

St John the Evangelist, Milford

**Annual Report
and
Financial Statements
of the
Parochial Church Council**

For the year ended 31 December 2024

Incumbent: Vacant

**The Vicarage
Milford Heath Road
Milford
Surrey GU8 5BX**

The Parish of St John the Evangelist, Milford

Parochial Church Council

Members and Advisers

Vicar:	vacant	
Assistant Priest	Peter Hewson	(Ordained July 2012)
Assistant Priest	Barbara Steele-Perkins	
Churchwardens:	Judy Downing	(Appointed March 2019)
	Jackie Hills	(Appointed October 2020)
Secretary:	Miranda O'Brien	(Appointed March 2016)
Treasurer:	Nicholas O'Brien	(Re-appointed March 2014)
Deanery Synod Representatives:	Maddie Murray	(Elected – March 2023)

Members	Pier Farrell	(Resigned January 2024)
	Nathalie Hinds	(Retired March 2024)
	Rob Andrews	(Retired March 2024)
	Jonathan Hills	(Resigned March 2024)
	David Pepe	(Resigned April 2024)
	Karon Sewell	(Resigned June 2024)
	Nicki Herring	(Re-elected March 2023)
	Maddie Murray	(Re-elected March 2023)
	Frances Cousins	(Re-elected March 2024)
	Nicholas O'Brien	(Elected March 2023)
	Bill Braid	(Elected March 2024)
	Dave Thomas	(Elected March 2024)
	Suzy Vincent	(Co-opted March 2024)

Bankers National Westminster Bank PLC
77 High Street, Godalming
Surrey, GU7 1AR

Independent Examiner Alison Sanderson FCA
20 Fernhill Close
Woking
Surrey GU22 0DJ

Structure, governance and management

The method of appointment of PCC members is set out in the Church Representation Rules. All Church attendees are encouraged to register on the Electoral Roll and stand for election to the PCC.

Objectives and activities

St John's PCC has the responsibility of co-operation with the incumbent, in promoting in the ecclesiastical parish the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical. It also has maintenance responsibilities for the Church and the attached Church Centre at Church Road, Milford, Surrey.

Achievements and performance

Vicar's Report

No report since no vicar

Churchwarden's Reports

In January the vacancy began and a series of meetings was held over the next few months to create and agree the Parish Profile.

We extend our huge thanks to Peter for all his hard work during this time. Also thank you to Barbara, David and Alison our occasional preachers, and to visiting clergy, as well as deputy wardens and all who have contributed towards the smooth running of St John's over the past year.

The organ continues to cause problems, but many thanks must go to our Organist, Carol Mitchell, for managing to keep us all in good voice, and to Sarah for occasionally filling in by playing the piano for us.

The Easter season began with a concert by the U3A choir. On Maundy Thursday we held our Agape Meal and then on Good Friday Peter and Barbara led the thought provoking – Stations of the Cross session. This culminated in our Easter morning worship services.

The weather was kind for the annual Village Fete in June which was successful and enjoyable.

Judy and Jackie attended the Annual Church Warden's Visitation Service held at St Nicholas Church in Pepperharrow. Then on the 30th of June we all enjoyed a BBQ at Borough Farm, and two weeks later we returned for a lovely afternoon of Tea and Swimming. Many thanks to John and Nicki for the hospitality.

In September the advert for a new Incumbent was ready for inclusion in the Church Times, but unfortunately to no avail

Autumn continued with our Harvest Festival, annual Quiz Night and Remembrance Day service.

An early start to Christmas celebrations began with the switching on of the lights on the Christmas Tree at the Village Hall. Then a week later we held our Toy Service to support Chase Hospice. A new venture this year was the Christmas Tree display in the Church, which looked very impressive. Our thanks to Frances and Alan and all who were involved, especially Pam Hewson who worked hard at this as well as the "Fun Quiz" and Wreath Making session to raise money for the Glass Door Project. Another U3A Concert was held in December which raised a generous amount of money for St John's. Then followed the

Rodborough School Carol Concert, the St John's Carol service, Crib Service, Midnight Service and two Holy Communion services on Christmas Day morning.

Jackie's personal thanks must go to Judy as she relinquishes her role as Churchwarden after a full term of 6 years, which brought unexpected challenges and demands.

Jackie Hills - Churchwarden
Judy Downing - Churchwarden

Church Electoral Roll 2024

At the beginning of the year the total was 138 but there were 3 deaths in March, August and September. A family of 4 members had also moved away in July but during the year we had 3 new members so at the end of the year the number stood at 134.

As a new Electoral Roll has to be done every 6 years, we will have to do a new one in 2025.

Miranda O'Brien
Electoral Roll Officer

PCC Secretary's Report

During 2024, and during the Vacancy, the Parochial Church Council has continued to meet on average once every two months so this year we totalled 7 meetings, all held in the Church Centre. We also held 1 special PCC meeting which was convened to decide what sort of ministry we wanted.

Each meeting has an agenda, which gives the opportunity for the Clergy, Churchwardens and Treasurer to report to the committee as well as comments on various aspects of Church life such as Electoral Roll numbers, Deanery Synod, Mission, Schools, Work with Young People, Buildings and Maintenance, Fund Raising etc. As well as the regular meetings we also held a shorter meeting a few days after the APCM to commission the PCC and also remind members of the various aspects of their work.

We have also had general discussions on subjects such as how the Christmas season went; the APCM; Church finances (a continual source of discussion including the Parish Share increase and how to deal with it); the Quinquennial Inspection Report and what to do; the Village Hall Lease renewal and what to do about the noticeboard in the Churchyard.

However, the subject of the Vacancy has been an item on the Agenda for every meeting. First, we had to decide what we wanted, then we had to draft our Statement of Needs and get it approved by the Diocese, and then we could draft our advert and also get Diocesan approval. At the meeting in January, we had Bishop Paul and Area Dean present for the first part of the meeting and then in May we had Archdeacon Catharine and Area Dean Chris present for the first part of the meeting.

At the January Special Meeting, the PCC voted to go for a half-time minister rather than a full-time post or a house-for-duty post. At the meeting on the 6th of March the PCC agreed to the sale of some restricted funds to pay off all outstanding Parish Share arrears once a new Incumbent is appointed. It subsequently agreed to a sale of a £30,000 portion of the Miss Price Bequest fund. On the 19th of June the PCC agreed that a large Gift Aid donation of £10,000 should be dedicated to the Glass Door Project.

The following policies were reviewed: -

- Baptism
- Garden of Remembrance & Book of Remembrance
- Holy Communion
- Marriage and Re-Marriage

During the year we lost 6 members: 1 resignation in January; 2 retirees at the APCM; 1 resignation in March; 1 resignation in April and 1 in June (the family moved away). However, we had 2 elections at the APCM and 1 co-option who has agreed to be elected at the 2025 APCM.

Miranda O'Brien
PCC Secretary

Financial Review - Year ended 31st December 2024

Summary

Our Parish Share was due to rise by £9,675 to £82,839 in 2024 with the last of the large transitional increases. The decision by the PCC to go for a part-time post (0.5 FTE) meant that our Parish Share was reduced to £63,286. At the start of the year, we owed £8,024 in unpaid Parish Share left over from 2023 and this increased by £11,686 during 2024. This meant that we had to sell off a £30,000 portion of the restricted Miss Price Bequest in order to cover this debt by the appointment of a new incumbent.

General Fund income was down on budget projections by £3,315 due to a decrease in Gift Aid Planned Giving, one-off donations and money raised for Outward Giving. Expenditure increased over budget by £1,747 mainly because of vacancy expenses such as an advertisement for a new incumbent. So, the budgeted deficit of £5,426 became an actual deficit of £10,488 which, with the Parish Share shortfall, resulted in the £22,174 deficit shown in the SOFA.

The Fabric Fund this year paid out £945 in roof repairs as required by the Quinquennial Inspection. It also paid £4,895 for a set of new chairs for the Church Centre which have been covered by a small legacy in 2023 which the PCC had designated for this in memory of the donor.

Funds

- The General Fund increased by £7,826 from £11,685 to £19,511.
- The Unrestricted Legacy Fund was unchanged at £1,000.
- The Fabric Fund decreased by £145 from £20,494 to £20,349.
- The "Glass Door" Fund increased by £14,386 from £3,297 to £17,683.
- The Discretionary Fund was unchanged at £2,250.
- The Flower Fund went up by £369 to £1,219 due to the Easter Lilies campaign
- The Restricted Bequest Fund increased by £4,860 but we also withdrew £30,000 so it went from £195,388 to £170,248.

Income

Significant changes were:

- Giving to the General Fund (both with and without Gift Aid) decreased by **£1,838 (-5%)**. Regular giving to the Fabric Fund was the same as last year.
- Other Gift Aid giving to the General Fund, including variable weekly Gift Aid donations, decreased by £181 (-6%).

- Unrestricted collections were down by £710 (-14%). Collections for outward giving at £1,150 were significantly down on the £3,370 raised last year due to fewer funerals giving a total decrease of **£2,930 (-35%)**
- One-off donations to the General Fund at £1,721, were **£653 (-27%)** down on last year. The "Glass Door" Fund received a large Gift Aid Donation of £10,000 (plus £2,500 of Gift Aid) compared with £5,280 last year so overall donations were up by £4,383 (57%).
- The Discretionary Fund had no income.
- General Fund Gift Aid tax recovery was down by **£1,062 (-10%)** while the Fabric Fund was the same as last year. With the Glass Door Gift Aid mentioned above, overall Gift Aid was £1,185 (9%) up on last year.
- Fund raising events did well this year with a net £1,299 taken at the Jumble Sale but only £674 at the Village Fete. Income from Lent Lunches and the BBQ was allocated towards Outward Giving causes. We had a good Quiz Night at the Village Hall which raised a net £1,183 for St John's and the Samson Centre. Porch Produce was down on last year but Sunday Coffee was up making a total of £728, 8% more than last year. We hosted three U3A concerts at St John's this year raising £817. Christmas Events like the Wreath Workshop and the Christmas Tree Festival raised £1,204 for the Glass Door Fund. The 2023 Christmas Quiz raised £291, treated as being in 2024 when all the money came in.
- Wedding & Funeral fees this year were slightly down on last year by £111 (-4%) but only because, during a vacancy, the Diocese lets us keep the Diocesan portion of the fees.
- Church Centre income decreased by £96 (-5%) as U3A had used it for slightly less classes this year.
- Sundry Income included a collection for Sylvia our retiring organist and £54 in the Alms Box. So Sundry was well down by **£2,345 (-94%)** on last year with no special events.
- Interest payments halved this year from £802 to £404 as we received very little from the nearly empty unrestricted Legacy Fund and dividends were down a little by £121 (-2%).

As a result of the above changes our General Fund income at £62,296 was £7,447 (-11%) down on last year. The big items were the drop in Planned Giving and so the Tax Refund, Donations, Outward Giving and Sundry. The total for all funds decreased by £2,845 to £84,852 (-3%).

Expenditure

Fund Raising costs at £528 were only £15 (-3%) down on last year.

Gifts for Outward Giving causes have been maintained at just under 10% of all income at £6,100, £450 (-7%) down on last year. Money has been given to our 5 regular charities (The Chandler School, The Children's Society, The Samson Centre and Mission Aviation Fellowship and Skillway). There was a significant increase in the money to Chandler School as they have a particular struggle with the number of Special Needs pupils in the school.

We moved to the final year of the phased removal of all subsidies, visible and invisible, from the Parish Share so it would have increased by £9,665 (13%) to £82,829. Because, 3 months into the Vacancy, we decided that we could only afford a part-time minister, our Parish Share dropped back to £63,286.

Carol Mitchell took over as our organist this year which required retrieving almost lost organ playing skills. So, the Honorarium (in Salary and Wages) that we pay an organist was unchanged at £1,680.

With no incumbent, the clergy travelling expenses fell £823 (-88%) to £117. We still had to pay for various services at the Vicarage in the vacancy even with nobody to use them. This included £744, to keep the gas and electricity available. So, Clergy Expenses only dropped slightly from £2,932 to £2,898 (-1%)

Our insurance costs went up by 5% (£3,104 vs £2,956)

Sacristy costs were up by £176 (53%) to £508.

The Organ needed a couple of visits this year down from £450 to £350.

IT and Web services were up by £190 (30%) to £825.

We had to retire our really old black and white printer/copier but not before buying a then unneeded printer cartridge. We moved the Vicarage printer/copier to the vestry as a replacement, but extra consumables and abortive service visits were needed for it raising costs here from £152 to £334.

General Maintenance was £977, down from £1,281. £270 was spent on servicing the Church Centre entrance doors which continue to give trouble.

We cut down on printed copies of the reports for the APCM to save Governance costs.

Utilities costs (gas, electricity, and water) had no subsidies this year but the move away from the Parish Buying Energy Basket to British Gas Lite kept costs down to £3,290 down by 377 (-10%) on last year.

The Church Centre running costs were £44 (5%) up on last year at £841

Total Church Running Expenses were slightly down by £151 (-1%) from £10,486 to £10,355

Sundry Expenses, as shown in the details page, covered the costs of a new fridge for the Church Centre kitchen and a collection for Sylvia (both covered by donations). We made a contribution towards a faculty charge for the Parish Council to check out the grave stones in our closed Churchyard. The big item was the Church Times advertisement for a new incumbent where we paid extra to avoid paying more for repeat ads which we needed since the first round yielded no suitable candidate.

Overall, thanks to the reduction in Parish Share, our General Fund expenditure went down by 9% (£8,610) from £93,080 to £84,470.

Assets

Under the current Charities Act we must show Restricted Fund share investments at their true value, but we are normally only able to spend the income arising and not the capital value of the shares. This money has come from a couple of restricted bequests, so the Fund is now referred to as the (Restricted) Bequest Fund. This year the value went up by £4,860 but we had to sell off £30,000 of the Miss Price Bequest so the value at the end of the year was £170,248 as previously stated. The new chairs for the Church Centre have not been capitalised as an asset.

Forecast

The Parish Share for 2025 has been set at £61,770 although we get a reduction of nearly £1,000 in Extended Vacancy Support from the Diocese until such time as a new incumbent is appointed. With a General Fund deficit in 2024 of £22,000 as basis, the budget for 2025 shows a deficit of £17,473 but with only £19,511 in the General Fund we are very likely to need to sell off the rest of the Miss Price Bequest in order to keep afloat.

As has been the case for some years now, we really need a Stewardship Campaign to push up our regular giving but even finding enough active people to set up a committee let alone find somebody to lead it is proving to be challenging.

The Fabric Fund has £20,349 in it but the initial quote for the stonework repairs required by the Quinquennial Inspection has come in at £11,383 including VAT so that will make a big hole. The Quinquennial also asked us to start saving for what amounts to a complete re-pointing of the Church stonework, but it is difficult to see how this can be done.

The Glass Door Fund at £17,683 has now got enough money to enable this project to go ahead which is the one bright spot to help make the Church more welcoming.

Nicholas O'Brien
Hon. Treasurer

Approved by the Parochial Church Council on 12th March 2025 and signed on its behalf by:

J. M. Hills

12.3.25

Jackie Hills (Chairman and Churchwarden)

Associated Reports

Life as the Honorary Curate of St John's

Well, what a year 2024 was and how encouraging that we have not only got through it but have had some excellent times between and among us. I have been through three vacancies in my time at St John's and I have to say that last year was the most taxing yet but strangely fulfilling.

I am not a Vicar, nor actually ever want to be one even if I could, but doing some of the things that we expect a Vicar to do has had its rewards. I have found it a privilege, and it continues to be, to stand in front of you every week. I now realise how much thought is required when trying to bring some reality to worship and some support to those that need it. I hope that you, the congregation, both regular and occasional, have not got too bored with the same face most Sundays. I have tried to find other leaders that can bring new and fresh perspectives to our Faith and our Worship. We have had some amusing and insightful moments.

I sincerely hope that our search for a new Vicar will not go on much longer. I pray for all of those who are involved in the selection process that they may receive God's guidance and blessing in their deliberations.

May God be with us all.

Peter Hewson

Occasional Preaching

David Pepe and Alison Turner have continued to preach 3 or 4 times each through 2024, during the vacancy period. It is a blessing to be able to contribute to Church life in this way and we appreciate the continued support of the congregation.

**David Pepe
Alison Turner**

Pastoral Team

There are 8 members on the Pastoral Team, who are led by Peter Hewson during the vacancy. They each have between 8 to 10 Parishioners to check on.

They meet 3 times a year.

The Pastoral Team are a very needed addition to the Church especially during this Vacancy.

Madeline Murray

Deanery Synod

The Deanery Synod met twice in 2024, visiting a different Church for each meeting.

Madeline Murray represents St John's.

The current Area Dean is Rev. Chris Bessant.

Madeline Murray

Building and Maintenance

Following the Quinquennial Inspection, we obtained two quotes from stonemasons for necessary repairs.

Paul Bellini completed the outstanding repairs on the roof as recommended in the report.

An application was made for a faculty on behalf of the Parish Council for memorial stone testing.

The Parish Council provided a team of workers who cleared the Churchyard, including the Webb Memorial and will keep it in good order.

The bell ropes need some attention. An advisor has been contacted but the cost of repairs is thought to be too high at present.

Judy Downing

House Groups

Mondays at Hawthorn Cottage

Our small group continued to meet on average fortnightly throughout 2024. We worked our way through the Gospel of St John for the second time in the life of this house group but found it, as before, to be most rewarding. We had to often recall that John was not writing a factual account of Jesus's Ministry but was rather striving to pass on his understanding of what it all meant so it is the most theological of the Gospels. Having finished the Gospel of St John we started on Acts to see how the early Church developed under St Peter and St Paul.

Nicholas O'Brien

The Friday Morning Home Group

This meets at 10.30 for coffee (and biscuits, I'm asked to mention!) every Friday in alternate months. We are a group of 8, who enjoy one another's company in a friendly and relaxed atmosphere, where everyone's views are respected, discussion and debate are encouraged, no question or comment is considered off the table, and humour is usually not far away! It is appreciated that everything we have explored so far has been relevant to our lives and not a mere academic study, and it is seen as 'an ideal environment in which to grow'.

Everyone is eager to learn and participate, and some topics have been specially requested. Over the past couple of years, we have looked at: Women in the Bible, Prayer, People of Faith, Mark's Gospel, the Creed, the Eucharistic Liturgy, Christmas, different 'voices' in the Bible and the Ten Commandments. Most recently we have explored the three readings for the following Sunday (preachers, take note; we may do this again!)

Barbara Steele-Perkins

Chandler School

Last year saw The Chandler getting back to what we now have to accept as a different "normal".

Classes are back to face-to-face teaching and for visits and excursions as we would hope. The major difference is that the School is a little smaller as three classes have merged into two for two of the year groups. However, the Hub which is used for some of the more

challenged children both educationally, socially and behaviourally, is functioning as was planned.

School Assemblies, where each week a member of the local Milford and Witley Clergy lead, are up and running and it is really encouraging to see the children seemingly enjoying the "God Input".

The results for the Level 2 Sats, the public exams taken at the end of year 6 before the pupils leave for Senior School, were good and better than the National average. We should all be proud of the children and their teachers who work hard to achieve this result.

Once again, the School Budget is stretched even tighter which has resulted in some further restructuring. Central Government funding is never enough for all the activities that the School would like to undertake. The funding for children with Special Needs is a particular problem for The Chandler and many schools nationally. Perhaps this is a hangover from the pandemic as there are now many more children requiring extra support.

We have finally got back to inviting members of the School community into Church. We held both new arrivals and leavers services in the summer and both were well attended. It is to be hoped that we can do more of this in Church activity for The Chandler and other schools.

Peter Hewson

Safeguarding

2024 has been another quiet year from a safeguarding perspective. There were no Safeguarding issues that I am aware of. We have been trying the on-line Safeguarding courses available from The Church of England and as of now, most of the PCC Members have completed the modules that are required of them.

As last year, I have deliberately delayed seeking new DBS checks for those that might need them as we are not undertaking any activities that might require them. I hope and imagine that this will change in the coming months.

I have undertaken Risk Assessments for some of our services and functions as the need arises.

Peter Hewson

Gardens Report

A huge thank you to everyone who has helped to maintain and keep our Church garden tidy. A special thank you to Andy Papworth for his regular use of the mower to keep the grass under control and to Jonathan and Janet Hills for keeping the shrubs trimmed and controlled.

Thank you to everyone that turned up with forks and secateurs when we held a working party in the Spring. Also, a thank you to the very welcome provider of cups of tea and coffee for the workers.

Hopefully, when the weather improves, we will have another working party to tidy up and prepare the garden for summer.!

Pam Hewson

The Children's Society

Following the changes established in 2023 fewer Children's Society boxes were handed in for counting this year but we remain very grateful for those members of the congregation and

wider community who continue to put money in their box each year. During October the congregation was urged to donate via cheque, cash or GoodBox card reader and a total of £1,000 was raised. The Children's Society sent a heartfelt letter of thanks.

Penny Clark

Mothers' Union

The Mothers' Union had a busy year with regular meetings and events within the Diocese. Subjects covered in the monthly meetings included reflections on Lent, on the Church both at St. John's and the Anglican Communion in general and visits from the retiring Diocesan Chaplain for MU and Revd. Sheila Samuels from Godalming Minster. A display entitled Soles of our Souls was put up in Church so people could reflect on domestic abuse and the bravery of people who walk away from such relationships. Members also welcomed the chance of sharing with the wider membership at the Lady Day Service at the Cathedral, 2 members' meetings and helping to run the craft sessions at the annual Summer party for women and children from the local refuges and others living in fear. Penny, Carol and Geraldine travelled to Oxford for the Provincial meeting where they had the opportunity to meet people from the Canterbury Province and hear interesting and inspiring stories of projects undertaken by different Dioceses and branches. We had good fun preparing blue and white decorations for our Christmas tree on display in Church. Afternoon tea was enjoyed at Willow Grange by invitation of the Bishops, in Church Close Garden courtesy of Carol and Geraldine and a Christmas themed tea at Frances and Alan's.

Money raised at the Village Fete and during meetings is sent to help pay for costs of running the summer party and also for worldwide projects such as Literacy and Numeracy campaigns.

As well as MU activities in the Parish we now have a link with the Waverley Refuge and Geraldine and Carol deliver goods donated by members from across the Diocese twice a year. We hope to be able to develop this relationship but it is difficult because of families moving on and the confidentiality involved.

As last year we continue to send anniversary of Baptism cards and deal with the Children's Society boxes.

Penny Clark

Flower Rota

First of all, a very big thank you to all the Flower Team for their help and support this year. They have all been very generous with their time and their flowers. Their efforts ensure that every week we have flowers for everyone to enjoy in the Church.

This year we were very pleased to be asked to do the flowers for a wedding in November here in St. Johns'. It was great fun and a pleasure for the team to take on this challenge. It also helped to boost Church funds!

With economy in mind, we have continued to use silk flowers during the winter months when fresh flowers are expensive. Fresh flowers will continue to be used in the summer and autumn months. Also, we will continue to decorate the Church at Easter with our Easter Lily donation scheme.

It is with great sadness that we have had to say goodbye to Lynne Callender, but we wish her well in her new home in Devon and thank her for her valuable contribution to the team. This year we are very pleased to welcome Lydia on to the team.

If there is anyone else who enjoys arranging flowers and would like to join the team, please speak to me. We would love to have new members.

Pam Hewson

The Eagles Group

With no children in Church, the Eagles Group did not run in 2024.

Monday Club (Formerly Toddler Service)

Monday Club remained suspended throughout 2024.

Bells Report

As always, we are grateful to our regular team of bell ringers, Tricia Boynton, Miranda O'Brien, Penny Clark and Marina. Sadly, Christine Bridson is no longer able to ring the bells but we have been joined by Chris Denton and our new young man Andreas is planning to join the team.

It is always good to hear the bells calling us to worship as we approach the Church on a Sunday and we also ring the bells at weddings when requested. Unfortunately, at the moment one of the bell ropes is broken and we are awaiting a repair so we only have 7 bells to ring rather than 8 which makes the rhythm a little difficult

Although we have 5 bell ringers on the list, they are all people who do other jobs as well which sometimes means their duties clash. To avoid this situation, it would be really great to have more Church members join the team, men or ladies are equally welcome. It is not difficult; you just have to be able to count to eight and it is really good exercise for the backs of the arms. Please speak to me if you are interested in giving it a try.

Tricia Boynton

Church Centre

The Church Centre is available for hire and it is used primarily by U3A for educational meetings but sadly there are not as many as in previous years. The Samaritans, Mothers' Union, Milford Hospital League of Friends also held meetings in the Centre.

Many thanks to Debbie for cleaning the Centre, the Post Office for keeping the key, and the Churchwardens for general maintenance notably the big white doors.

I now feel that I have done the Church Centre bookings for long enough and would like to pass it on to someone else.

Liz Burrows
Booking Secretary

Mission at St. John's

News from the charities supported by St John the Evangelist is displayed on the notice board in the Church Room, it includes some posters for Shooting Star Children's Hospices and a monthly letter from Mission Aviation Fellowship. Skillway will be pleased to show

small groups (3-5) round their work shop. Chandler School has had a number of services in Church, members of the Church welcome to attend. Money is also donated from the PCC to the Samson Centre founded by John Hambly.

Wendy Stevenson

The Choir

The choir sings at the 10 o'clock service on the first Sunday of the month, supplementing the music of the St Thomas Mass, and also at the annual Carol Service. Occasionally, there are requests to sing at weddings and funerals, however, these usually occur during the week when not everyone is available.

At the Carol Service in December 2024, however, we were fortunate to be supplemented by singers from Royal Surrey Choir. With the well-known carols, together with the lusty singing by the congregation, we made a heavenly sound and we hope to be able to do this again in 2025.

With Mrs Sylvia Foster retiring at the end of 2023, we have been fortunate that Carol Mitchell has filled the role of organist. Carol conducts a choir practice before the 10 o'clock service on the first Sunday and also plays the organ (and sometimes electric piano) on the other Sundays except the second Sunday when Sarah Dunning plays the electric piano.

Of the seven regular singers in the choir, three singers read music, and four do not, so the repertoire for more advanced hymns, part-singing and anthems is rather limited.

The organ has been temperamental to say the least in 2024 and some thought must be given by the PCC as to an economic way forward.

When either Carol is unable to attend, or the organ is not working (an increasingly common situation), we are fortunate to have a special library of CDs of all the hymns in the hymn book mostly with organ accompaniment. The CDs are played through a portable CD player with a connecting lead to the sound system.

Madeline Murray currently coordinates the choir activities, and we have a St John's Choir WhatsApp group which has proved vital in sharing availability and logistics information.

Currently, the members of the choir are:

- Madeline Murray
- Judy Downing
- Carol Thomas
- Geraldine Tigg
- Pauline Garlick
- Luisa Denton
- David Pepe

David Pepe
Madeline Murray

Report as an Organist

Having not played for 30 years, it was daunting to offer my services once again as a very rusty organist but, although I had a very inauspicious start in the early months, the Church was immensely encouraging and supportive, being very patient with some unmemorable attempts.

This encouragement of the congregation, choir members, clergy, PCC and Churchwardens stimulated some hard work on my part which has paid off great dividends all round. I am

pleased to report that that I have been playing now for nearly a year (starting at the end of last February) on a regular basis of three services, with one off, per month.

I enjoy the friendship, warmth of this community and have become a more confident player.

I hope my choices of music are in keeping with the ethos of the Church and have greatly appreciated the support of the choir at the service on the first Sunday of the month which is chorally sung.

It is a year where the Church has played a very positive part in my life after a long absence away from it.

Thank you to all who have contributed to the musical worship of St John's Milford as congregation, choir and officiants.

Carol Mitchell

Village Hall

The Village Hall had a bad start to the year when the heating system finally gave up the ghost. Hopefully it will be up and running smoothly after Easter after some issues with the company.

There are 13 regular hirers each week and Saturdays and Sundays are usually booked for children's parties.

Madeline Murray has stepped down after 18 years and a new lady called Sue Allen is taking over. Madeline has her details until the new website is set up.

Madeline Murray

Wedding Co-Ordinator

We only had one wedding this year, which was that of Molly Hills and Luke Rainbow on 9th November.

However, we are delighted to have four weddings booked for 2025.

Pam Hewson

Website and Facebook

Our Church website continues to be hosted on Church Edit at www.stjohnsmilford.org.uk Visits last year peaked in April-May, with a secondary peak of interest in October.

We continue to receive contacts from people, particularly those making wedding arrangements, through the website email stjohnsmilford@hotmail.com.

Regular services and special Easter/Christmas ones are promoted both on our own website and on the C of E "A Church near you" www.aChurchnearyou.com while social events, such as the quiz or jumble sale, are added to our @StJohnsMilford facebook page. A free mailchimp account allows us to directly email 118 contacts (some on our electoral roll and others who have simply signed up to our mailing list) with information at key points in the calendar.

Alison Turner

Three Churches Magazine

The magazine is defunct and needs a fresh start.

The Friends Co-ordinator.

There are currently 27 people on the Friends of St John's list and of those eight people give regular donations (monthly, quarterly or annually) whilst the remainder made a one-off donation initially.

Two newsletters have been sent to the Friends this year by email or post: before Easter and Christmas. Peter wrote an introduction to each newsletter and news of forthcoming activities and Church affairs was added. Information about services and special events were also in the newsletter with a message of thanks and a promise of a warm welcome should any Friends decide to join us in person.

Despite several requests for feedback and /or acknowledgment of emails and letters received nothing has been forthcoming so perhaps the Church needs to consider running an event specifically for the Friends to maintain interest.

Penny Clark

Data Protection

We have no Data Protection Officer.

Data Protection Officer vacant