

# ST JOHN'S CHURCH, RANMOOR



## Reports to the 2024 Annual Parochial Church Meeting

**Publication Date:**  
18<sup>th</sup> April 2024

**APCM Date:**  
28<sup>th</sup> April 2024

This report contains information about many of the groups and activities that have taken place through 2023.

The 2023 Accounts are published separately to this document.

This report can be downloaded from our [website](#).

## Introduction

Welcome to the annual reports and accounts of St John's Ranmoor. These highlight some of the wonderful work done by members of St John's to sustain and enrich its life. We are very grateful to the many volunteers who give of their time, talents and resources. As ever, we are on the lookout for new talent. Hopefully, the following pages will inspire you to volunteer, perhaps by joining the PCC. This year our APCM is at noon on 28<sup>th</sup> April. We hope to see you there!

**Matthew Rhodes, Vicar**

## Church Building

Work is continuing on priority repairs to the church fabric, as well as progressing the wider building improvement project (The 'Inspire Project').

The most critical work remains the church spire. The exterior of the spire requires re-pointing and some stone repairs. Internally, the stonework is severely eroded to such a degree that a structural engineer has expressed concern over the spire's integrity. Whilst repairs to the exterior of the spire will be relatively straightforward, interior repairs will require careful thought and will likely involve either new stone being indented or a new brick lining. Both approaches will require full scaffolding.

Along with this priority issue, the church tower has also begun shedding masonry. Following an incident in August last year, where large pieces of stonework fell to the ground outside the South Door, a full rope inspection was carried out and any loose masonry removed. For public safety, it was decided to erect protective scaffolding until a full descale could take place and the tower declared safe.

Following multiple drone surveys of the tower and spire, our architect is now consulting a structural engineer to determine the best approach to addressing these issues. It is estimated that repair works will commence by September 2024 at the earliest. Given the ongoing issues with the tower and spire, St John's Church has now been added to Historic England's Heritage at Risk Register which records national cultural heritage assets at risk of decay.

As well as these priority repairs, we are also working with our architect to develop other aspects of the 'Inspire Project', which will focus on improving facilities and opening the church for wider community use. Our priorities include repairing and reordering the vestries (which are in a poor state), improving toilet facilities and creating a more suitable refreshment area. The Building Subcommittee is continuing to steer this project and has begun mapping out funding possibilities.

More routine maintenance has included unblocking the west-end downpipe outside the baptistry and addressing a water leak from the north-side earth bank which is flooding the disabled access route. We believe the latter has been caused by a shifting water table and we are looking to install

a soakaway to clear the water permanently. We are also looking to arrange professional cleaning of the church's war memorial which is in a poor state. Quotes for the cleaning are modest and it is hoped that any cost can be covered by a grant or donations from the local community.

We are forever grateful to our Verger, Steve Dugdale, and all that he does on a day-to-day basis to care for our church, and to the members of the PCC and Building Group subcommittee for their wisdom and support on all manner of maintenance and fabric issues.

### **Mark Gregory & Pauline Heath**

#### **Churchwardens**

### **Deanery Synod**

The new three-year Hallam Deanery Synod met for the first time on 19<sup>th</sup> September at St Columba's Crosspool. Hannah Sandoval the Diocese's Lights for Christ officer was our speaker. <https://www.sheffield.anglican.org/your-calling/lights-for-christ/>

Unfortunately, Ian Parkinson, the Associate Archdeacon for Hallam and Ecclesfield, suffered a major stroke and has had to retire. Mike Gilbert, the former Vicar of Eyam, has been appointed as his successor and starts in April.

On 6<sup>th</sup> December, Bishop Sophie spent a day in Hallam Deanery, visiting churches, a school and a social action project. In the evening, we were joined by Bishop Pete and members of Ecclesfield Deanery Synod and provided input to the Diocese's next funding bid. Hallam is now twinned with Ecclesfield and all of our synods this year will be joint meetings. On 30<sup>th</sup> January, the two synods met at Christchurch Hillsborough to think about ministry with the elderly and those with dementia. Helen Coates from SCCCC was our speaker.

We are very grateful to John Green, our deanery synod representative, who is stepping down this year. We now have two vacancies on the synod and it is important that St John's continues to be represented. Please speak to Matthew if you would like to know more.

### **Mission Area**

St John's is part of a Mission Area with St Mary's Walkley and St Mark's Broomhill. Among other things, the three churches work together on supporting people with dementia and their carers.

Members of St John's and St Mark's also pray together on Zoom each week on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Since 2021, Matthew has been Associate Priest of St Mary's. He or Alison take the morning service there on the third Sunday of the month and Matthew is a governor of St Mary's Primary School. Sue Hammersley, the Vicar of St Mark's, has also been Priest in Charge of St Mary's. Sue stepped down from both of these roles earlier this year and the search is now on for her successor.

## Electoral Roll Report

The Electoral Roll membership at the 2023 APCM totalled 164. Over the past year, we have removed 2 people who have sadly passed away and removed 1 person who has moved away. We have added 10 new people. 8 of which are wedding couples and 2 new people who have moved to the Parish.

**We therefore have a total of 171 people currently on the roll.**

Once in every six years the preparation of new church electoral rolls takes place, which means that everyone must come off the roll and re-apply. The next occasion for the preparation of new rolls is in 2025. People who would like to be on the Church Electoral roll must complete an electoral roll form. Forms should be completed and handed to a member of the Clergy, Churchwarden, the church office or to Claire Webber, our Electoral Roll Officer.

## Inclusion

Members of St John's continue to work on inclusion in a variety of areas including neurodiversity, learning difficulties and dementia. During the year, we have enjoyed more wonderful music from black, female and LGBTQ+ composers who are often under-represented or unacknowledged.

Last summer, we were delighted to host a service to celebrate the marriage of Abi and Natalie, our first same sex couple. Following the decision by the Church of England to authorise Prayers of Love and Faith for same sex couples, the PCC has now agreed to offer these in the context of our regular worship and to provide standalone services of blessing if and when this becomes legal. Members of St John's continue to campaign for this change. The Church now has a dedicated web page for same sex couples:

[https://stjohnsranmoor.org.uk/Groups/413394/Same\\_Sex\\_Couples.aspx](https://stjohnsranmoor.org.uk/Groups/413394/Same_Sex_Couples.aspx)

We continue to work for greater inclusion at every level and in every area of our life and are always grateful for new ideas and encouragement.

## Children's Ministry

Over the past year we have continued with Footsteps on the third Sunday and Involvement with the all age service on the first of the month. The junior choir are still joining us for footsteps and we have welcomed new families who are attending church and as part of the pop up and main choir. There is provision during the all age for the younger children to be part of the service with linked crafts and stories in the crèche area.

The crèche area continues to be well used.

The biggest achievement of the year and the answer to our collective prayers, for which we must give thanks is the appointment of Claire Eaton our Childrens and Families worker.

It was a privilege to welcome Claire and her family to our church family just before Christmas. We held a Messy Christmas service which was well attended. We have recently worked together on Messy Easter , which had Easter related crafts, story, communal snack time and the making of the Easter garden.

Love to all

Janet

We are now able to hold footsteps each week (except the first Sunday which is all age).

It has been great to launch our new weekly baby and toddler group and watch numbers grow week by week. We hope to see these families begin to engage with our other church activities and events.

We would like to look at introducing a termly 'Stay and Play' event for families that could incorporate a fundraising element and activities based on our Eco Church ethos.

We would like to look at offering a relaxed termly social for the choir and church families with space to share the highs and lows of our parenting journeys, food, faith and fun!

In September we will be linking with St Mark's Church, Broomhill for their Parish Weekend with St John's hosting activities on the Friday evening.

Again, the biggest thanks must go to all the helpers, who help to make it possible to bring more children into the Church family.

We are always looking for anyone who would like to help with any of the activities.

Love to all

Claire Eaton

## Music

It has been another very busy and successful year for the music department at St John's, supporting and enhancing the church's worship. I will report in detail below on the various components of our choir and of our music-making activity.

The **Choristers** have continued to sing a service each Sunday and a Wednesday evensong once a month as well as working towards medals in the RSCM Voice for Life scheme. They have been led brilliantly by the Head Chorister, Mabel, and the other senior choristers Sofia and Lily. Those three have occasionally sung services with the adult sopranos as part of their transition to becoming choral scholars in the next year and have continued to be excellent role models for the younger choristers and an invaluable help to me.

We have had a very stable period of having 15 Choristers, all with good attendance and a high proportion of them with outstanding attendance, hardly missing a service or rehearsal.

Accordingly they have been able to perform regularly to a very high standard, building on their repertoire and also taking part in lots of extra things – the Come and Sing with all the various polychoral pieces, the Christmas concert and, most impressively, the St Matthew Passion. It is still a relatively young group (10 of the 15 are still in Primary School) so it will be exciting to see their progress over the coming years. All the choristers receive instruction in music theory and individual singing tuition as part of the church's offer to them and their families.

We try to keep a good balance between services where they sing on their own (or take the top line along with the lower parts) and where they sing with the excellent adult sopranos. This enables them to sing a wider repertoire than they otherwise might do.

The **Junior Choir** have continued to sing two services per month and even took part in the Matthew Passion in March as part of the ripieno chorus. We currently have 6 Juniors; 3 in Year 3, 1 in Year 2 and 2 in Year 1. The Year 3s will probably all move into the Choristers in September (all three have parents in the choir). Recruitment and retention has not been as successful as previously but we have a few younger siblings who will be coming up to Year 1 in September and may well join them which will keep the numbers strong enough. I will continue to contact and visit schools and keep the visibility of what we are doing high.

The **Pop-up Choir** has continued to run once a month during term time. It remains a great way of giving children the experience of singing in a choir – either as a stepping stone to joining or as something to do once a month.

We have three **Choral Scholars**, two in Year 11 and one in Year 12. They continue to sing alongside the adults, learning from the experienced and excellent singers we have in our ranks, as well as having one-on-one tuition. They make an excellent contribution to the choir. We have not actively recruited in this area, seeing this as more of a route for our Choristers to take when they move on from that but we are open to young people joining the choir as Choral Scholars and will be looking for ways to publicise this more widely.

We are most grateful to Georgina Hulse (Chorister Tutor) and Katie Collin for their work training the Choristers and Juniors on Monday evenings, to Jacky Dakin for organising their robes and their choir pay, and to Sarah Beardsmore and her team of chaperones without whom our work with our young singers would not be possible. We are also grateful to all the families of our young singers who are the unsung heroes of any choral foundation.

The **Adult Choir** have continued to provide a standard of singing which would be the envy of many cathedrals, let alone parish churches. I am most grateful for their hard work and commitment.

In July we said farewell to Matthew Warbis who finished his time as Organ Scholar on completion of his Master's Degree and his relocation. He left with our thanks and best wishes. We have advertised for a new Organ Scholar but with no applications or expressions of interest. We are

fortunate to have a strong team of organists and are not dependent on an organ scholar for coverage of services but we are keen to appoint whenever possible as we have a lot to offer a young organist.

There have been numerous highlights over the last year:

- i) Last June the choir sang a concert jointly with the choir of Tapton School – it was a real pleasure to work with our near neighbours and we hope to do similar things in future years.
- ii) In August, the choir spent a weekend in the North East, singing a concert at St Mary's, Holy Island and both Sunday services at Newcastle Cathedral. A large number of children and adults made the trip. It was a hugely successful trip, with our singing greatly appreciated in both places, and a great opportunity for people to get to know each other better socially and musically.
- iii) In September we had our Come and Sing event, Biber *Requiem* and polychoral motets. We had 30 visiting singers join our own choir in a day of rehearsals, culminating in an excellent performance, with the Choristers taking a starring role in both works.
- iv) In December we again held our “Christmas Extravaganza” with Stannington Brass Band. We had a good audience and an excellent concert. The choir (including Choristers and Juniors) really enjoy working with the band (and they with us) and we are already looking forward to the next one in December 2024.
- v) In March we sang Bach’s St Matthew Passion, alongside the Steel City Choristers in place of evensong on Passion Sunday. It was a huge undertaking and congratulations and thanks go to everyone who took part but particularly to David Milsom (who organised the orchestra) and Eleanor Jarvis who prepared the Steel City Choristers for the performance.

All of this, of course, in addition to a busy regular pattern of services and many special occasions such as the Advent Procession, Christmas Carol Service, Epiphany Procession and the many services in Holy Week, all of which have been very successful.

The whole choir; adults, Choral Scholars, Choristers and Juniors are an absolute delight to work with – I genuinely look forward to every rehearsal and every service. I would like to thank them for their dedication, skill and commitment. I would also like to thank Derek Grover, Julian Gunn, Joe Hutchinson, and Peter Heginbotham for their excellent playing, conducting, wisdom and support.

Our monthly **Organ Recitals** have continued this year and we have hosted various concerts by outside organisations.

Philip Collin

## Flowers

The flower rota is coordinated by Sandra Green and Jackie Lowe. Each volunteer on the rota normally commits to providing and arranging one pedestal of flowers in Church for two consecutive weeks, on average once a year.

Volunteers are also invited via the church notice sheet to help at the major festivals of Easter, Harvest and Christmas. This usually entails providing and arranging flowers for either one of the window sills, a pedestal, the font or the church porch.

Prior to Easter we asked via the church news sheet for donations towards the purchase of lilies in memory of someone who had died and these were incorporated in our two Easter pedestal arrangements and around the font. Volunteers provided potted plants and spring flowers arranged in decorative jars or baskets for the window sills and we used potted plants arranged in compost for the church porch.

For our harvest arrangements we used colourful autumnal flowers, plants, fruits and vegetables together with foliage from our gardens to make all our arrangements without the use of floral foam. The window sills were enhanced with small needlework tapestries from our Mission Partnership Church St Mark's Broomhill.

At Christmas we used fatsia leaves sprayed gold at the edges, white carnations and large white chrysanthemums , gold pine cones, baubles and stars together with holly and green foliage from members gardens to create our arrangements for the pedestals, font and window sills. We also used battery operated candles on the window sills and holly which had an abundance of berries this year. In the porch we used small potted Christmas trees planted in compost with baubles and stars. We have since planted the Christmas trees in our gardens to use again.

As part of St Johns Eco-church and the wider church's Net Zero action plan we have made changes in that we used less floral foam (Oasis) in our arrangements at Easter and since September 2023 all our arrangements have been floral foam free.

We would like to thank everyone who has helped to enhance our worship this year by providing flower arrangements.

We are always looking for more people to help so please do contact either Sandra Green or Jackie Lowe if you are interested.  
**Jackie Lowe and Sandra Green.**

## Study Groups

This year we have run two study groups.

In Advent we ran a four week evening group which reflected on the seven 'O' Antiphons sung at our Advent Service on the first Sunday in Advent. Our study was based on seven paintings in Jane Williams' book "The Art of Advent". The sessions were led by Rev. Peter Das and Sandra Green.

In Lent we ran an afternoon group. We based our study on Tom Wright's book 'Lent and Easter for Everyone - From wilderness to glory'. The book had seven weeks of daily readings and reflections which could be used as the basis for individual reading and prayer during Lent and the Easter season. Each week we focused on two selected readings for our study. The sessions were run by Rev Peter Das, Rev Alison Wragg, Liz Dwyer and Sandra Green. We have found that in reading, reflecting, discussing and listening to each other, we have learned much which has helped us to grow in faith. Our study groups are small but very friendly. We would love to welcome more members - if you would be interested in finding out more about our groups, please do speak to one of us.

Sandra Green

## Eco Church

We increasingly see how the climate and nature emergency affect the earth and all living things. St John's is a Silver Eco Church. This shows our commitment to the fifth Anglican Mark of Mission to strive to safeguard the integrity of God's creation, and sustain and renew the life of the earth, and work for climate justice. A Rocha's Eco Church survey records the life of our church community in five key areas below to achieve our award. It's wonderful that the two sister churches in our Mission Area are also Eco Churches: St Mary's have just received their Bronze award and St Mark's is the first Gold Eco Church in the Diocese. We welcome new members to join St John's Eco Church Group or support in any way you can, so do have a chat with John, Cathy or Matthew.

### **Buildings**

The estimated carbon footprint of our church building is 33 tonnes net Co2 and is one of the highest in the Diocese, mainly due to difficulties in insulating and the age of our gas boilers. As part of the building project, reducing our carbon footprint towards the Diocesan and national CofE Net Zero by 2030 target is crucial. In the long term this will save money and make us a warm welcoming space. The vicarage and parish centre are in the survey and our renewable energy tariffs, LED lights, cycle racks, recycling and reusable cups for refreshments are in this section.

## **Worship & Teaching**

We regularly pray about the climate and nature crisis, and mark seasons like Harvest & Creation-tide. The fantastic Creation tapestries from St Marks were displayed alongside sustainable flowers at Harvest. The flower arranging team have been wonderfully creative and achieve beautiful arrangements with planters, jars and containers, using innovative ways to reduce our use of floral plastic foam. The Easter Garden made at Messy Easter used long-lasting flowers in planters made of recycled pallets (thank you Philip Walshaw!) It's great to have Claire Eaton, our Children and Families Worker supporting this work including beautiful prayer stations at the all Age service in March. John Green writes thoughtful eco articles for Inspire including Citizen Science and 'Eco-Good News!' Revd Peter Das is part of the theology subgroup of the Diocesan Environment Working Group chaired by Cathy, in her voluntary role as Diocesan Environment Officer.

## **Land**

The RSPB Big Garden Birdwatch was completed for vicarage and church in January. We don't have many birds around the church - hence planting the crab apple tree to mark last year's coronation. It acts a food source for insects (nectar) and birds (fruit). We'll take part in 'No Mow May' again in front of church following our Land Management Plan and in June our 'Churches Count on Nature' survey will show how many species we can find! The land at the church, parish centre and vicarage are managed for wildlife, and we hope the bumblebee nest under the vicarage patio will be used again this year. We are connected with churches supporting Nature Recovery Sheffield with the Wildlife Trust, including as a case study online.

## **Community & Global engagement**

All of our toilets need to be twinned, and the group hope to work with Claire Eaton and our younger members to raise funds to twin those in the Annexe and church. We support environment charities, including A Rocha and Christian Aid. In this election year, there are campaigns and information about how churches and their members can be involved to encourage greener government, so watch this space if you would like to learn more about that.

## **Lifestyle**

Varied activities from car shares to joining litter picks to vegetarian food options are counted here! The Good Taste Fairtrade shop is now in church regularly and it is great to have the card machine available. Thank you to all who help and support our Eco Church work.

## **John Green and Cathy Rhodes**

## Ranmoor Ringers

This last year has been an interesting time as the highlight was “Ring for the King” a celebration of Coronation ringing.

**Sunday Service Ringing.**

Our numbers vary from 6 to 12 but we always have enough ringers to make a joyful noise.

Peter and Elaine have taught three new ringers who are now on our Sunday service rota.

Wilf has moved on to Oxford Uni where he is continuing to ring with the student band.

We have had visiting ringers both for Peals and outings of varying abilities whose donations have helped to increase our bank balance as we have had to replace a number of ropes this last year.

This last year has been busy with weddings – perhaps a catch up Post Covid and the coming year is looking quiet.

Our Christmas ringing for the local schools was well received especially the 3 services for Notre Dame.

Our Steeple Keeper Nick has retired after 26 years following on from his Father who did many more.

Jeremy has taken over this position and we are grateful for this.

My thanks go to the band in supporting me and the church in the call to worship.

Richard Noble – Tower Captain.

## Report of the Pastoral Care Group

The Pastoral Care Group has met 4 times during 2023-2024:

- **Members of the Pastoral Care Group during 2023 have been:** Janet Atkinson (chair), Liz Dwyer, Rosemary Farkas, Mary Grover, Trudie Kelly, Gillian Stanley, and Barbara Wozencroft. Rev Matthew Rhodes and Rev Alison Wragg continue to play a key role in guiding our work and offering support to individual members of the congregation as needed. Rev Peter Pithikrit Das has also attended meetings

### Roles and responsibilities

- Mary Grover and Liz Dwyer continue to act on requests for short-term support and arrange occasional meals for families or individuals.
- Barbara Wozencroft has continued to organise a transport rota throughout the year and responds to any new requests for people needing help to get to church services. This service is highly valued by those receiving lifts. Other members of the congregation also regularly bring friends and neighbours to services.

- Trudie Kelly provides a very important link with the Wednesday lunch club and also sends cards to members of the congregation who are hospitalised or unwell for periods of time.
- Rosemary Farkas continues to provide professional guidance and insight on issues relating to pastoral care

In all our work careful attention is given to data protection, safeguarding and confidentiality.

### **Areas of pastoral care covered since April 2023**

The informal support that so many members of the congregation offer to each other continues to be a vital part of the life at St John's, often quietly undertaken without any formal recognition or mention: e.g. lifts to hospital, visits and ongoing care and support. The pastoral care group provides a framework to ensure that as far as possible we can respond to situations when needed and support the clergy in their pastoral role. Members of the group regularly respond to requests from clergy to visit people or keep in touch by telephone. Mandy Stockley and Gillian Stanley have both visited members of the congregation unable to attend services.

Providing home cooked meals in unexpected crises or during planned treatments has continued to be valued by members of the congregation and we are grateful to those people who cook and deliver meals when a need is made known. If this is something you would like to find out more about or be able to do on an occasional basis please speak to Liz Dwyer or Mary Grover..

The Wednesday lunch club has continued to thrive and expand in numbers: now serving on average more than 23 meals a week, plus occasional home deliveries to those members unable to attend. Thanks again to all the volunteers and in particular to Anne Ward who continues to organise the volunteer rota and help at the lunch club. The city council grant has continued to contribute to transport costs: an application for a further grant to continue this service has been submitted.

In August 2023 we were again able to provide lunches on Wednesdays during the summer enabling regular volunteers to have a break. We are planning to do this again in August 2024 and are looking for volunteers who might be willing to join the team for one Wednesday in August from 12 noon to 2pm. For more information speak to Barbara Wozencroft, Janet Atkinson or Claire Webber.

Anyone interested in helping with the Wednesday lunches will always be welcome to join the rota setting tables and serving lunches. We are also urgently looking for another person to join the rota of cooks following the retirement of Susan Hepworth and Grace Woods. Susan had been on the team for more than 25 years!!

Thanks again to Trudie Kelly and Pat Thompson who continue to send cards on the first anniversary of weddings and christenings that take place at St John's, thus maintaining contact with families who come to St Johns to celebrate significant life events.

Three small teams comprising both lay and ordained people (nine in total) lead Communion Worship once a month in three care homes in the parish: the Laurel and Limes, Darwin House and

Bridgedale House. These services of worship are much appreciated by both staff and residents who attend. Rev Alison Wragg also leads a small home communion service on a regular basis in Lodge Moor for members of St Johns who are no longer able to get to services.

As part of our Mission Partnership activities a service of Songs of Praise for people with dementia and their families again took place at St Marks Broomhill this year organised by the dementia support group.

The monthly social lunch following the Sunday morning service has become a regular activity and is enjoyed by all those who have attended, providing a simple but delicious lunch and a variety of enjoyable activities. Thanks to Wendy Weeks and Janet Anker and everyone else involved in making this happen.

### **Thanks and Looking Ahead**

We continue to be thankful for the 34 people in our church community who continue to offer their time and skill; enabling us to care for each other both informally and through more organised activities.

We should also like to record again our particular thanks to Claire Webber who continues to play such a significant role in relation to pastoral care by listening, supporting people, providing practical help and referring requests on to the pastoral care group. She plays a particularly important role in guiding us with any issues associated with safeguarding and Data Protection.

If you are interested in finding out more about our pastoral care activities or think you might like to contribute in some way, please speak to Janet Atkinson or contact Claire who will pass on your details to a member of the pastoral care group. We are still looking for two more volunteer drivers who would be willing to join a rota of people who collect a member of the congregation and bring them to the 10.30 service. This is much appreciated and enables people who need transport to attend services. Anyone wishing more information about what this involves can talk to Barbara Wozencroft. It does not have to be a weekly commitment.

When people volunteer we ask for a commitment of just twelve months which is reviewed at the end of each year. We are planning a lunch on Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> September to thank all those people who have contributed to pastoral care during 2023/24. Anyone interested in finding out about Pastoral Care is welcome to come along and find out more about what they might be able to do and how to get involved in some small way.

**Janet Atkinson on behalf of the Pastoral Care Group. April 2024**

## Dementia Matters

Since the APCM in 2023 the Dementia Core Group has continued to meet. This group consists of representatives from the three churches (St Mary's Walkley, St Mark's Broomhill and St John's) of the South Hallam Mission Area. The task of this group is to broadly outline the continuing movement towards increasing dementia awareness and action in the mission area while allowing some flexibility in the separate parishes to deliver it according to the individual wishes and needs of each parish. There are no additional resources allocated to the group. The Core Group meetings are relatively infrequent (3-4 times a year) but are undoubtedly productive.

The Core Group is a member of the Sheffield Dementia Action Alliance (SDAA) which works citywide across different organisations to raise the awareness of dementia among their staff and clients. As part of our SDAA membership we have to produce two annual (ratifiable) pledges to indicate our plans for the forthcoming year and deliver them. In May/June 2023 the Core Group pledged to organise the design and delivery of Christmas and Easter cards suitable for people with dementia. The responsibility for designing the cards rotated across the three parishes and used the skills of children or adults of those parishes. The cards were to be given to all residents of the dementia care homes in the mission area. Secondly the group pledged to construct and present an act of worship, specifically for people on the dementia pathway and their carers, to be held in one of our mission area churches. This was to be in addition to the regular services provided by our churches to the care homes. This service entitled "Hymns for Harvest" took place at St Mark's church on Sunday October 1<sup>st</sup> followed by afternoon tea. Parishioners from the three different churches volunteered to be helpers. The service and tea was much enjoyed by those attending but afterwards the Core Group felt that by taking the service to the care homes we could make it available to more residents. This is our plan for Harvest 2024. Our 2023-2024 pledges have been fulfilled.

At the end of 2023 members of the congregation of St Mary's were able to resume leading monthly services in the dementia care home (Moorend Place) in their parish so now all the homes in our mission area have a regular act of worship for their residents if they wish.

For Dementia Action Week (May 2023) the Core Group wrote a special Dementia Awareness Prayer for use in the three churches and by their congregations. This could be taken home as a prayer card, spoken during the regular services or used in silent prayer and will be used again this year by St John's during Dementia Action Week.

An "Action" taken by St John's in 2023 involved a small set of books related to dementia being incorporated into the church library. These covered a range of dementia related topics ranging

from a basic guidebook suitable for carers to autobiographies, some books for children and the theology of dementia.

As part of the Action Week 2023 the national Alzheimer's Society had asked for volunteers to attend Morrison's supermarkets to collect money for their ongoing work. Several members of St John's congregation volunteered to attend Morrison's at Hillsborough and were amazed at the generosity of the customers there and were moved by hearing many describing their carer experiences.

Wendy Weeks

## The Sunday Social

The Sunday Social has continued to run (mostly) on the fourth Sunday of the month over the last year after the morning service at St John's. It provides a further time of fellowship for those attending the service, *of any age*, who live alone. A tasty 2 course lunch is provided and after lunch there is plenty of time to explore the table top games and jigsaws and, of course, talk and laugh. Some of our group now excel at Scrabble and our jigsaw "specialists" remain undefeated by 250-300 piece puzzles working together as a happy team. Nothing is competitive, just a lot of fun. Home made cake and tea/coffee is served just before departure at 3pm. All this for £5.50 to cover the cost of food, any surplus raised goes to the church funds. Our thanks to the helpers without whom the Sunday Social would not be possible. If anybody is interested in joining please contact Janet or Wendy or Claire in the office.

**Janet Anker and Wendy Weeks.**

## Social Justice Committee

Report of the Social Justice Group of St John's to the APCM April 2024

Those involved with Christian Aid and green issues work independently but share their activities with the Social Justice Group.

### 1. Church Giving to charities.

The Social Justice Group is responsible for scrutinising annually the church's charitable giving and sending out recommendations to the PCC. St John's donates 4% to charity, out of the income left over after our contribution to the Diocese.

We allocate funds on the following basis:

A. 10% Subscriptions

- B. 30% Overseas
- C. 30% UK
- D. 30% Sheffield

<b>A. 10% Subscriptions to organisations which support the life of the church</b>		
Yorkshire Association of Change Ringers		£ 120.00
A Rocha		£ 349.80
<b>B: 30% Overseas</b>		
UNHCR - UN agency for refugees		£ 469.80
Medecins Sans Frontières		£ 469.80
DAC - this is to be allocated as an when needed in the year		£ 469.80
<b>C: 30% National</b>		
MIND		£ 469.80
Shannon Trust		£ 469.80
Church Action on Poverty		£ 469.80
<b>D: 30% Sheffield</b>		
Sanctuary Sheffield		£ 352.35
Sheffield Young Carers		£ 352.35
SRASAC (Sheffield Rape and Sexual Abuse Centre)		£ 352.35
The Snowdrop Project (Future free from Child Trafficking)		£ 352.35
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£ 4,698.00</b>

Christmas Card Board: It was agreed that the Christmas Card Board proceeds should go to the Archer Project. This year a single communal card was displayed and signed by members of congregation who gave donations.

## 2. Fair Trade Stall

Our Fair Trade stall was resumed in December 2022. It is now held on the second Sunday of every month. We are grateful to Jenny from Good Taste, the fair-trade shop in Broomhill, for preparing the box and to Janet and Malcolm Anker who deliver the box to church.

- 3. **Dementia Action Week** - Wendy Weeks has, over many years, helped the church become aware of the ways in which we can support those with dementia. (See separate dementia report)
- 4. **Baby Basics**- We are very grateful that Susan Hepworth continues to maintain the church's link with Baby Basics.

Finally, though we are a large group whose members are all active in various aspects of the church's work for social justice, we still lack a chair. Please would anyone who feels they take on this role contact Matthew. With many thanks.

## Burngreave Foodbank

We continue to collect fortnightly from the Church drive for the Burngreave Foodbank. We do a separate Christmas and Harvest Collection too. A total of 3005.65kg was donated over those 12 months. That actually makes St John's the 4th highest donor for the year, coming only after our 2 Tesco in-store collection points and a large insurance company in London who randomly decided to support us last year (but not this year, sadly)! The foodbank really is staggered as St John's really are the biggest individual donor by a long way. 3005 kg of food is the approximate equivalent of 7155 meals. Thank you to everyone once again for their incredible generosity – and just sheer faithfulness in continuing to give so regularly when many others have not managed to. It was the foodbanks busiest year by far last year and St John's has been a major player in keeping them going!

The foodbank remain grateful beyond words.  
Claire Webber

## Christian Aid

During Christian Aid week we were able to deliver envelopes and leaflets, which showed all the Christian Aid events for the week, to every accessible house in the Parish. A number of people who delivered also collected on their delivery route and this realised £1320. A further £400 was collected from the collection points in the Parish Centre and at the Chemist on Oakbrook Road.

The theme for Christian Aid was 'peas' and we sold peas for folks to grow and then to show them to us as their plants developed and some people even had them cooked with their meals. We made £43 selling the peas in fibre pots.

We began the week with a sponsored walk around the Parish boundary where donations totalled £389. We enjoyed an excellent concert, with contributions from many talented young people in the choir, as well as some other members of the congregation, which took place on the Friday night and brought in £261.

The big breakfast on the Saturday was well supported and a cake stall, plant stall, sale of cards and preserves and a book stall brought in a further £823.

Our overall total was just over £3500 and this also includes card payments to the St John's Christian Aid account.

In addition to this Peter Lowe did a magnificent bike ride from Lands End to John O'Groats which raised a further £1270 through his Just Giving page. Many thanks Peter and what an achievement.

We would like to thank all those who helped in any way from bundling up the envelopes to organising the Gala Concert, to cooking the bacon and vegetarian sausage and manning the stalls. We had a great week and look forward to fine weather again this year when we have more events planned.

Christian Aid week is 12-18 May 2024 when we will be focusing on poverty in Burundi. We would of course welcome any further offers of help, especially for the Big Breakfast, so do please contact us.

Janet Anker and Pauline Heath

## Safeguarding

As members of the Church of England we are concerned with the wholeness of each individual within God's purpose for everyone. We seek to safeguard all members of the church community, of all ages. It is the responsibility of each one of us to protect children and young people and vulnerable adults from physical, emotional and sexual abuse, and from neglect. The Safeguarding policy is updated each year and the current year 2024 will be signed off with the PCC in April 2024. All aspects of our policy are in line with the House of Bishops Guidance on Safeguarding.

The PCC appointed me as independent Parish Safeguarding Officer. I have attended many training courses on safeguarding and ensure that the PCC are up-to date with all aspects of keeping our church safe.

St John's is very pro-active, ensuring that DBS Certificates are in place for any people working with children and vulnerable adults. Risk Assessments take place for every piece of activity we may conduct, and First Aid Courses are ran to ensure we have emergency training to help anybody who falls ill or has an accident. This year due to the pandemic we have ensured that the use of media, images and consents are all up to date for parents. We have also increased awareness about church being a safe place for all. We have introduced registration forms for adults and children joining any of our groups and we update any legislation as and when this is implanted throughout the year. Safeguarding is part of our monthly PCC Agenda.

Importantly I ensure that people who work with children and vulnerable adults in our parish are trained and aware of what to do to keep our church a safe place. Thank you, Claire Webber

## Weddings

St John's is a wonderful church where on average we have many weddings taking place each year. Around half the couples that are married here attend regularly to come on our electoral roll. Many have another qualifying connection to be married such as – they have lived in the parish; their parents or grandparents were married here and so on.

There are fewer weddings booked through 2023 and 2024 and we acknowledge that this is due to couples facing more financial constraints and nervousness about committing to a big wedding and the costs associated. We were very excited to be able to hold our first same sex blessing which will took place in summer 2023.

We hope and pray for all couples being married in St John's this year and wish them all very well in their lives together.

## Social Events

The Committee has held infrequent meetings in person, with a focus on the schedule of events in 2024 aimed both at increasing the social cohesion of the existing church family and reaching out into the community within Ranmoor Parish and the wider Diocese.

The bulk of our work this year is in support of the wonderful Scissors, Paper, Stone programme that is being curated by Mary Grouer as part of the build up to celebrating the 150th anniversary of the building of St John's pre-fire iteration. The two week exhibition planned for June, together with associated events present a great opportunity to showcase St John's and its history to a broad audience. Committee members are involved in supporting this, in addition to the events taking place during Christian Aid week in May, the Bishop's Garden Party also in June and aspects of the musical programme through the year. We will then focus upon planning for events in the autumn and during aduent.

Peter Wozencroft  
Committee Chair

## Coffee and Refreshments

After the morning service on a Sunday, we continue to serve coffee, tea, squash and biscuits. This is an important part of our Sunday mornings – people like to gather after the service to chat, catch up with friends and share news. Our coffee & tea is sourced from the Fairtrade shop at Broomhill. We are always looking for extra people to come onto the rota to help serve. Thank you to the

excellent volunteers who help each week to provide refreshments after the morning service – it is greatly appreciated. If you would like to help, please speak to Claire in the Parish office.

## Inspire Magazine

The parish magazine continues to flourish under the editorship of Philip Walshaw. It is posted out and hand delivered, with the help of Janet and Malcolm Anker, Chris Cooper, Sue Coombe, Norma Barnsley and Alan and Pauline Heath. Additionally, it is e-mailed to everyone on the Church's database. Copies are available inside Church and in the Parish Centre. We try to break even financially, although this is proving more difficult with ever increasing printing costs and a reduced number of advertisers. In 2023, the income from the magazine was £2,098 and the expenses were £2,390, resulting in a subsidy of £292. With no price increase for many years, the magazine represents good value at £1 per issue and it is an important part of the Church's mission to reach out to the community. Regular features such as the *Quiz*, *Eco Church*, *Restaurant Review* and *Rambling On* prove to be popular amongst the readership. Articles for inclusion in the magazine are always welcomed from anyone. Many thanks to those who do submit them, particularly John Green and Roy Stanley, who are regular contributors

Philip Walshaw

## Scissors Paper Stone

I set off on the Scissors Paper Stone project at the request of Matthew, our vicar. In 2029 we will be commemorating the 150 years since the laying of the foundation stone of our first church in 1879. Matthew wished to understand, as fully as possible, the ideals and mission that caused our church to be established and the origins of the wealth that funded it.

From the outset we aimed to make this a community history project, just as the creation of the church had been a community project. The land was donated by a neighbouring cutler James William Harrisson and the building was funded by the brewer John Newton Mappin who lived on the Fulwood Road. The furnishings and windows of both the first and second church were funded by parishioners.

In September 2023, as a part of a Heritage Open Day, I gave a talk which set out the aims of the project and sought support and interest from all members of our parish. I have been delighted by the response. Val Hewson and Susan Roe are researching the lives of the stone masons who actually built our church. In this they have been inspired by the discovery by our church warden, Mark Gregory, of a treasure trove of masons' initials in the roof space of the church. Val will be giving a talk on our stone masons at the Heritage Open day talk in September.

The Scissors Paper Stone team have planned a series of events for 2024 in which we share the findings of those who have been researching with us. This is the first of four years of events leading up to the commemoration of our founding in 2029. This year's events focus on the fabric of the building: the people who funded and built the church. Next year we will be moving on to the social composition of the parish in the first thirty years of its creation.

The year's events were launched on April 13 by Loueday Herridge's superb lecture on our donor John Newton Mappin. This derived from newly researched material and was introduced by a delightful short concert from members of the church choir of the kind of music which may well have filled the parlours of the wealthy benefactors of our first church.

Our major event this year will run from June 15-29th when we will open the church to the community around us. Margaret Bennett has generously offered to share and sell her paintings at a two week long exhibition entitled Sacred Stones. During these two weeks we will be organising children's art workshops and a history trail, a musical event and a talk to the Victorian Society. Local schools have already expressed interest in bringing children to visit the church during this time. We are very lucky that our children's worker, Claire Eaton, local historian Dan Eaton, Sarah Beardsmore and Margaret Bennett are joining forces to plan a children's treasure trail round the church for us to use with visiting children. This will be a permanent resource for the church.

Talks in the following months include a lecture by the professional geologist, Scott Engering on the stones from which our church is built, Val's talk on the stone masons and Sylvia Dunkley's on the eminent sculptor Frank Tory who carved so much of our stonework.

These talks are made possible by the generosity both of the speakers and of the researchers who have made material available to us. I am most grateful to members of the Fulwood History Group who have guided me and to the Ranmoor Society who have made their archives available. The chief burial researcher of the General Cemetery could not have been more helpful as has the Heritage Officer of the Sheffield branch of CAMRA. As always the librarians of our city's Archives and Local History collections have done all they can to identify material that might be useful to us. I am also grateful to the Sheffield Society of Architects for enabling me to access information about the architect of both our first and second churches, Edward Mitchel Gibbs.

The interest and support of both individuals and groups demonstrate just how much the community as a whole can learn from an examination of the history of the church in which we are lucky enough to worship. This project would have been impossible without the help of Claire Webber and Mathilde Hutchings. The design and organisational skills of Sarah Beardsmore have been invaluable. Mary Grouer

## Tech Team

Our current streaming arrangement is to broadcast both Sunday morning and evening services and occasional weddings, funerals and concerts on YouTube.

The streaming system itself has been simplified and can now be operated with minimal training.

The sound system is in good order following a servicing from a sound engineer. The two lapel mics have been repaired following issues with sound quality during services.

## Sides People

We really are back to a new normal this past year, with a team of four at main services. This has been helped by recruiting new members Krys Chandler and Becky Marsh and Chris Lewis and Graham Woods re-joining us. Veronica Sullivan is having a break but we look forward to when she can re-join us. Peter Das has taken over the readers rota from Julian. We have been trying to co-ordinate the rotas using a spreadsheet, so members can combine sides-person and reader/intercessor duties.

Anthea Priestley has stepped back from Duty Warden duties for the time being. I will be looking for a replacement to act as a key holder so the Churchwardens don't have duties too often. We are always pleased when people ask if they can help with the rota duties, so please make yourself known if you think you could help.

Mark Gregory has greatly simplified the broadcast/recording process so it's not so intimidating. It just requires labelled buttons to be pressed at the appropriate time. That's a great relief to those of us who are wary of technology!

## Wardens and Duty Wardens

### **Wardens and Duty Wardens**

Pauline Heath\*

Mark Gregory\*\*\*

John Green

Peter Lowe

Carl Webber\*\*

Peter Wozencroft

### **Senior Sides-persons**

Peter Chatterton

Sandra Green

Barbara Wozencroft

### **Sides-persons**

Janet Anker

Malcolm Anker

Janet Atkinson

Deborah Bower

John Biggin\*

David Booker

Krys Chandler

Norma Chatterton

Pam Cooper\*

Nigel Edmonds

Rosie Gregory\*

Susan Hepworth

Trudie Kelly

Chris Lewis

Jackie Lowe

Peter Morrison\*

Becky Marsh

Anthea Priestley

Morag Shaw \*

Gillian Stanley

Mandy Stockley

Pat Thompson

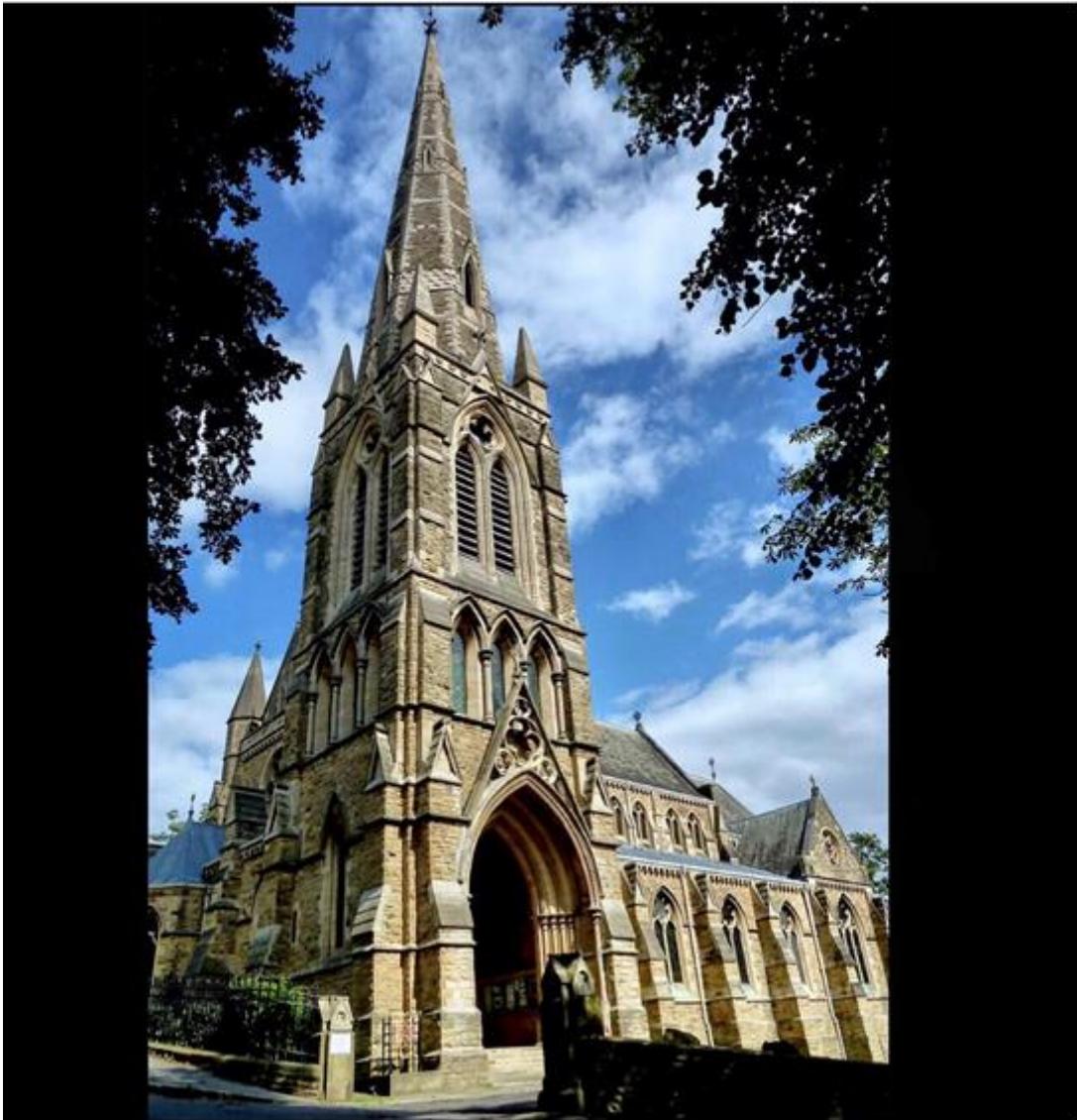
Claire Webber \*\*

Wendy Weeks \*

Graham Woods

\* Euensong \*\* All Age

**Thank you to everyone for your contributions.**



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