



Living the Reason

ST JOHN'S CHURCH WORKSOP



APCM 6th April 2025

APCM minutes of Sunday March 24th 2024

1. **Opening prayer** Rev. Dave Gough
2. **Present:** Jess Rudman, Phil Rutherford, Andrew Rutherford, Margaret Cartwright, Pete Cartwright, Sue Dawson, Dawn Beaumont, Barbara Baldwin, Pete Dawson, Sylvia Makeman, Ben Makeman, John Nelson, Debbie Hodgkins, John Hodgkins, John Rawson, Derek Watkinson, Paul French, Jane, Ady, Peter Heggaty, Helen Hodgkinson, Martin Hodgkinson, Ian Walsham, Jane Baker, Mairwen Brownhill, Karen Balston, Gemma Sibson, Stephen Dillon, Michelle Blankley, Chris Blankley, Jean Marsh, Will Davidson, Damisi Osilaja, Bunmi Osilaja, Rachel Follows, Susan Drury, June Bacon, Roger Bacon, Ingrid Kicks, Helen Cooper, Anne Shillitto, Betty Stones, Judy Deakin, Chris Ledger, Sue Ledger, Alan Hardstaff, Josie Hardstaff, Pauline Newcombe, Neal Newcombe, Phill Kicks, Rosemary Arnott

Apologies: Ann Rutherford, Anne Drury, Jeanette Dillon, Mel Morris, Doreen Morris, Barrie Stones, Maureen Stones.
3. **Election of Churchwardens** - no change. PK & JR happy to continue
4. **Minutes of the 2023 APCM** Accepted nom AH, sec JR
5. **Matters arising** - none
6. **Churchwardens report** - written report read out by JR.
7. **Churchwarden's Fabric report** - written report PK
8. **Presentation of the audited accounts for 2023** - written report explained by PR. Breaking even this year.
9. **Adoption of the Accounts and appointment of the independent examiner.** Accounts accepted nom PR, sec MH All in favour. PK had earlier explained that the money from the Lottery needs to go through the church account. The Deanery is now auditing the accounts so that they can be signed off.
10. **Electoral Roll Report** Sue L - written & comment of 9 new names on electoral roll giving a total of 68.
11. **Safeguarding Report** Sue Dawson written and comment that our church is keeping up to date and is compliant with safeguarding. There is a new matrix which is available in the church office.
12. **Additional Reports previously submitted.** PCC Secretary's Report - written and expanded Deanery Synod report, Project Delivery group report, Sunday@ Six, Mother's Union, Home groups, Lifeline prayer, Games night - all written Thursday Drop in - written and then expanded by Steve Dillon. Last week there were a total of 42 people, which was very encouraging, compared to the small numbers when they started in last September. Kids church - written and then expanded by John Hodgkins. The team has been strengthened by new leaders including Judy & Dawn. Today they had 14 children. Pray for children to know Jesus as saviour. Tuesdays @10- written and then expanded by Karen Balston. There is a plan for a data base for memories. A heritage website has been created <https://worksopspire.org/> Friday Toddler Group - written and then expanded by Gemma Sibson Gemma came as a parent and now 13 years later is still helping with the group. Ann R in the kitchen, Debbie, Karen & Kirsty help with crafts Hannah has been leading the singing & circle time. Grandparents who originally brought their children are now bringing their grandchildren. All the reports were accepted nom Sue L, sec Sue Dawson.
13. **Deanery Synod Reps** - Pete D, Jess R continuing

APCM minutes of Sunday March 24th 2024

14. **Recommendations to PCC** Current members all continuing. Additional member Rachel Follows, nom Sue L sec, Janet Silk All in favour.
15. **Minutes of the last meeting** (usually deferred to next meeting)
16. **Matters Arising** (not dealt with)
17. **Appointed offices** - Electoral Roll officer Sue L. Treasurer PR PCC secretary RA nom MB sec JR all PCC in favour.
18. **Final words** PK Thanked everyone for their help. the church will take 6 months for the inside to dry out. DG Thanked everyone for all they are doing. Well done good and faithful servants. Continue to pray for the leaders, and support the church wardens & leadership team while Tim is under suspension. DG then closed in prayer. RA PCC secretary March 2024

Churchwarden's report for APCM 2025

This has been a mixed year - a year of sadness and disappointment about Tim's resignation at the beginning of June and the conclusion of the Clergy Disciplinary Process at the end of November; but also a year in which we have seen many blessings and God's goodness, faithfulness and provision for us.

On September 8th it was a great joy to celebrate the end of the building project with a full church for a wonderful thanksgiving service, followed by lovely refreshments. We gave thanks for God's wonderful provision for every aspect of the project, and showed our appreciation for all the hard work that the project teams and Heritage Worker had put in.

Redlands School choir enhanced that service, then returned to contribute to a joyful harvest celebration and a very enjoyable carol service with the brass band. It was lovely to restart the Nine lessons and Carols - a beautiful service with an augmented choir and our new organist, John Rawson, on our partially restored organ. Our own lovely Christingle service rounded off a wonderful Christmas season, in which we had also held services for our Scout groups, Redlands and Edmund Hillary schools. In February we welcomed baby Chinwenmeri at a Thanksgiving Service and appreciated being invited to join the family for Nigerian food afterwards.

We had fun raising funds for Tearfund at their quiz night in November and have enjoyed sharing food and fellowship at two Bring and Share lunches. Thanks to Sue and Chris for organising these and also for producing the new Beacon Newsletter which we all look forward to reading.

On September 28th we held a Vision Morning led by our Archdeacon Tors Ramsey. It was well attended and the work done fed into our Parish Profile which goes out to prospective applicants for the incumbent's post.

The Archdeacons and CPAS have helped us so far in this process. The final date for applications is April 27th.

We are grateful to the continuing support of the diocese and particularly to Rev Dave Gough, our Area Dean, and to Rev Edith for taking communion once a month. Dave baptised two adults on September 15th and prepared five of our older children for their first communion on March 2nd.

My greatest thanks however goes to our team of leaders who have kept all the services going for over nineteen months now. Add to that the funerals that Ann and now Phill have done, and that represents many, many hours of conscientious preparation. Each of the leaders has other roles in the church and we really appreciate all they do.

We have been so well supported by you all. This is a very unusual and special church in that so many of the congregation help in some way on Sundays and midweek: with roles in the services, providing refreshments, children's work, finance, administration, serving on the PCC, keeping the media up to date, home group leadership, pastoral care, cleaning, gardening, maintenance, helping in the Toddler Group and Tuesday @ 10. Do take time to read all the reports prepared for this meeting to appreciate all that goes on and enhance your prayer support. Many of these roles are unseen but all are undertaken with love and commitment. I also see week by week the caring and sharing of burdens, joys and sorrows that goes on. Then there is the loving, giving and praying which undergirds our church life that only God knows about. So a big thank you to you all - each a valued member of our church family and team St John's. Let's continue to be ready to welcome new members and reach out to others with the good news of the love of God.

And finally of course a huge thank you to our faithful God who has sustained and blessed us through this year.

Jess Rudman

Church Wardens Fabric Report January 2025

2024, oh what a year that was. We started with the spire covered in scaffolding and slowly being completed only for it to grow again around the church, but the benefit that came with this was a roof you could not see through and keeps us dry. Amongst all this we have completed many other longstanding jobs and protected or enhanced our facilities and appearance, this has also made it easier for those who give up their time in keeping our building clean and tidy

High Points

Workdays were well supported and attended.
Clock working and keeping good time.
All exterior completed.
Exterior Lighting now working correctly
Re-commissioning and regular use of the pipe organ.
Numerous repairs done in Church, Hall, and Grounds.

As we move into 2025 the church wardens have reviewed the list of repairs needed church estate fabric and will continue to prioritise the work to bring our building into a good state of repair. The results listed below are a result of a walk around inspection in early 2025. We have assigned a priority level from 1-3. 1 being urgent, and 3 being it would be nice to be done.

We currently have across the church estate, after completing 25 major and 4 cancelled, 34 Tasks including the new added tasks.

9 Priority 1 tasks a reduction of 10 tasks.
11 Priority 2 Tasks a reduction of 9 tasks.
14 Priority 3 tasks, a reduction of 1 task.

4 tasks are already planned in for completion during 2025

Part of the main fabric plan for 2025 is the internal roof repair which is planned for June-July, the cost for this is funds already set aside.

The list of outstanding tasks gives more details and is available to view on the notice board, if you can help to complete any of the tasks, please contact either of us to discuss. By the end of this year, we hope to complete some more of the outstanding tasks and moving more to maintenance and as a result the higher priority tasks will diminish, there will always be a list of work, but our aim is to stop the deterioration.

We have received our quinquennial survey which was completed on 7th January. I am happy to report that although there are some immediate actions they can be tackled with a minimal outlay of funds and volunteer help.

Phill Kicks

Summary of the quinquennial survey

Urgent (Category 1)

12.7 Enclose the gap over the timber door to secure the recess.

There is evidence of rough sleepers occupying the covered recess. This presents a hazard (potential for fire) and should not be encouraged. The gap over the door needs to be secured and the recess cleared out.

12.7 Clear the bedding etc from the recess.

There is evidence of rough sleepers occupying the covered recess. This presents a hazard (potential for fire) and should not be encouraged. The gap over the door needs to be secured and the recess cleared out.

15 Provide a timber cover over the bell hatch.

New floor required

25 Arrange for the 5 yearly electrical inspection to be completed.

Message left for PDQ to contact us 18th March

25 Arrange for the PAT testing to be completed.

Planned for 11th April

27 Arrange for the lightning protection system to be tested.

No Plan as yet

33 The church should complete the 'Practical Path to Net Zero

No Plan as yet

Work Within the Next Twelve Months (Category 2)

13.1 Prepare and decorate the timber door.

Choir Vestry external door needs stripping and painting

13.1 Extend the timber door to secure the opening.

Same as urgent items 1 & 2 (12.7)

15 Provide safe access to the Belfry.

Same as urgent item 3 (15)

17.1 Closely inspect the condition of the plastered panels.

Requires inspection and painting of Nave Roof No plan as yet

17.2 Hack off the loose plaster and repair with lime plaster.

South Aisle roof planned to be done June 2025

17.4 Hack off the loose plaster and repair with lime plaster.

North Aisle roof planned for June 2025

17.7 Closely inspect the condition of the plastered panels.

Requires inspection and painting of Chancel Roof No plan as yet

19.6 Remove the loose material to the areas of damaged plaster.

Behind the organ. There is some damage to the plaster finish particularly to the north wall. With restricted access it will be very difficult to repair. The loose material should be brushed off regularly and swept up.

30 Arrange for an Asbestos Management Survey to be completed.

No plan as yet

8.3 Work Within the Next Two Years (Category 3)

10.6 Arrange for safe ladder access for the church architect to inspect.

Toilet roof needs to be resealed

16.1 Arrange for clock to be serviced and repaired.

Done and working switched of temporarily.

17.1 Prepare and decorate the plastered and painted panels

Nave roofs no plan as yet

17.2 Prepare and decorate the plastered and painted panels

South Aisle roof planned for June 2025

17.4 Prepare and decorate the plastered and painted panels

North Aisle roof planned for June 2025

17.7 Prepare and decorate the plastered and painted panels

Chancel roof no plan as yet

8.4 Work Within Five Years (Category 4)

33 The PCC are encouraged to consider taking steps to reduce energy usage in the building.

To be investigated

10.2 Remove the vegetation growth to the south slope.

There is a small amount of vegetation to the back gutter against the tower buttress to the south slope. The vegetation will need to be removed.

Statement regarding financial report and year end accounts.

The year end accounts were completed and as last year because of the building project the monetary value through the account exceeded the allowed threshold for an independent examiner. The accounts were submitted to Southwell for checking and approval only for them to state they cannot do them because of various reasons. Phillip Rutherford is liaising with them to seek a solution. As they are not signed of we cannot put them to print. Phill will however give a verbal report on how we managed last year.

Phill and Jess

Safeguarding

St Johns Safeguarding Report for AGM April 6th 2025

Parish Safeguarding Officer and Lead Recruiter – Sue Dawson

Supported by John Hodgkins

All people in church roles have completed or are booked on the required training at Basic Awareness, Foundation and Leadership level. This is really positive and means we are compliant with the Church of England Safeguarding training requirements.

Training is ongoing and as people come into role we will be following the safer recruitment processes as required. All those who require a DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) checks are up to date, this is another ongoing process and we are alerted to renewal dates.

The PCC thanks all you have attended training in person or on line and appreciate the time involved.

The church has notices up in the Hall and in the entrances to the church advising you of who to contact should you have a safeguarding concern about a child or adult or just want to discuss something with the Parish Safeguarding officer, the Church Wardens or the Diocese.

Safeguarding actions remain confidential, however we have supported people from inside and outside of the church to access appropriate supportive services as needed. If assistance or a referral to statutory agencies is required we will work with those concerned to make sure they are supported in a confidential and appropriate manner.

Anyone who has a role in the church is classed as a church officer. This includes bible readers, prayer leads, refreshment servers, musicians, sound engineer, welcomers, children's workers, PCC members and service leaders. This means, that to be in a role, safeguarding training is required at a level applicable to the role and a DBS may be required.

Moving forward the Church of England is going to be auditing parishes on their ability to work to good safeguarding practices. To do this, the PSO and PCC will be working towards compliance of the five standards over the next few years, it is a rolling programme. The audit takes place in Jan 2026 and we already have some good practices embedded in our church, but will need to work on some areas during this year. There is a poster about the audit and the five areas of safeguarding it covers in the church porch or Sue Dawson can share more information about this.

We as a church continue to work to make St Johns as safe a place as possible for all who come, and to support those who may have been harmed in the past. The PCC and PSO cannot do this without your support –**Safeguarding is Everyone's Business.**

Sue Dawson - Parish Safeguarding Officer March 13th 2025



Summary Action Plan Worksop St. John.pdf

Bassetlaw & Bawtry Deanery Synod Review for 2024

The Bassetlaw and Bawtry Deanery Synod met twice during 2024, 17th April and 7th November at St Anne's in Worksop. The meeting on 10th July was cancelled. Thank you to St Anne's, Worksop and the Area Dean for hosting us each time.

Meetings

The meetings during 2024 gave opportunities to gather, support each other and share about the good news happening in the churches. There were discussions on Parish Share changes for 2025, Eco Church tips & help, safeguarding updates, a chance to pray for each other, Area Dean and Deanery Updates, Diocesan Synod and General Synod feedback. Parish share was calculated differently for 2024, following a review by the Diocese, acknowledging it is a huge struggle to give when costs are going up. Bassetlaw and Bawtry Deanery contributed £578,116 reaching 82.5% of the requested £711,888. We are thankful for the contribution all the churches make during the year. In April we invited Jeremy Gower to share the work of Christian Aid and all they do through partners on the ground in countries for Emergencies and Development to improve life and to help people thrive. A part of their work is to challenge justice, one of their biggest challenges is Climate Change. Information of all they do and how you can help can be found on their website. <https://www.christianaid.org.uk/> At the November meeting, Richard Kellett led us in prayers for the Middle East. Praying for peace, safety, strength and leaders, healing and hope.

Clergy Chapter

There has been some change in the chapter this year with Rev Tim Stanford leaving in June and Rev Ben Clayton leaving at the end of July to move to be the vicar of St Barnabas, Heapey and St Paul's, Withnell in the Diocese of Blackburn. Rev Nicky Skipworth left on 26th December to take a post of Lead Chaplain for the Thames Valley Police in the Diocese of Oxford. We were also delighted to welcome Rev Jenny Foreman in September as the vicar of Christchurch Worksop and St Luke Shireoaks.

Vacancies

Blyth, Scrooby & Ranskill, Idle and Sands Benefice, Oswaldbeck Benefice and The Rivers, Retford Benefice have been in vacancy for several years. Archdeacon Tors is looking at a new initiative for Rural Clusters to commence in 2025. This involves a Lead Mission Enabler (lead Vicar) with a team of Mission Associates (Vicars and Lay Ministers) Family & Youth Worker and Operations Manager to support the work of several parishes in a cluster. It is something that is completely new and in December the Church Commissioners granted funding to help finance this. Mission Associates were advertised in November with an open day for interested candidates. St Saviours Retford, St John's Worksop and All Saints Harworth came into vacancy in 2024. Our thanks go to the Churchwardens, PCCs and the wonderful Retired Clergy and PTOs who faithfully continue to serve the churches, congregations and parishes during the sometimes long vacancies. The Lay Chair post is vacant.

Our thanks go to:

The Deanery Synod Members for all their time they give to serve their Benefices and Churches. To the Deanery Standing Committee Members for their time and energy to help lead the Deanery. To the Deanery Treasurer, Deanery Administrator for their work and the Area Dean who helps to hold everything together.

Electoral roll report

This year we had notice that all churches should prepare new Electoral Rolls from scratch. As we had done this only last year with permission from the Deanery we were allowed to do just the usual revision. Since last year 3 names have been removed from the previous Electoral Roll as they no longer meet the criteria.

Encouragingly, 8 new names have been added this year making a total 73 members.

Sue Ledger, Electoral Roll Officer
26.03.25

PCC Secretary Report

This report covers the period between April 9th 2024 and February 25th 2025.

The PCC has met 10 times since the previous APCM usually on a Tuesday evening. Meetings start with a Bible reading and prayer and end with prayer.

PCC membership consists of 13 (12) members - 2 church wardens, 2 lay readers, deanery synod rep (ex-officio), the treasurer and 7 elected members - now 6. A letter of condolence was sent to Elaine following the death of David. (we give thanks for the contribution of David Chivers to the work of the PCC)

- Reports are received regularly from the Treasurer, Safeguarding officer, Project Delivery Group (closed in September), Roof fundraising group (closed in May), Church warden - plant report, Kitchen update, clock update
- The work on the south and north roofs was completed in May, and the project closed in June.
- Maintenance issues are regularly discussed and decisions made about priorities. 2 work days have taken place as well as regular maintenance of the church and grounds.
- Faculties have been applied for and completed for the vestry and organ loft roof
- A number of policies have been approved during the year, including:- Safeguarding Action plan level 3 & the code of safer working practice.
- Kids church has relocated permanently to the lounge, together with new additional furniture. A third person is on the rota to support, due to increased numbers.
- The former choir vestry has been decorated and is now available as a creche during services,
- The old organ has been brought back into use, an organ fund was started to cover the costs of repair.
- A scaffolding tower has been purchased to enable the internal repair of the lower church roofs.
- The new outside notice board on the wall of the hall is now in use and regularly updated.
- Chris and Sue Ledger have produced a monthly newsletter for the church, the Beacon.
- At the June PCC the Arch Deacon spoke to the PCC about the next stage and the interregnum following Tim Stanford's resignation as vicar. As a result a parish profile was produced and a vision Saturday held in September
- 5 Eucharist Assistants were approved by the PCC.
- A celebration service to mark the completion of the project was planned and held on September 8th.
- A vision day led by Archdeacon Victoria Ramsey was held on September 28th
- In October we had a section 11 meeting to discuss the parish profile and the way forward in advertising for a new vicar.
- In November we had a section 12 meeting the PCC with Victoria Ramsey Archdeacon of Newark Diocese, Phil Williams Archdeacon of Nottingham Diocese and John Scamman from CPAS, with further discussion about the parish profile and the advertisement for a new vicar.
- The Quinquennial survey was held in January.
- During this current session the church wardens have continued to set the agenda and chair the meeting. The PCC is grateful to everyone who supports the various services and activities run at St John's and looks forward to serving you in the year ahead.
- I am thankful that Rachel Follows will now be taking on the role of PCC secretary.

Rosemary Arnott

Mission and Outreach

Sandra Merriman

Sandra Merriman is a former member of our church who has been working in Uganda for the past 30 years. She works with 'Youth with a mission' in the city of Jinja, which is on the River Nile.

YWAM is a faith mission, so this is why we want to support Sandra and her work. Initially, Sandra went out as a pharmacist to help during the AIDS crisis in Uganda but over the years her work has developed so she is now joint director of YWAM Uganda and leads the team in Jinja.

The team is involved in a wide variety of activities, from fostering orphan children, to visiting in local prisons, to training future leaders in Discipleship training. Occasionally we have had a craft stall in church with items made by the foster parents to raise money for their families.

Sandra last visited us in the summer of 2024, when we heard more about the work. However, she sends a weekly email so that we can pray for her and the team. If you would like to receive this, please speak to Rosemary. You can also follow her work on Facebook under Ywam Torch.
Rosemary Arnott

St. John's Kids Church

In the last academic year a total of 39 different children came to at least one session of Kids Church. While we have seen only a couple of new children this year, we have a nucleus of around 7 children who come regularly with several others who come occasionally. In these days when many churches have few or no children, it is good that we have an active group and are able to reach the children with the news of God's love for them.

We have continued to use the Scripture Union 'Splash' materials and supplement this with ideas we find on the internet and the teachers' own creativity! Over the year we have taught lessons on Jacob Joshua, David and Solomon from the Old Testament and from Jesus' ministry. Seasonal festivals of Christmas, Easter and Harvest have also been covered.

During the Christingle service the children took part in a drama sketch, 'That's a Surprise!' Thanks to Karen Balston for leading the drama and organising the children. Our teaching team of John and Debbie Hodgkins, Dawn Beaumont and Karen Balston is well established with Judy Deakin assisting. We meet termly to plan the programme and to pray for the

children. We have now worked together for over a year and it is really good to work with such a dedicated team.

We also have a team of people on a rota that act as a 'third person' to assist in sessions – Gemma Sibson, Rachel Follows, Margaret Cartwright, Ann Shillito and June Bacon. Rosemary Arnott, Sue Dawson and Jess Rudman have also helped on occasions. Our thanks go to everyone who assists – it is a real team effort and a testimony to the willingness of St. John's folk to serve.

After a year in the church lounge while the church repairs were being made, we decided we wanted to stay and not move back to the vestry which we had outgrown. This freed up the vestry at the front of church to be used as a lovely creche space for parents and young children. Our presentation service where the children are given a Christian book has become an annual event and Summer 2024 was no different. After the service we had a very enjoyable Pizza party for the children accompanied with their parents with games following. It remains our prayer that as the children learn more of God each week through our lessons that they will grow up to love and trust Jesus as their Saviour and become men and women of God. John and Debbie

Church Groups

TUESDAYS@10

The group has been running successfully as a progression from the initial Heritage Cafe during the term of the Spire and Heritage Project.

We meet every Tuesday morning in the lounge, and as it is officially a Place of Welcome, it is open to everyone, not just church people.

We have 12 – 14 regular attendees, some from the church fellowship and some from the community. Sometimes we have other visitors including a group from the Green Pastures leaders who are working in Worksop on a Tuesday. One person who is not part of the church has particularly identified that belonging to this group has really improved his mental health and self confidence.

There is generally a good “vibe” with conversations and refreshments of tea/coffee and biscuits being served by a team of volunteers. At the moment we have a rota of 4 teams, serving the refreshments, and we are extremely grateful to them for their work. Earlier this year it became clear that a few folks enjoy doing jigsaws and this has now become a regular activity, and we also held a Christmas craft morning which was popular.

Since last summer we have engaged a guest speaker once a month to come and talk about matters of local interest. For example someone from the Chesterfield Canal Trust, someone to talk about Shireoaks Colliery, Worksop Manor, Mr Straw’s House, and Worksop heritage and museum artifacts. These events are advertised on the St John’s Worksop Memories page and attract a quite a bit of interest. We can get up to 45 people, so that we have now had to move from the lounge into the hall when there is a speaker. The talks normally last about 40 mins so there is sti time for general conversation before and after.

We would like Tuesdays@10 to continue for the foreseeable future, so please tell your friends and family about it, and if there is anyone who would like to join the rota of volunteers serving refreshments, please see Sue Dawson, Jess or myself.

Anne Shillitto
12th March 2025

Chairmans Report from Mother’s Union

I must, as usual, express my deep thanks to all our members for their continual encouragement and support for myself and for Margaret and Karen. Thanks also to Sheila for her faithful work in sending out Birthday cards which means so much to us all.

You may not know how isolated we have become, as a Branch, since our Deanery branches have mostly closed. I can only thank our members again for their commitment and love.

I apologise for not attending all of the MU meetings that I should have done. I will try to do more, but Southwell is so far away, and I have a lot of commitments at St. John’s whilst we are without a vicar and my energy level, and fitness, are not what they used to be. Members, please continue to pray for me and for each other, as I know you already do. It is only through God’s Spirit that we can do anything.

The newsletter from Mary Sumner House is very encouraging and interesting and it is good to hear about MU’s ongoing and changing work in 2025.

As a Branch we have enjoyed some lovely meals out together. It was a joy to see Brian Foster at our Christmas meal out, in January. We continue to be an extremely generous Branch and a total donation of £100, at the December meeting, enabled us to support the Relief Fund and also the MU Literacy programme, which is a project close to our hearts.

At our February meeting we remembered past members who are now with the Lord, which caused me to think about the influences of people in the MU on my Christian life. Perhaps we should do that more often.

In April we discussed the work of the Leprosy Mission and its foundation in prayer. MU also has its foundations deeply rooted in prayer and also in bible study which we often do in meetings each year.

As usual we enjoyed a Strawberry Lunch in our garden in July. It is always fun to be outside, sharing conversation and a bring and share lunch. It especially inspires Andrew to clear up the garden ready for it.

It is always good to be involved in the Wave of Prayer each September, although it is more difficult when there is no real Deanery input. We made our own decision and met at my house on 18th September at 2pm and held the service there together, lighting the candles for each link Diocese. This links us with MU Branches all over the world who remember their Diocesan links with churches in other countries.

We are a world-wide movement, in support of women and families, involved in supporting women suffering domestic abuse, gender violence and injustice and female genital mutilation, which is an abominable practice that MU members have stood up against, despite opposition.

We were very glad to join in some Christmas Craft work, under Karen and Jeanette's capable leadership, at our November meeting. It reminded me that MU encourages craft work amongst its members and for many this becomes a business which can help family finances.

Everything that we do here in our little Branch can help others in distant poor and remote places. We can finance chickens, goats, soap making, agricultural advances and new crops to withstand global warming. We can also help poor families in this country to have a holiday through our 'Away From It All' Lent Appeal.

Just Drinking a cup of tea and eating a biscuit can bring blessings to someone somewhere.

We make a difference. We are transforming lives!

Ann Rutherford

REPORT FROM LIFELINE PRAYER LEADERS 2024 - 2025

The Wednesday evening Lifeline Prayer meetings at 7pm - 8pm have continued to thrive.

Each fortnight has been led by one of three pairs, either Chris and Sue Ledger, Alan and Josie Hardstaff or Rachel Follows and Anne Shillitto.

The pattern followed by the teams has been generally to allow for periods of prayer and thanksgiving focussing on different areas/topics, interspersed with bible passages and worship songs. Each pair leads the meeting with a different feel and style, and this allows for a more interesting and varied evening

The number of people regularly attending the meetings during the past year averages around 12, sometimes more, with everyone participating in the prayer times during the sessions.

We have sensed God's presence with us and his Holy spirit guiding our prayers. Some personal prayers have been offered and answers to prayer have been shared, so we have been blessed and encouraged in our faith. More folks are of course always welcome to come and share in these evenings with us

12th March 2025

REPORT FOR APCM - THURSDAY DROP IN - 2025

This group is not technically a church group, however it is a group that we host in our hall and a group that we feel is a vital part of our church's ministry. I attend to facilitate and as church liaison. Sue Dawson or Rosemary Arnott now support me. Steve Dillon does a sterling job supervising the door and outside. The group is run by Mattersey Training Centre, part of the Christian Housing organisation called Green Pastures. It provides valuable training and work experience for their students, who are nearly all people who have experienced homelessness, addiction and related issues, and who are now training to go into the workplace and particularly into Christian settings.

We started in October 2023. The team of around 12 volunteers, is supervised by a senior staff member from the centre. They arrive at 4pm bringing a ready cooked meal, which they warm up in our kitchen. They serve hot drinks first and as folk begin to arrive around 4:30 they serve meals. Recently the team have been giving testimonies during the meal over the sound system Pete Dawson has set up in the hall. Food is served till around 5:30. If there is food left over it is put into takeaway containers for the clients. When we started we had between 10 - 15 clients now we have between around 40 and on March 12th we had 54 - mostly men but some women as well. Some come regularly, others drop in and out. Some of our church members attend, along with some of those who used to come to the Drop In who have benefitted in the past.

In addition a small team of around 4 or 5 come on a Tuesday morning to prayer walk in the town, chat to clients and invite them to Thursdays. A couple stay behind in the church hall to operate a kind of clinic where clients can come to get further help with issues and sign up for rehab.

For the last few months the team have brought a lot of food donated by Fareshare and this is distributed fairly. We also give out clothes and warm blankets and bedding.

The team take every opportunity to chat to the clients, in some cases we have helped practically and always the team are keen to share their testimony to the tremendous difference knowing Jesus has made to them. We have close links with the YMCA and have been able to find accommodation for some. Many of the clients are happy to be prayed for. Some of them have gone off to rehab, and a few made a start on the Christian journey.

At 6pm we move from the hall to the lounge where we have an informal service lasting around half an hour. Some of the clients come through to this occasionally. I continue to find it a great joy and privilege to be able to welcome and host this team. Their passion and testimonies to the real, obvious transformations that God has worked in their lives are really inspiring and encouraging. Their servant hearts are also a real challenge to me.

The stories we hear from the team and the Thursday clients are often heartbreaking and show that most people end up in this situation, not through choice, but through dysfunctional family life, sad life events and things falling apart for them.

One of the great bonuses from our connection with Mattersey is that a team come the first Sunday of the month to lead our Sunday @ 6 service. This is a lovely time of worship, testimonies and preaching. We would encourage you to join us for this or come along and see what happens on a Thursday.

Jess Rudman

Toddlers Club report 2025

As usual, we lost quite a number of our regular families after the Summer and Christmas holidays when many move up into Nursery. This year our numbers have taken some time to recover, but God has been bringing us some special people who need a quiet, friendly group. Hopefully they have found a home with us and we support them as best we can. We have enjoyed many interesting conversations over coffee, tea or chocolate, we even have a popcorn flavoured chocolate drink which is popular with some mums!

We are grateful to our helpers who come along so faithfully to help us put out the toys and crafts. Sadly we have been missing Gemma as she broke her ankle before Christmas but Kirsty and Karen, Andrew and Jess have covered for her nobly. Thankfully she is now back with us. Debbie and Karen have come up with some amazing craft ideas for special times of the year which have been much enjoyed by children and parents. Sometimes people come through our door with grandchildren who turn out to be old friends who brought their children to our Toddler Group! We couldn't keep going if it were not for the Lord's strength and our faithful volunteers.

Ann Rutherford & Jess Rudman

Friday Games Night - Report for APCM 2025

The Friday Games Night has continued every alternate Friday. We serve refreshments and provide Pool, Table Tennis, Table Football, floor chess and Board Games. We have a pleasant relaxing evening of fun and chatting.

We have a regular clientele of around 15-20 folk and others drop in from time to time. It's great to have more church family children coming as they are getting older, and lovely when they bring their friends. Some who come are not regular churchgoers - this is a good way to introduce friends to church.

Jess Rudman

Sunday @ Six Report for APCM March 2025

Throughout the year we have met regularly on a Sunday evening in the church lounge. This has proved to be a benefit to all of us with a warm and comfortable room and the adjoining kitchen for refreshments. (usually provided by Jeanette.)

Between 10 and 20 people come regularly with a mix of people from the morning congregation and others that prefer the evening.

We usually start with refreshments and a catch up. This is followed by informal worship, Bible reading, teaching and prayer.

In recent months we have settled into a pattern of once a month having the team from Mattersey who lead us with live worship, testimonies and teaching. On the other Sundays Alan, Jess, Sue and Rosemary have led on a variety of topics including, the Lord's prayer, various Psalms, as well as teaching from Genesis and the sermon on the mount.

We find that in the more informal setting of the lounge we can support one another by prayer and fellowship and so value the opportunities that arise to be church family, as well as welcoming occasional visitors.

Rosemary Arnott

Housegroups

Michelle's Home group

Our Home group have continued to join together throughout the year. We looked at both the Notes from Chris L and went through "The Chosen" starting from the beginning, with watching an episode and reflecting on it each session. Due to both the busyness of the Christmas season and illness we stopped meeting around November and are looking to regroup after Easter. This felt the right move for us as a group and will hopefully rejoin like a resurrection, full of new life.

AFTERNOON LIFE GROUP

This group meets in different homes on Wednesday afternoon from 2:30 to around 4:30pm. We have five regular members, one member who comes when she can and have welcomed a new member who is a great addition to the group. We start with refreshments and catching up, then enjoy good, frank discussions in the Bible studies. We are grateful to Chris for preparing the notes. We know each other and our respective situations well and share and support each other in care and prayer at a deep and ongoing level which we all really appreciate. It has been good to see many of our prayers answered.

Anyone who would like to join an afternoon group would be most welcome.

Jess Rudman

Life Group Report Ledgers

leaders:

Chris and Sue Ledger.

Other group members:

John Nelson, Janet Silk, Barrie & Maureen Stones

Our group meets fortnightly on Wednesdays at 6.00pm. We aim to finish between 8.00 and 8.30pm.

Venues: Ledgers or Nelsons

Of late we have been reduced to just 4 attendees, with 2 others not able to be with us due to health issues. We begin informally with an opportunity to catch up on what has been happening in members lives since we last met. Members not able to attend a particular meeting are sent the teaching notes and contacted beforehand for prayer requests.

We then move into a time of praise, thanksgiving & worship, using mainly video-clip songs for about 20 minutes. Then into the set Bible study with discussion and digressions. This usually produces lively discussion.

A break for refreshments & time to share personal concerns and other matters, that takes us into Holy Spirit directed prayer & ministry time.

We have a social evening once each term which usually involves a meal out which we all enjoy.

Chris & Sue Ledger, 7th March 2025

Rutherfords/Arnott Home Group

We have had another successful Home Group with the addition of Wil Davidson which makes a total of six regular members. We take it in turns to meet in three of our homes; we follow a usual pattern, with greetings and catch-up to start, followed by singing unaccompanied a few of the numbers from *Songs of Fellowship for small groups*. We take it in turns to lead the Bible study and have followed Chris Ledger's very helpful study notes which we found challenging at times and led to interesting discussions. After a break for refreshments we end with a time of prayer for each other and our church's needs.

Andrew R

Report from home group led by Sue Dawson and Rachel Follows

We have continued to meet in different people's homes. The meetings have been well attended. It is a supportive group characterised by a lot of chatting and laughter. We were privileged to attend the Vow renewal of Elaine and David, prior to his tragic death.

We have prayed for big things like getting a new Vicar and the ministry of Phill Kicks, Safeguarding ministry of Sue Dawson and the building project.

We also pray for small things – about the lives of the people in the group. For healing for people and for our families. There remains a special emphasis on young people. We have kept updated on James Drury's progress in University.

Also we have some fringe people who we continue to pray for.

The Bible notes provided by Chris Ledger have been appreciated and brought interesting discussions. There is an emphasis on applying this to our lives.