to commit to regular planned giving through PGS, Standing Orders or the white envelope scheme or PGS, which gives us regular income. Regular Planned Giving makes budgetary planning so much easier as we have a clear picture of what we have available. We encourage all who are eligible to sign Gift Aid declaration forms, so that we can reclaim the Gift Aid, aiming to make us as tax efficient as possible. Giving via the Parish Giving Scheme is the most efficient way to support the church financially, with gift aid paid immediately, and with a built in opportunity to increase donations in line with inflation. if you are not already using one of the regular giving schemes or if you think you are eligible to sign up for gift aid, I urge you to consider this as it does make such a difference to our financial position. This year we were once again able to make use of the Small Gift Aid Scheme, which enabled us to claim gift aid on some anonymous donations (i.e. plate collections and from the donation box). We also now have a Giving Station in church which allows those who do not carry cash to make a donation using a credit card or via their phones.

The time consuming task of recovering the Gift Aid falls into the capable hands of Frank Parvin, and I am very grateful to him for undertaking this task.

As a PCC we have been encouraged to have a Legacy Policy asking people to consider leaving legacies in their wills for the benefit of the church. Over the years we have been very fortunate to receive legacies from generous benefactors and it is these that we have depended upon to keep us afloat - but receiving any legacy is unpredictable and we cannot count on receiving any which makes budgeting difficult. Some years we receive none as in 2015 and 2021, some years they are small and in other years very generous.

In 2022 we received an unrestricted legacy of £500 and a restricted legacy of £57,954. Unrestricted legacies can only be used for the stated purpose, which in this case is for a particular use in the churchyard, whereas unrestricted legacies can be used for any purpose and it is these which have enabled us in the past to reduce our deficit.

Our financial year runs from January 1st until December 31st, as can be seen in the accounts. To date in 2023 we have received two further unrestricted legacies of £1000 and £2000, and we are anticipating receipt of a third of £22,000.

The PCC is well aware that we already have a very generous church family who dig deep into their pockets to support the church financially, and on their behalf I would like to record our thanks to you all.

Trudi Kearsley

PCC Treasurer

Summary of Financial Receipts and Payments

The financial effect of our activities during the year can be summarised as follows

	<i>Unrestricted</i>		<i>Restricted</i>	<i>Endowed</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Notes</i>
	<i>General</i>	<i>Designated</i>			<i>All Funds</i>	<i>All Funds</i>	
	<u>Fund</u>	<u>Funds</u>	<u>Fund/s</u>	<u>Fund/s</u>	<u>2022</u>	<u>2021</u>	
	£	£	£	£	£	£	
Income and endowments from:							
Donations and legacies	59,080	-	60,790	-	119,870	77,920	
Charitable activities	4,366	-	-	-	4,366	4,867	
Other trading activities	6,376	-	7,140	-	13,516	7,857	
Investments	847	-	-	-	847	77	
Other receipts	-	-	-	-	-	1000 -	
Total received	70,669	-	67,930	-	138,599	91,721	3
Expenditure on:							
	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Charitable costs	74,913	-	521	-	75,434	86,642	
Trading costs	673	-	8,681	-	9,354	5,199	
Other payments	-	-	-	-	-	15	
Archdeacon loan repayment						35,000	11
Total paid	75,586	-	9,202	-	84,788	126,856	5
<i>Reconciliation of funds:</i>							
Net income or (net expenditure)	(4,917)	-	58,728	-	53,251	(35,135)	
Disbursement control	(1,000)		-	-	(1,000)	1,369 -	
Net movement in funds	(5,917)	-	58,634	-	53,811	(33,766)	
Bank accounts at 1 January	17,252	14,005	12,162	-	43,419	77,193	
Bank accounts at 31 December	10,094	72,791	13,345	-	96,230	43,427	A & L

Notes to the Financial Report

3 Analysis of total received

	Unrestricted		Restricted <u>Fund/s</u>	Endowed <u>Fund/s</u>	Total	Total	Notes
	General	Designated			All Funds	All Funds	
	<u>Fund</u>	<u>Funds</u>			<u>2022</u>	<u>2021</u>	
	£	£	£	£	£		
Planned giving (excl. tax refunds)	34,770	-	-	-	34,770	36,315	
Plate Collections	4,166	-	521	-	4,687	4,014	
Donations	9,610	-	2,315	-	11,925	13,525	8
Legacies	500	-	57,954	-	58,454	-	9
Gift Aid recovered	10,034	-	-	-	10,034	11,299	
Grants	-	-	-	-	-	12,767	4
Donations and legacies	59,080	-	60,790	-	119,870	77,920	
Fees for weddings & funerals	4,366	-	-	-	4,366	4,867	
Charitable activities	4,366	-	-	-	4,366	4,867	
Fundraising activities	6,376	-	-	-	6,376	1,976	
Friends Fundraising activities	-	-	883	-	883	188	
Coffee Club	-	-	150	-	150	-	
Hall hiring fees	-	-	5,758	-	5,758	5,693	
Other trading activities	6,376	-	7,140	-	13,516	7,857	
Bank & CBF deposit interest	847	-	-	-	847	77	
CBF investment fund dividend	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Investments	847	-	-	-	847	77	
Other receipts	-	-	-	-	-	1,000	
Total received on all funds	70,669	-	67,930	-	138,599	91,721	

Notes to the Financial Report

5. Analysis of total paid:

	Unrestricted		Restricted Fund/s	Endowed Fund/s	Total All Funds 2022	Total All Funds 2021	Notes
	General Fund	Designated Funds					
	£	£	£	£	£	£	
Charitable grants and donations	130	-	521	-	651	640	6
Parish share to Chichester Diocese	55,000	-	-	-	55,000	51,901	7
Salaries and honoraria incl NI	-	-	-	-	-	1,055	
Clergy and other people's expenses	2,374	-	-	-	2,374	1,891	
Sunday school/Children's work	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Costs of church services	2,067	-	-	-	2,067	2,269	
Printing & photocopying	1,572	-	-	-	1,572	939	
Church utilities bills	3,948	-	-	-	3,948	246	
Church maintenance & redecoration	4,167	-	-	-	4,167	4,822	
Churchyard upkeep	322	-	-	-	322	3,804	
Roof Repairs	-	-	-	-	-	6,701	
Bells	-	-	-	-	-	6,980	
Flower Fund expenditure	623	-	-	-	623	831	
Insurance	3,910	-	-	-	3,910	3,763	
Examiner's and other financial fees	800	-	-	-	800	800	
Charitable costs	74,913	-	521	-	75,434	86,642	
Fundraising expenses	673	-	-	-	673	203	
Church Centre Utilities	-	-	2,851	-	2,851	2,366	
Church Centre Maintenance/admin	-	-	3,560	-	3,560	2,430	
Friends expenditure	-	-	-	-	-	200	
Mens Club Expenditure	-	-	1,728	-	-	-	
Coffee Club Expenditure	-	-	542	-	542	-	
Trading costs	673	-	8,681	-	7,626	5,199	
Other payments	-	-	-	-	-	15	
Extra-ordinary item	-	-	-	-	-	35,000	
Total paid on all funds	75,586	-	9,202	-	83,060	126,856	

Notes to the Financial Report

- 1 The financial statements of the PCC have been prepared in accordance with the Charities Act 2011 and current Church Accounting Regulations, using the Receipts and Payments basis.
- 2 The following assets are recognised but not valued in the Statement of Assets and Liabilities: Movable church furnishings held by the churchwardens on special trust for the PCC, which require a faculty for disposal.
- 3 Analysis of total received
4. No grants received in 2022
5. Analysis of total paid
- 6 Charitable grants and donations.
- 7 The Parish share to the Chichester Diocese is for the payment of Clergy and other central costs. The full cost of parish ministry in 2022 amounts to approximately £76970. As our Parish Priest has dual responsibility for the neighbouring parish, Pagham is only required to pay half the stipend. .
8. £1000 donation received from Pagham Parish Council to be used for upkeep of the churchyard.
9. Donation for specific purpose in the churchyard. Donor stipulated that it remains anonymous.
10. Clergy support Council Tax, travel, hospitality, postage, telephone, water bills. The costs of Council Tax , telephone and water bills are shared equally with our neighbouring parish.
11. £15,000 of the Archdeacons Loan still remains to be repaid. This is interest free and needs to be repaid in full by the end of 2024.

Planned Giving

At the year-end **17** members of the church family were making use of the freewill offering envelope scheme of which **13** were using Gift Aid. Also **16** members were paying by regular or one off standing orders of which **13** were gift aided. The use of the green envelopes has not been significant this year for obvious reasons. In addition there are **31** church members using the Parish Giving Scheme of whom **30** are Gift Aiding.

The PCC can only plan confidently for the future against the steady flow of income which arises in the main from the Planned Giving and Gift Aid schemes. **Every £1 contributed by Gift Aid produces an additional 25p for the Church.**

The Gift Aid claim for 2022 was similar to the previous year. There are clear reasons for this but in these troubled times the PCC is extremely grateful for the continued support of the members of the Church family who use the various planned giving schemes.

Frank Parvin – Gift Aid Secretary

Safeguarding

The PCC have agreed the annual Safeguarding Parish Agreement for 2023 stating our continued commitment to the safety of children and young people, vulnerable adults and those experiencing domestic abuse. The statement will be displayed in the North Aisle and at the church centre.

Our SQP (kitemark) certificate is also displayed on the noticeboard and can be viewed on our web page.

The PCR2 (Past Cases Review 2) certificate is also displayed. This is issued to confirm that should there have been any cases of concerns about the behaviour of clergy and church officers towards children and vulnerable adults these would have been dealt with appropriately.

A comprehensive guide to our Safeguarding Policies and Procedures, and any other relevant information, is available on the link on the front page of our Parish web-site.

The PCC comply with section 5 of the Safeguarding and Clergy Discipline Measure 2016 (duty to have due regard to the House of Bishops' guidance on safeguarding children and vulnerable adults).

We have continued to use the on-line safeguarding training successfully. The modules have been re-named with C0 now known as Basic Awareness Training, C1 as Foundation Training and C2 as Leadership Training.

The Basic Awareness E-learning module is undertaken by all PCC members as well as many others who may come into contact with vulnerable individuals at any time and is suitable for the whole congregation.

The Foundation E-learning module is completed by Sunday School Leaders.

The Virtual Safeguarding Leadership Learning Pathway provides the next level of training. This course is aimed at Leaders and promotes a learning journey for participants.

We continue to emphasise safeguarding is the responsibility of the whole congregation and I would encourage more people to complete C0 training. Details are available at safeguarding.chichester.anglican.org or from Jan Brockhurst.

Jan Brockhurst, Parish Safeguarding Officer

Health and Safety

As we all returned to the pre 2019 church activities in 2022/2023 throughout the past year, this is a short report with no non-compliances to report with the Health and Safety regulations.

All statutory electrical, lighting conductor and fire safety inspections have been completed throughout the year by approved industry body contractors and new annual certificates issued.

It is anticipated that an update of our registered First Aiders certificates will be required over the next year with all those required attending an update course.

Alex Brockhurst, Health & Safety Officer

Confirmation

A great highlight of the year was to host a Deanery Confirmation in November, for which we welcomed the Bishop of Horsham- The Rt Rev'd Ruth Bushyager. We also welcomed candidates and their families and friends from across the Arundel and Bognor Deanery, we were fantastically supported by the worship band of The Shore Church on Victoria Drive, who played some worship songs for us as part of the service- this Confirmation was a first of its kind as it followed the format of Tuesday@7, our informal family worship.

As a result of attendance and involvement in the Tuesday@7 congregation 6 women were confirmed at this service, having followed a course of preparation. The course of preparation trialled the Diocesan Confirmation resources which was a part of our involvement in the Great is Thy Faithfulness Programme.

On All Saints' Sunday we also admitted 9 young people to receive Holy Communion, after attending a course of preparation on Saturday mornings in the autumn.

If you are interested in Baptism (any age), Confirmation (school yr9 or older) or Admission to Holy Communion (school yr6 or older) please speak to Mthr Lucy.

Tuesday@7

In its second year Tuesday@7, our informal, family friendly mid-week eucharist has gone from strength to strength. We regularly welcome 40+ people of all ages to this 40minute service and celebration of Holy Communion. The children, in particular, are keen to be involved in all aspects of the worship: welcoming, leading us in readings, serving at the altar, DJ'ing and also at times leading us in prayer. The 'sermon slot' sees both children and adults engaging in the teaching and learning from scripture through a variety of teaching styles.

A huge moment of celebration in the year was to welcome +Ruth for a Tuesday@7 Confirmation in November- in the course of the year we have seen 6 adults come to Confirmation, and 9 children admitted to Holy Communion. This is one marker of the success of this ministry, the other is the way in which our children and young people race into church on a Tuesday evening and dawdle on the way out!

We have enjoyed meeting points of the wider church family with this congregation most notably the BBQ for the Platinum Jubilee in June and the End of Term BBQ and open-air Eucharist in the churchyard. And we look forward to more opportunities for this in the coming year.

We are blessed to be a part of growing confident, prayerful young people and to be walking with them in the early days on their journey of faith.

'Great is thy Faithfulness' – Growing The Household of Faith Pilot Programme.

Our parish was invited, with 15 others from across the Dioceses, to take part in a twelve session course running from January to June 2022. Each parish was partnered with a parish in a similar location. We were partnered with Rustington. Three of us plus Mthr. Lucy took part and we have remained involved in the events arising from it.

The course consisted of zoom meetings, on-line videos, group meetings within the parish and a visit to each other's churches.

The aim was to encourage church growth in all its many dimensions, not just in growth of numbers but in learning, faith, participation, support and to help the congregations to pray and reflect on their shared baptismal vows. We saw on video examples of how some parishes have been working to achieve this.

The material provided gave lots of examples of parishes working successfully to encourage growth, but it was made clear that there was not a simple fix that would fit every parish. We were encouraged to look at what was already in place, what was already working well and use that as a starting point.

As with many other parishes we could see that food and hospitality provide a focal point, bringing people together in church in a less formal way, and we have therefore built this into our practice. We have had picnics, breakfasts, bar-b-ques, pancakes afternoons, suppers, tea and coffee after services, together with the very successful lent lunches and the monthly tea and chat.

Before the course started, a Tuesday night service aimed specifically at our young families was already in place. Many families experience difficulty in getting to church on a Sunday as there are so many other activities happening. Developing 'Tuesday@7', has proved to be extremely successful, with growing numbers of families attending throughout the year. Our enthusiastic young people are keen to participate in all aspects of the worship and the learning opportunities. The numbers have grown because our young people invite their friends to join them.

One of the aims of the project was for the parish to set up a discipleship course. This is starting next month and is an introduction to Christianity with a difference. It is titled 'Being With'.

We will continue us to keep a link with Rustington and hope that many parishioners will become involved with the 'Being With' course.

Jenny Spurle

Arundel and Bognor Deanery Synod 2023

Since our last APCM the Deanery Synod has convened on three occasions. All meetings have been open to all.

June 2022: St Mary the Virgin, Clymping
Presentation from Reverend Stephen Gurr on 'Coming out of Covid'

October 2022: St Peter and St Paul, Rustington
This was a joint meeting with representatives from the Worthing Deanery, primarily focussing on finance. Financial information was provided to aid each parish when considering the amount they are able to pledge as their Parish Share for the forthcoming year. Parishes were encouraged to be generous but also realistic. Archdeacon Luke gave a presentation on the Diocesan Strategy, and how each parish is encouraged to engage with this.

February 2023: St Wilfrid, Bognor Regis
The topic was spirituality amongst older people and the speaker was Coleen Jackson. Coleen is both an Anna Chaplain and the lead for developing Anna Chaplaincy across the Diocese of Portsmouth.

Trudi Kearsley

Bellringers

We just about manage to keep the bells ringing each Sunday morning and for special occasions with our very small loyal team. This includes the Platinum Jubilee, then sadly a few months later the passing of HM The Queen.

It has been wonderful to have 12 year old triplets learning to ring and making excellent progress. However, we really do need more volunteers of all ages to come forward and learn this ancient art, otherwise bellringing here at Pagham could become just a memory.

To ring church bells. You do not have to be strong, musical or a mathematician. But reasonable coordination and a sense of rhythm does help. Learning to ring is not instant. It takes a few weeks and commitment.

If anyone is interested do please have a word with any of the ringers or just come along to one of our Monday evening practises to see what it is all about.

Mike Wake.

Book Group

The book group continued to meet every other month to discuss books suggested by the members. About a dozen members usually take part, out of 26 currently on the mailing list. We meet in St Andrew's Chapel on a Friday afternoon. New members are always welcome. Books read and discussed over the past year included *Katherine Parr*, from the Tudor Queens Series by Alison Weir, *Hinds' Feet on High Places* by Hannah Hurnard, *Leaving Alexandria* by Richard Holloway, *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* and *The Magician's Nephew* by C S Lewis, and *Joseph and the Three Gifts* by Brian Sibley.

If you would like to be added to our mailing list, please email lindatempest@hotmail.com.

Linda Tempest

Charitable Giving

The PCC remains committed to a policy of donating 5% of unrestricted income to charitable causes, when possible. However once again in 2022 church income was severely restricted making it difficult to fully meet our aim.

In 2022 donations were made to Nyewood Church of England Junior and Infant Schools, as part of our regular support to these schools.

The proceeds of all the 2022 Christmas Collections were divided equally between the Chestnut Tree House Children's Hospice and Christian Aid. The 2023 collections were split between Five Talents and Family Support Work (FSW).

In 2022 special collections were taken in support of the DEC Ukraine Appeal, and 2023 a retiring collection was taken to support the Christian Aid Turkey and Syria Earthquake Appeal.

Our support of The Children's Society continues through Christingle Collections and individual collection boxes, coordinated by Pat Rush.

We also continued to support the Link to Hope Shoebox Appeal. 70 boxes and over 100 knitted blankets (produced by the Knit and Natter Group) were donated. Link to Hope delivered to Moldova, Romania, Bulgaria and the Ukraine.

During Lent we ran Lunches in Aid of Christian Aid. Simple lunch was available at the Church Centre on the five Thursdays during Lent, with a variety of home-made soups being offered. These events were well supported and raised £585 for Christian Aid.

Trudi Kearsley

Church Centre

The Church Centre lost the booking of the playgroup in August. Mrs. Jean Powell gave up after nearly 50 years. Obviously this had a major effect on the Centre's finances.

Fortunately we have secured the booking of a new pre- school group who will be using the hall for more days during the year at an increased rate. This booking should secure the future of the Church Centre for the near future. It is due to start on Monday 17th April 2023.

Apart from the new pre-school group, the Centre hosts meetings of:

1. A Theatre Group
2. A Choir
3. Rabbit Shows
4. A Model Railway group
5. Slimming World
6. Rainbows
7. Brownies
8. Occasional children's parties

The monthly Tea and Chat has proved popular

The Men's group resumed its successful Burns Night in January

Pagham Church Friends held a Winter Warmer event

The hall continues to be well used and offers a valuable service to the Parish.

There is currently a vacancy for a caretaker.

David Smith

Church Flowers

Visitors to the church often comment on how pleased they are to see flowers adding to the beauty of the building. We have a beautiful church, and that beauty is enhanced by the floral displays produced on a regular basis throughout the year. We would miss them if they were not there, and we certainly notice them on those big occasions when the church is ablaze with colour.

We have a very small team of willing volunteers who take on the task of creating the displays, and I am very grateful to all those who willingly say 'yes' whenever I approach them to help. This is not a closed group and if anyone would like to join the team they would be very welcome - just speak to me.

This year members of our flower team once again took part in the much delayed Festival of Flowers at the Cathedral. Sue Smith led our team of arrangers from the church - Carole Druce, Heather Gamble and Trudi Kearsley, and from the wider

community - Lynette Hurdle, Sue Austin and Debbie Lamb, to create beautiful flower covered angels, building on the structures created by David Smith, which then 'flew' in the cloisters at the Cathedral.

Providing the flowers in church costs money, and those costs are increasing. All of our arrangers provide the greenery from their own, or friend's gardens, helping to reduce costs, but the flowers do cost money. As in previous years sponsorship of the flowers for the bigger festivals has been invited and I am very grateful for all the generous contributions received.

There is, of course, always the opportunity to sponsor flowers - to remember a loved one, to celebrate an anniversary or just to say thank you to God for what he provides for us - just speak to me to sort out the details.

Trudi Kearsley

Church Music

The music at St Thomas à Becket continues to go through a period of rejuvenation and in these early days we are grateful to Alison Blenkinsop who has played throughout the year on Sundays and other Feast days. And to Jenny Spurle who has played for the Parish Family Eucharist- encouraging and welcoming a number of our young people to join in playing instruments and singing from time to time. Alison stepped down from playing the organ and leading the choir at the end of 2022.

We are also thankful for the committed band of singers- 8 of whom sing regularly for our Sunday 09:30am service and give thanks for those who have joined or re-joined in the past 12 months. The choir currently rehearse the Sunday hymns at 9am before the service. There have been many fruitful comings together of the choir with the choir of St Richard's choir for the Christmas Carol services in both churches, and the Good Friday Service in Pagham. Some singers have also offered their voices for funerals and weddings- which families have been very grateful for.

As a temporary but effective way of enabling us to have music on Sundays when we don't have an organist available to play, we make use of the St Martin-in-the-field recordings on the A Church Near You website. This music was first made available and enjoyed by us during the pandemic for our recorded services, the catalogue of available music is now vast and used by many churches in a similar situation to us. We continue to look for a more permanent solution to music in the church, however, suitable organists are hard to come by, so we must be patient.

Tuesday@7 continue to make good use of worship music available on-line and we have a valued team of DJ's who take up the role of providing us with music each week. Our next step is to work with some of the musicians in the congregation who would like to learn some of these songs for us to sing along to 'live'.

Churches Together in Bognor Regis and District

Linda Tempest and Sue O'Neill represent St Thomas à Becket on the Churches Together group meetings and communication, in addition Linda is Treasurer for Churches Together in Bognor Regis (see notes below re changes to this)

Activities – At the beginning of 2023, the Church Leaders and working party of Churches Together in Bognor Regis (CTBR) proposed that the old CTBR, be dissolved as it was no longer working in its current format, and that a new group Bognor Churches Together (BCT) be formed from the coordinating group. This motion was carried at a meeting on 24th January 2023. It was also voted the remaining funds in the bank account be donated to charity – the total of £817.15 to be divided equally between Bognor Regis Foodbank, Christians Against Poverty in Bognor and Churches Together in England. Linda Tempest (treasurer) was thanked for her work over many years and asked to close the bank account.

Bognor Churches Together – BCT has now been formed with the following objectives:

- Be united by our shared faith and our relationships with one another
- Champion and celebrate the work of local churches and organisations
- Enjoy greater communication and collaboration
- See more lives transformed in the Bognor area

Actions - Bognor Churches Together will:

- Encourage, and help facilitate as appropriate, churches to collaborate and work together
- Arrange gatherings and other events for churches & their leaders to give opportunity to nurture and strengthen cross-church relationships, and increase ecumenical engagement.
- Facilitate communication channels to enable effective sharing of information and events across member churches, and to encourage members of different churches to pray, act and serve together.

Next Meeting - Tuesday 16th May a vote will be taken to confirm Member churches and also those who will be joining the Coordinating Group moving forward.

Communication and Activities –

Regular updates sent out to the mailing list

Clergy breakfast meetings

Warm spaces poster with details of Churches providing company and support over the winter

Individual Church events

Updates on Bognor Foodbank & CAP courses and programmes

More information can be found via the BCT Facebook page, [Churches Together in Bognor | Facebook](#), this includes photos from 2023 Walk of Witness

Please speak to Linda or Sue if you would like to be added to the mailing list, or more involved in anyway. Linda Tempest & Sue O'Neill

Coffee Fellowship

Coffee Fellowship continues on Sunday mornings following the Sunday morning Eucharist.

Fellowship is well supported. Numbers vary, from low 20's to above 50 for Special Services. It provides a venue for the congregation to chat and relax together.

There is a small number of people who regularly volunteer to serve the coffee and biscuits. We thank them for their help.

It would help if more people signed up to help serve, this is not a difficult task. There is a sign- up sheet in the Chapel, please sign up.

Dave Smith

Cursillo Groups

'Cursillo is a movement of the Church providing a method by which Christians are empowered to grow through prayer, study and action and enabled to share God's love with everyone'.

Cursillo is active in most Anglican dioceses in Great Britain and is part of a worldwide movement amongst Anglicans, Roman Catholics, Methodists and several other churches.

Many members of the church family here in Pagham are part of Cursillo in the Chichester Diocese, taking an active part in Cursillo in the parish and in the Diocese.

Members who have completed a three day weekend, where they take stock of where they are in a relationship with God, through teaching, worship, exploration, prayer, fellowship and fun, come together on a regular basis to continue to pray together and to support and encourage one another, endeavouring to bring Christ into all aspects of their lives. Members are encouraged to meet regularly to pray, share experiences and to support one another

Three times a year larger Diocesan wide meetings are held, which are open to all. One of these gatherings, called an 'Ultreya' was held here last year attracting participants from across the Diocese and from our neighbouring Dioceses. We also hosted a less formal gathering (Camino), which again is open to all, where members come together to socialise, share experiences, sing whilst enjoying fellowship and cake. If you are interested in learning more, then please have a word with me.

Trudi Kearsley

Friends of Pagham Parish Church

The reason for “The Friends of Pagham Parish Church” is to raise funds for the PCC to use in the maintenance of the fabric of this wonderful Church, that is patronised by the parishioners and visitors to Pagham.

Over the last couple of years, it has been difficult to maintain the number of events we were able to organise since Covid 19. We have had to cancel a couple of these as we were unable to gain support due to many different reasons.

The events we have organised, have been well supported and I wish to thank all those that who attended these.

I would also like to thank Alison Blenkinsop for putting together the Christmas Quiz and a wonderful selection of prizes.

Events organised, were the: -

Skittles at “The Spur” which was a great fun-filled evening with a B-B-Q meal.

Winters Warmer at the Church Centre was a fantastic evening, well attended and great food organised by Carole Druce.

The comments we received following these events were heart-warming and inspiring to continue with what we like to do.

This is the time for me to step down as Chair, as I have completed 3 years in this capacity. I would like to thank all the committee members that have stuck together throughout these difficult times. At one time it seemed that the committee might fold but I am very pleased and hopeful that it will continue. It is not only the raising of funds that is important, but the very sociable aspects of these events and the bringing together of the Parish community.

Richard Druce

Knit and Natter

Our group has once more settled into its routine of Wednesday weekly meetings and at Christmas we sent 100 blankets and bags of knitted garments with the Link to Hope Shoe Box appeal. One of our monetary donations this year was in March 2022 sent to the Link to Hope Ukrainian Appeal. This was made up of £50 from funds plus voluntary contributions from our members. Our Christmas monetary donations were £100 to the Bognor Food Bank and £100 to The Snowdrop Trust who provide nursing care at home for local children with life threatening or terminal illnesses. Once again we would like to say thank you for all the donations of wool received and to the many squares that are knitted by the “out knitters”.

Sue Davis

Men's Group

The Men's Group, have eased ourselves back into the community after Covid, over the last year the Men's group have enjoyed a couple of breakfast clubs at the Pagham Beach Café and a trip to Tangmere Aviation Air Museum.

This year as ever, started with a bang, well a haggis! Burns night again was a resounding success. My thanks go to all the Men's Group who supported me in making it such a brilliant night and long may it continue. No record on spud bashing but it only took 1 ½ hrs and we were done and then onto the whiskey!! ! A dozen men, highly trained and rearing to go! I think some enjoy the prep night as much as the main event!

The Christmas market, Pagham Men stepped up to the plate and did bacon butties, teas and coffee, all the bacon was sold out by the end of the event! A great team effort! The Village hall did smell good!!

The Summer Fair had the Men's Group doing the BBQ which was well manned and we were kept busy for the whole fair.

So all in all we have had a great year, an enjoyable way to support the Church Family.

The Men's group were able to finance the repair of the Millennium light in church as the motor / fan had sadly served its time and expired, through the fundraising.

We are a small gaggle of men with big aspirations for supporting the church. We do need more input from the younger male members of the church family, contrary to popular belief we don't bite! And like to enjoy a drink in a local drinking establishment. We have no agenda and talk and discuss things that may have be importance to the world!!

So why not! You have no excuses not to give us a go! You may enjoy it, if only for a drink or to help in your community! You will make a difference in whatever part you decide to be in.

Please contact me Stephen via the power of email,
stephen.coxrusbridge@btinternet.com

Prayer chain

The Prayer Chain is available to anyone for prayer requests. There are currently 15 church members on the chain. To start the chain request please telephone Gillian Purvis on 267597 or Pat Rush on 262561. Prayer requests are usually for one week unless requested for longer.

Anyone wishing to join the chain please speak to Gillian or Pat for your name to be added to the list.

Gillian Purvis and Pat Rush

Tea & Chat

Two years on and Tea & Chat at Pagham continues, providing a welcoming place over a cuppa.

Now that finally all restrictions have been lifted and we are able to meet again freely, the good people of the parishes of Pagham and Aldwick have heartily enjoyed coming together for a hot drink and piece of cake. They are cheerfully served by 2 alternating teams of volunteers, who also do the cake and biscuit baking.

We continue to meet at the Pagham Parish Church Centre in Nyetimber lane on the second Wednesday of each month (2.30 to 4pm). Entrance is by donation, and you are not required to pre-book. We usually cater for between 15 and 30 people. As a direct response to the free advert in the Sussex Views monthly magazine that is distributed to the local households, we were happy to welcome 2 new ladies from the area this month.

The format is simple, and it works; come, bring your knitting (not compulsory) and your conversation, and join in with some smiling faces. There's usually someone there to lend a listening ear if you don't feel so much like smiling at the time, also.

All are welcome, age and gender no barrier, so do come, and join us next time.

Carole Druce

