

Diocese of Oxford & Deanery of Aylesbury
PARISH OF MONKS RISBOROUGH:
ST. DUNSTAN'S CHURCH AND ST. PETER'S CHAPEL
ANNUAL MEETINGS SUNDAY 5th MARCH 2023

3.45pm Annual Vestry Meeting

(open to all those on the Church Electoral Roll and those who reside in the Parish of Monks Risborough)

- Opening Prayers
- Minutes of last meeting
- Election of two Churchwardens

4.00pm (approx.)

Annual Parochial Church Meeting: (Only those on the Church Electoral Roll may vote)

Agenda

1. Apologies
2. Minutes of 2022 APCM (copy attached)
3. Matters Arising
4. Notification of Any Other Business
5. PCC Annual Report (copy attached)
6. Fabric Report (copy attached)
7. Church Electoral Roll Report (copy attached)
8. Other reports (as copies attached)
9. Election of two members to the Parochial Church Council
10. Election of three Deanery Synod Representatives
11. Appointment of Independent Examiner of Accounts
12. Other matters of Church and Parochial interest as notified at 4 above
13. Closing Prayers

A very short inaugural meeting of the new PCC for 2023/2024 will take place after the APCM

To propose and second officers and co-opt additional members as necessary:

- Vice-Chairman; Treasurer; Secretary; appointment of the Standing Committee

Next PCC meeting

**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL VESTRY AND PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETINGS OF ST
DUNSTAN'S CHURCH , MONKS RISBOROUGH HELD IN THE CHURCH AT 7.00 PM ON
WEDNESDAY 18th MAY 2022**

Introduction: Vestry/Parishioners Meeting

The Annual Vestry Meeting opened at 7.00pm with a prayer and a reading from John 13 v34-35. The Reverend Peter Godden was in the chair. The minutes of the meeting in 2021 were approved – proposed by Paul Woodward-Court, seconded by Jane Curry - and duly signed.

Paul Woodward-Court and Mick White were both prepared to serve again as Churchwardens and they were both thanked for their dedication and service. There being no other nominations, they were duly elected to serve for the coming year.

The meeting concluded at 7.12pm

Annual Parochial Church Meeting

The APCM began at 7.13pm. All reports, previous minutes etc. had been collected into a documentation pack which had been available prior to the meeting – copies were also available at the meeting.

1. Present and Apologies for absence

The Reverend Peter Godden took the chair with Sue Ingram as secretary for the meeting. There were 24 parishioners present and apologies were received from Charlie Fairall, Jane Rogers, Avril Neighbour, Janet East, Jo Wade and David Curry.

2. Minutes of 2021 APCM

Minutes of the 2021 APCM had been circulated with the Agenda papers. These were agreed to be a true record and were duly signed by the chairman. (Proposed by Margaret Pitman, seconded by Anne White and passed unanimously)

3. Matters Arising

PWC pointed out that the minutes stated that Ann Tomkins was to take on the role of the Charity Commission Officer and also the Independent Examiner of Accounts. It was subsequently decided later during the year that Simon Merchant would act as Charity Commission Officer leaving Ann to fulfil the role of Independent Examiner.

4. Notification of Other Business

- 1) Jill Iredale – Quieter toys
- 2) Rosemary Woodward-Court – Pewsheets,
- 3) - Church opening.

5. PCC Annual Report

There were no questions. The Chair expressed his thanks to all who had served the church so well during the vacancy before his arrival and said how much he was looking forward to completing his first full year in Monks Risborough in a few weeks' time. He said it was a joy to be here, worshipping with us all.

The Chair thanked both Anne White, the Treasurer, and Simon Merchant who had worked so hard in the preparation of the accounts, and also Ann Tomkins as our independent examiner of accounts. There were no further questions about finance/reserves issues.

The Chair reported that the treasurer had indicated her intention of stepping down from her post by the end of 2022. He emphasised the importance of the role of Treasurer and urged all present to pray for a new treasurer to be found as soon as possible in order to benefit from shadowing Anne for the next 6 months if needed.

6. Fabric Report

The fabric report had previously been circulated and there were no questions. The Chair thanked Mick White (for his report) and Paul Woodward-Court for their work on all the church buildings.

MW pointed out that the items mentioned in his report were now mostly completed.

7. Electoral Roll

The Chair delivered the report from the Electoral Roll Officer, Charlie Fairall reporting that there are currently 138 parishioners on the Parish Electoral Roll. This revision takes into account 23 removed from the roll (including 2 sadly deceased), along with 1 who has been added. There were no questions on this report.

8. Other reports

There were no questions on the other reports previously circulated.

Ted Kent delivered the Open House Report verbally which is added as part of Appendix 2.

The Chair expressed his delight that despite Covid, 2021 had been a wonderful year with much activity.

PWC offered those at the meeting the use of his Zoom account for church meetings if needed.

9. Election of two members to the PCC

Two members had completed their terms of office, namely Anne White and Libby Keane. The former had agreed to serve again. Since the last APCM Mick Quigley, Judi Precious, Johanna Powell and Susanne Dodds had all resigned which meant that there were eight vacant positions (there were 2 further vacancies unfilled during 2021) on the PCC. Nominations had been received for Anne White, Charlie Fairall, Lucy Nott and Ann-Marie Longshaw. The latter was not on the electoral roll so it was proposed that the PCC might co-opt her at the short PCC meeting to be held at the close of this APCM. The other three nominees were duly elected, all three elections being passed unanimously.

10. Appointment of Independent Examiner of Accounts

Ann Tomkins was thanked for her input during 2021 as the Independent Examiner of Accounts. She has agreed to serve again for 2022 which was approved unanimously – proposed by Margaret Hunnibell and seconded by Cathy Farquhar.

11. Other business

Jill Iredale requested that quieter toys be found for the children's corner in church. The Chair told the meeting that his wife Caroline had already audited the toys and removed the noisier items; he agreed that we could invest in some quieter toys.

Rosemary Woodward-Court asked that the Pewsheet be reinstated; the e-news is excellent but doesn't reach those who are not computer savvy.

She also felt that it was time to reopen the church during the week; she pointed out that a locked door is not welcoming and that we are not sharing with the community the sense of sanctuary that we once did pre-Covid.

The chair reported that the PCC has discussed reopening the church on many occasions and pointed out that we would need to start a rota of openers/closers. He felt that due to a couple of events in his ministerial experience where there had been difficulties involving visitors and their leaving the building, the church doors should be preferably opened, and certainly closed, by two people rather than the previous sole person, for safety reasons. He said he would be delighted to see St Dunstan's open again and would ensure that this was discussed via email with the PCC at the earliest opportunity, together with the topic of the distribution of communion.

The secretary volunteered to restart the Pewsheet and Mick White suggested it should be based on the e-news.

Jane Curry queried that we had only filled 3 of the 8 PCC vacancies. The Chair pointed out that in order to elect more, an APCM would need to be convened, and also that we could co-opt one further person during a PCC meeting.

12. Closing Prayers

The meeting closed at 7.45pm with a prayer.

PWC proposed thanks to the Chair and the secretary for organising the meeting.

2022 Report and Accounts for the Parochial Church Council of St. Dunstan's, Monks Risborough and St. Peter's, Owlswick

Aim and purposes

The PCC has the responsibility to promote, both in the parish and throughout the Risborough Team, the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to the doctrines and practices of the Church of England, and to co-operate with the minister in promoting in the parish the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical. It has responsibility for the maintenance of St Dunstan's Church, the church hall and churchyard, and the Chapel of Ease of St Peter at Owlswick. It must also ensure that appropriate safeguarding and health and safety procedures are in place. The Team Vicar is commissioned to minister both within the parish, and throughout the Risborough Team.

Objectives and Activities

Throughout 2022, we sought to continue to offer worship and, where possible, community groups and events, in the context of the ongoing challenges posed by the coronavirus pandemic.

The Eucharist is our central act of worship, with full use made of the seasonal range of liturgical material for Holy Communion from Common Worship (CW) produced by The Church of England. Services of Holy Communion and Evensong according to the Book of Common Prayer (BCP) also form a core part of the life of the worshipping community.

The pattern of services typically follows this pattern (all services are at St Dunstan's unless specified):

First Sunday of the month:	8am BCP Holy Communion 10am CW All-Age Holy Communion 3pm (Winter) / 6pm (Summer) BCP Evensong
Second Sunday of the month:	9.30am BCP Holy Communion (St Peter's Owlswick) 10am CW Holy Communion 3pm (Winter) / 6pm (Summer) BCP Evensong
Third & Fifth Sunday of the month:	10am CW Holy Communion 3pm (Winter) / 6pm (Summer) BCP Evensong
Fourth Sunday of the month:	10am CW Holy Communion 3pm (Winter) / 6pm (Summer) BCP Evensong (St Peter's Owlswick)

Additional services are held for the major feasts of the Church year.

Activities such as the Fellowship Group, Friendship Group, and the Lunch Club, enable the church to provide a pastoral presence for the local community.

The PCC aims to donate ten percent of its income to charitable causes. The Standing Committee discusses the financial viability of this in the context of its finances towards the end of the year, and makes a recommendation to the PCC, which then votes on a proposal.

Achievements and Performance

Attendance at 'normal' Sunday services has started to recover following the Covid-19 pandemic, and particularly since Lent and Easter when more typical levels of congregation singing were reintroduced to services. Attendance at Easter and Christmas services was likewise encouraging: 135 people attended either the Easter Vigil or the Easter Day services, with 121 people receiving Holy Communion; 375 people attended worship across our five services on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day, with 117 people receiving Holy Communion. During the year ten children were baptized; we held one marriage and one service of thanksgiving for marriage; we held six funerals in St Dunstan's Church and our ministers conducted a further four at crematoria; there were a further five interment-only services in the churchyard, two memorial services held in St Dunstan's, and one funeral which, for practical reasons, the Vicar conducted in St Mary's Princes Risborough.

Groups such as the 10 O'clock Club (Sunday School) and the Lunch Club continued their activities, bringing in both young and old. St Dunstan's church was successfully used as a venue for Bucks Art Week, as it has done for many years.

A second Christmas Tree Festival, held on the weekend of the First Sunday of Advent, was a tremendous success, seeing many community groups take part, healthy numbers of local people visit, and funds raised for the church.

The Rev'd Sally Prendergast joined the church in October 2022 as a Curate-on-Placement, as part of her ministerial development following her curacy at St Mar's Wendover.

Financial Review

Owing to the PCC's prudent management of its financial resources during last year, at the start of 2022 our reserves were in a much stronger position than had been the case during the pandemic. Indeed, our opening reserves were £62,000. As usual, the largest share of our income came from parishioners' donations (mostly gift-aided). It is pleasing to record that there was greater use of the Parish Giving Scheme for regular donations ensuring that the repayment of gift aid tax in respect of these contributions was, and is, received each month. The continuing support of our parishioners is greatly appreciated. 18 people are now using the Parish Giving Scheme for their regular giving. The opening up of society, following the removal of Covid restrictions, has enabled us to undertake more fund-raising activities. As a result the net proceeds from these activities approximately doubled over the previous year. We are most grateful to all those who helped to organize, or participated in these activities. Fortified by our greater financial strength we were able to pay our full parish share contribution to the Diocese, as well as give £10,500 to selected charities (mostly small and local), helping to place St Dunstan's at the heart of our community. In addition we undertook several necessary minor maintenance tasks, e.g. repairs to the church boiler (£2,500), replacement of the church hall boiler (£2,900), and essential tree surgery (£2,200). We ended the year with a close to break-even financial result, closing the year with reserves of £60,000.

Anne White and Simon Merchant
February 2023

Reserves Policy

The purpose of the Reserves Policy is to maintain sufficient funds to cover at least 3 months of everyday running costs as well as forecast expenditure on planned fabric projects. At the end of 2022, Reserves stood at £60,000. A substantial amount of this will be required for essential repair and maintenance work to be carried out on the fabric of St Dunstan's, where the main projects envisaged are the longstanding repairs to St Peter's Owlswick (£13,000) and, at St. Dunstan's, replacement of a church hall window as outlined in the Quinquennial report (estimated at £500), important repairs to the organ (cost unknown at this stage), and completion of the replacement of the bell tower soundboards (£5,000-£6,000). After allowing for the planned expenditure on fabric projects, we are pleased to report that the remaining reserves are considered to be sufficient to meet every day running costs.

Anne White and Simon Merchant
February 2023

Plans for the Future

It is hoped that the church can build on the re-establishment of its community life that it saw in the coming year.

A glimpse of plans for 2023 include:

- Worship and celebrations to mark the King's coronation.
- Continuing to recommence events held pre-pandemic, such as community film nights and concerts.
- Increasing our ministry to young families, with the continuation of the new half-term play days and restarting our toddler group.
- Undertaking building works on St Peter's Chapel Owlswick
- Establishing a serving team, to enhance worship in the sanctuary.

Structure, Governance and Management

The Parochial Church Council (PCC) is a corporate body established by the Church of England and operating under the Parochial Church Council Powers Measure. The PCC is a charity registered under the full title of THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF ST DUNSTAN, MONKS RISBOROUGH (No 1153869). Members of the PCC are the trustees of the charity. The PCC met 5 times during the year.

The method and appointment of PCC members is set out in the Church Representation Rules. The Team Vicar and Churchwardens are ex officio members of the PCC.

Meetings are frequently preceded by a Standing Committee meeting, with the Standing Committee having the power to transact the business of the PCC between PCC meetings, subject to any directions given by the PCC, and to undergo preparatory work on behalf of the PCC ahead of full Council meetings. The Standing Committee comprises the Team Vicar, Churchwardens, Treasurer, and PCC Secretary.

Composition

During the year, the following served as members of the PCC:

Team Vicar:	Peter Godden (Chairman)
Churchwardens:	Mick White Paul Woodward-Court (Vice-chairman)
Elected Members:	David Curry (Treasurer from 1 st January; co-opted) Jane Curry (representative on the Deanery Synod) Tim Goode (representative on Deanery synod) (until September 2022) Sue Ingram (Secretary) Anne-Marie Longshaw (co-opted in May 2022) Lucy Nott (from May 2022) Simon Merchant Debbie Norie Margaret Pitman (representative on Deanery Synod) Jane Rogers (representative on Deanery Synod) Angeline Vere Anne White (Treasurer to 31 st December 2022)

The number of parishioners on the church electoral roll for 2022 was 138 (155 - 2021).

The Incumbent and Churchwardens are also trustees of Hody's Charity: a small charity established by a previous incumbent of the parish, and which offers young people from the parish support with education.

Administrative Information

The parish of Monks Risborough with Owlswick centres around two places of worship: St. Dunstan's Church, in the village of Monks Risborough; and St. Peter's Chapel in the hamlet of Owlswick. The parish forms part of the Risborough Team Ministry, in the Buckingham area of the Diocese of Oxford, within the Church of England.

St. Dunstan's Church is situated on Mill Lane, Monks Risborough, HP27 9JF.

St. Peter's Chapel is situated at Owlswick, Princes Risborough, HP27 9RH.

The correspondence address for both is: The Rectory, Mill Lane, Monks Risborough, HP27 9JE.

The parish website is www.stdunstanschurch.com.

The PCC is registered charity number 1153869.

Parish Bankers

Barclays Bank, Aylesbury

Independent Examiner

Ann Tomkins

Vicar's Annual Report

2022 was my first full calendar year here in Monks Risborough, which means that, by July, I had completed a full year's cycle in the life of a church. This is always a great milestone to reach in a parish – you feel as if you have really become part of the life of a worshipping community when you have done everything once!

In the early part of the year, we began to slowly relax the restrictions on our worship brought in due to the coronavirus pandemic, most notably in reintroducing most of the familiar sung elements into our principal services. During this period we held a particularly poignant service for the World Day of Prayer on 4th March, where utmost in our minds was the dismay at the conflict unfolding in Ukraine.

April saw us mark Holy Week, the most precious week in the Christian year. It was very special to see so many of us participate in such sacred worship, as we marked with solemnity the death of our Lord, and then with great joy and delight His resurrection from the dead.

In May, we were blessed by lovely weather as we marked our patronal feast of St Dunstan with our traditional feast out in the grounds – the sun shone, the food was wonderful, and we welcomed plenty of people who are not part of our weekly congregation. The celebrations continued into June, with the Platinum Jubilee weekend. We held a special service of choral evensong in St Dunstan's on the first day of the bank holiday weekend, which was a tremendously joyful occasion, and which again saw many people come to St Dunstan's who would not usually do so.

In September, we joined with the nation, the commonwealth, and much of the world in mourning the death of our late Queen Elizabeth II. The church was available for people to come and remember her late majesty, and we held a service of commemoration on the eve of her funeral.

The autumn saw special occasions such as Harvest in October, and Armistice Day and Remembrance Sunday in November. It was particularly good to see so many people gather at the War Memorial on Mill Lane on both Friday 11th and Sunday 13th November.

We were also blessed to have our Curate on Placement, the Rev'd Sally Prendergast, come to minister among us. Sally quickly became part of the community, and has been a real blessing to our spiritual life.

As autumn gave way to winter, we had a particularly special Advent and Christmas. We welcomed many people back to St Dunstan's who had not been there for some time. Midnight Mass was a particular highlight, with wonderful music to lift the worship of what was a notably young congregation, with a dozen people in their twenties and thirties among those who gathered.

In all of this, I wish to thank and pay tribute to all those who give their time, expertise, and energy to ensure that the body of Christ can continue to thrive in this place. A church is, after all, the people – and so it can only flourish thanks to those who are a part of its life. So my thanks to absolutely everyone who contributes in any way: my fellow clergy; our churchwardens, treasurer, and PCC secretary; everyone on the PCC and events team; organists and choir members; 10 O'clock Club leaders and Lunch Club volunteers; sidespeople and the sacristan & linen team; flower arrangers and cleaners; churchyard workers and the newsletter team; and many, many more of you too numerous to mention: thank you for making our community what it is.

The Rev'd Peter Godden

Risborough Team

The Risborough Team, of which our parish is a part, has continued to be a place where God's grace and love abide. Having a united group of Anglican parishes in the Risborough area – Princes Risborough, Bledlow, Lacey Green, and ourselves – means that the clergy of the Team support one another in faith and ministry. For me, this particularly comes in the form of leading Collective Worship at St John's Primary School in Lacey Green, and Speen Infant School, which is a real privilege. The pupils are genuinely enthusiastic about exploring the faith, and the particularly like the knitted Bible figures that I often take along.

In journeying alongside one another, the clergy of the team pray together every Wednesday, in a different church around the team, and meet up on a monthly basis to share news and encourage one another. Being part of a Team is a real blessing, and I thank the Team Rector David Williams, and all the clergy of the team, for their fellowship and support over the past year.

The Rev'd Peter Godden

APCM Annual Youth Report St Dunstons Church 2022

The 10 O'clock club has around 6 children on the Sunday school register, ranging from ages 4 to 15, some occasionally, some more regularly. There are younger children in the church, so this number will hopefully grow. We continue to use Mary Kents resource book, which works well with a little adaptation according to ages. Lighthouse songs are sung as part of our worship, and the children are becoming experts at the actions!

The children built a beautiful Easter Garden for all to admire, outside the porch, which I know had many lovely comments from parishioners. Thankyou to all those who helped and supplied plants.

The children continue to lead the prayers at the family service each month, when one of the their families are able to attend church.

Lighthouse went ahead this year, smaller than previous years on purpose, because of covid and the lack of volunteers. It was a huge success and brilliant to be back! We noticed the increase in SEN children, so will be focusing next year on how better to support those that need extra help.

Harvest festival and Remembrance saw greater numbers of uniformed children attending from 2nd Monks Risborough Rainbows, Brownies and 1st Monks Risborough Guides, which was encouraging.

We ended the year with our Christmas party, making bead candycanes, and telling the Christmas story in fancy dress!

Debbie Norie

PCC Youth Team Leader

Bell Ringing Report 2022

With no Covid restrictions this year we have continued to ring for Sunday morning services and to practice on Thursday evenings. It has been a royal year with ringing for the Duke of Edinburgh's funeral, the Queen's Platinum Jubilee and her funeral. We also rang for Remembrance Sunday with the bells half muffled as they were for the royal funerals. Unusually we rang for a wedding during the Queen's mourning period with the bells still half muffled as demanded by protocol.

For most of the year we were short of two of our six ringers due to illness and help from both Ellesborough and Great Kimble towers have enabled all six bells to be rung on most Sundays.

Bell maintenance has carried on as normal and one broken rope was replaced with a new spare. Luckily we have had no maintenance costs during the year as wedding income has almost dried up. Our bank account show a balance of £285 after paying 2023 guild subscriptions.

Brian Highe

Bethany House Group

Bethany House Group had occasional meetings at the beginning of last year due to covid. However we managed to study Mark 10 under the title of a Walk with Jesus when we related stages in our lives to the people Jesus met on His way to Jerusalem. We shared Communion in Holy Week and then met monthly until the summer break. In September we were back meeting fortnightly at Su Viney's which is our usual and favourite venue where we have a warm welcome. Since September we have been studying Images of Christ eg The Good Shepherd, The Vine, The Cornerstone etc which will take us to the beginning of Lent this year. The group is at full capacity having 10 members from St Dunstan's and the Methodist church.

Rose Williams

Churchyard 2022 Report

Thanks to the mowing team once again. The grass has continued to be cut to a higher setting and some areas as 'wild' to encourage a greater range of plants and thereby wildlife. The PCC were asked to view this voluntary work subsequent to one of our PCC meetings in order to obtain feedback.

Following the tree inspection in 2021 work was carried out on many trees in the early part of 2022.

Pruning work was carried out by volunteers in the meadow area. Two meadow cuts were done during the year & the subsequent hay left in the area under the willow.

Autumn leaf clearing has been kept 'on site' for a number of years now & has proved successful.

The shed has kept secure for our equipment.

We now have one green bin for filling & being emptied. Encouraging plants to be put on the main compost if they are needing to be disposed of.

Compost has been used to level up the churchyard to help easier, safer mowing and public visiting.

There is now a maintenance list, timetable to give a guide to the work being carried out in the churchyard.

Finally, a reminder of the PCC September 2020, Synopsis of the Diocese of Oxford Churchyard Regulations 2016, in relation to The Churchyard St Dunstan's Church. Displayed in the churchyard.

Mick White.

Churches Together in Risborough 2022

'Working together in unity to serve the community in God's love and for God's glory'

This group meets approximately every 3 months and comprises the Anglican, Baptist, Catholic, Elim and Methodist Churches in Princes Risborough plus Little Kimble, Lacey Green and Speen churches

Whilst each church pursues its own work within the community there are several areas where we can and do work together or provide background support for each other.

This year things started to look more normal, in that we began doing things face to face on a regular basis, beginning with a service here for the Week of Prayer for Christian unity. The lent and Easter events all took place, with study groups, an act of witness, finishing in the Market Square, on Good Friday, and the Easter Sunrise service on Whiteleaf Cross.

Lighthouse was able to take place, albeit with a smaller number than usual, @ 250 clients per day plus helpers (up to 100), but it was agreed that it was a successful week. Like all things costs have gone up dramatically, so 2023 may need to be run differently. This year Wycombe Youth for Christ has been involved, as well as working in the town on a regular basis. There is a Drop in available with the help of local volunteers.

CTR had a presence at the Town Festival and the Christmas Light Switch on, giving out booklets, providing craft for the youngsters, as well as interacting with the public. As usual 'It's your Move' booklets were given out to primary schoolleavers.

An Advent Service was held at the Baptist Church, and a couple of study groups took place

Throughout the year all the CTR member churches have been involved with projects to help the Ukrainian refugees, ranging from, help with language lessons, clothing, food, accommodation. In the summer there were @ 170+ living in the area.

Also this winter, CTR has been helping with the 'warm space campaign'.

As was said last year, despite all the continuing challenges, CTR still provided a presence within the town and surroundings, and hopes to continue to do so in the still challenging times to come.

CTR's website www.risboroughchurches.org.uk acts as shop window for our activities and provides a link to all the member churches as well as further afield.

Any areas where you think CTR should have a presence please advise Peter or me, Thank you.

It would be very helpful to have another from St Dunstan's on the Committee.

Margaret Pitman.

Deanery Synod 2022

Four members of the PCC are eligible to sit on the Deanery Synod, which meets 3 times a year. The Deanery Synod provides the PCC with an important link between the parish and the wider structures of the church. We are down to 3 representatives following the resignation of Tim Goode.

All meetings bar 1 were face to face this year. The one Zoom meeting was to elect a new Lay Chair.

This year's presentations included Aylesbury Town Centre Chaplaincy a brief history and what the current situation is;

Reflections on peace in Ukraine – from Lady Lidington, who has a family member that is Ukrainian;
The Generous Giving Advisor gave a talk on the economic situation within our churches at local level;
'Spacemakers' – a contemplative scheme for young people in schools and another scheme 'You shape Life' for young adults.

St Andrew's Bookshop

Analysis of Parish Share Payments.

These were usually followed by discussion and Q&A sessions. There is more information available on these topics. Contact me for details if interested.

Updates were given on the local issues, new developments in Aylesbury, the rural scene, vacancies and environmental issues plus the financial position of the Deanery and Parish Share situation.

Margaret Pitman

January 2023

Friendship Group

We continue to meet on the 3rd Wednesday each month. Numbers have gone down slightly this year as Marilyn Taylor moved away and in the summer we sadly said 'goodbye' to Doris Lawrence a long standing member of our group.

We have welcomed Peter several times and laterally Sally which means we have got to know them both better. Other meetings have included the ever popular Beetle Drives, Quick Fire Quizzes, Arm Chair Aerobics and also making Christmas decorations for our tree for the Advent festival.

In the summer we enjoyed an outing to Bradmoor Farm for a cream tea - this was very nice!

All together, we have had quite a good year but really need some new members so that we could do even more interesting things and invite people to speak to us.

Avril

St. Peter's Chapel, Owlswick

Since last year there has been no noticeable change to the building, however the quinquennial report has highlighted a number of defects that need to be rectified, some of these items can be put right by volunteers, but a number of them will need to be restored by professionals, in particular, the need of a new cill for the window behind the altar, slipped roof tiles, repointing, and of course the ongoing problem in the crack in the south wall and the replacement of the tin arch.

During the celebrations for Queen Elizabeth's Platinum Jubilee the residents of the village gathered on the Green and the results from the celebrations was a donation of £600 towards the repair of the chapel.

The main change in services has been a change of time for the service of Holy Communion on the second Sunday in the Month to 9am, it is hoped that the earlier time will prove to be more convenient than the previous time of 11.30am.

It was good to be able sing again and we are grateful to Stuart for playing the keyboard and Margaret for her support with the hymns.

In addition to the regular services, we celebrated Harvest Thanksgiving with a donation of goods to the Whitechapel Mission, there were donated by the people of the village. The Carol Service took place inside the chapel for the first time since 2019, although we had managed to celebrate during the pandemic, our Carol Services had of necessity taken place outside on the Green and it was good to return to the chapel with our traditional seven lessons and carols, followed by sherry, mince pies and a chat.

We are grateful to the many people who support this little chapel over the year, the flower arrangers, the readers, the musicians and of course Peter and his support team

Jane Rogers

2022 Report for APCM on Monks Risborough School

During the course of 2022 school life returned more or less to normal. Governors' meetings still mostly take place by Zoom, which enables earlier starts and finishes and leads to greater participation, but for pupils, school activities now take place again in person and sports clubs have resumed.

The school has inevitably been affected by the economic downturn and inflation. Probably the most significant issue to have arisen was the huge hike in energy costs, which meant that budget expectations had to be recalculated. The school had sufficient reserves to cope with the immediate effects of this, unlike many schools throughout the country, but a major disappointment is that the school's overall strategic plan for the future, which includes expansion in several areas, will need to be reassessed and/or postponed. Expected forthcoming government budget cuts are likely further to dent school finances generally, albeit in our case starting from a better position than many.

The school revised its previous programme for educational trips as the rise in the cost of living meant that it would be more difficult for many parents to pay for them. It was therefore decided to ensure that no trips, apart from the residential one, cost more than £20. It was also decided that there would be fewer 'Friends' events and that when asking for donations this would be without specifying any particular amount.

Due to problems with last year's after school club providers, coupled with diminishing numbers of pupils taking up the service, the school terminated that contract. Since then the children who still wish for after school care have been accompanied every day after the end of the school day by staff walking to the facility provided at Princes Risborough Primary School. It is hoped that in the near to medium future Monks will once again be able to provide such a service at our own premises.

Whole school worship in the school hall resumed, with the following pattern emerging:

Monday - led by head teacher or Rev. Vanessa Rye, who has included a series of worships delving into the Lord's Prayer.

Tuesday - led by Rev. Peter Godden – usually with a focus on a Bible story linked to the school value of the month, but also ensuring that pupils learn about all the major Christian festivals.

Wednesday – separate worship for each Key Stage (either first 3 years in the school or the last 4 years).

Thursday - Key Stage celebrating international or national events

Friday – worship based on celebrating achievements, including good behaviour in accordance with school values.

The school celebrated Harvest at St Dunstan's, the first time since Covid that the school attended the church with all parents able to attend. Food was donated to One Can charity to support our local community food bank.

A Remembrance Service took place at the school on 11th November; in addition, the head teacher and the members of the school council attended the service at the War Memorial and laid a wreath.

Mrs. Hirst restarted her Choir for Key Stage 2 children and her "glee club" for Key Stage 1 children, both taking place after school. The Key Stage 2 choir sang at the Princes Risborough Christmas Lights Switch-On event.

At the end of 2022, the school nativity show was staged twice in the school hall before parents and friends of the school. At the end of the term, Year 3 dressed up and participated in a retelling of the Christmas story in St. Dunstan's. Carols were sung, interspersed throughout the performance, accompanied by Sarah Fairall on the organ and clavichord.

Jane Curry,

Foundation Governor and V-C of Governors,

6th February 2023

Our Current List of Sidespersons

Susanne Carr, Margaret Pitman, Janet Griffin, Jane Rogers, Pat Argue, Margaret Butler, Jackie Highe, David Kemp, Michael Quigley, Mary Quigley, Morna Hinch, Rosemary Woodward-Court, Jo Wade, Angeline Vere, Anne White, Anne Baker, Avril Neighbour, Lucy Nott, John Collinswood, David Powell.

Once again we have been fortunate to have had a wonderful team who have helped the smooth running of Services at St Dunstan's. Our team have many duties to perform during a service, but the one I, and I am sure people attending services appreciate is the warm welcome on entering the church.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone for all that you do and your marvellous support, it is so much appreciated.

Mick Quigley.

St Dunstan's Music Report 2022

The year began with restrictions for singing at services still in place, but gradually throughout the year they have all but been removed. Also, the limits on the number of choir members allowed at any one time has been waived.

All this has made the musical contribution to our services more or less 'back to normal'.

With Peter in his first full year as incumbent we have experienced some different services. Firstly, at Easter when we had a service on the Saturday evening when the choir produced bells, pots and pans with clappers, anything to make a joyous noise, to herald Christ's resurrection, as well as singing 'Of the glorious body telling' a first for us, sung immediately after Communion of Maundy Thursday.

Other special services included Evensong for the late Queen's Platinum Jubilee celebrations, as well as Evensong before her funeral, two very contrasting occasions. Most of the choir were able to attend which added depth to the sung responses as well as the hymns and psalms.

We have managed a number of anthems as well as hymns during the morning Eucharist this year, some we have sung before and others new to some choir members.

At the beginning of the year, we had only one tenor, David but in the summer and autumn, we have been joined by another tenor, Chris and a bass Frank, which has added greatly to the depth of sound. The sopranos and altos have remained the same in number, bringing our regular number of singers to 13, with occasional extras from our organists when necessary.

The pinnacle for the choir this year was the Service of Nine Lessons and Carols, when we had 14 voices and we sang 5 anthems, the most we have learnt and sung since before the pandemic. The singing was some of the best we have produced since lockdown. The number of singers varied over the other Christmas services, but their contribution to the music over the period was very well received.

Choir practices are still often lively affairs with 'discussion' sometimes nearly taking over, but the members work hard and are gaining confidence as time passes, especially with the addition of the extra men.

The choir couldn't sound as they do without the contribution made by our organists who play at practice as well as at our services. As previously reported, we are extremely fortunate to have up to six organists who are willing to play. They not only play before but also after the services, setting the scene for the devotions and finishing with wonderful voluntaries as people leave.

Their help with the choir as well makes learning and practising a lot easier, often with useful tips on technique etc which I find very helpful. Thanks to Sue Ingram for arranging the organist's rota.

It only remains for me to thank the choir and our organists for making the music at St Dunstan's such an integral part of our worship.

Margaret Pitman

Open House Report for 2022

We started the year still meeting remotely by Zoom but as restrictions were removed we met first in the church hall and then in people's houses. This has made it much easier to share and discuss various topics to do with the bible and the Christian faith.

Over the year we looked at Hebrew poetry especially in the Psalms and the need to see the 'Big Picture.' We did a tour of the Old Testament in 60 minutes. In the autumn we studied the book of James and discovered many useful thoughts about how we should live as individuals and as a church.

Open House continues in the tradition of openness with a freedom to ask questions about difficult concepts. Many of these questions are developed further in later meetings.

It is a friendly group and all are welcome to our monthly meeting.

Ted and Mary Kent

St Dunstan PCC Report – report for 2022

The Flower Team

2022-2023 saw a return to “normal” and the church opened up for services. The team of 20 St Dunstan Flower Arrangers provided flowers for the porch, Wilberforce Chapel niche and the High Altar on a fortnightly basis with the flowers mainly provided by the team.

So the cycle for the Flower Team set off with Mothering Sunday, followed by Easter and more challenges. As part of Easter, besides the arrangement of lilies and spring flowers we were asked to arrange flowers for an “Altar of Repose”; which we had to research. May saw the Queen’s Platinum Jubilee celebrated with a theme based on floral bunting and jam jar arrangements on the windowsills. This was followed by the Bucks Art Week, a wedding, the celebration of the life of a General, a number of christenings, Harvest Festival and Remembrance Sunday. The Christmas Tree Festival, following the success of 2022, was booked for the first weekend of advent.

This year the theme for the Christmas Tree Festival was “Advent” and there were 44 Christmas Trees, with a number of new entrants. The imagination and workmanship put into the creation of the trees was outstanding and there are photographs on the church website, taken by John McKay. The Events Committee and many of the congregation gave their support over the two days in the organisation. We raised £2000 and more than 500 people attended. However, this year with the restrictions of receding, the competition from the surrounding villages, and locally, proved that the beginning of Advent weekend has become very popular with at least 8 other events within 5 miles!

Christmas is extremely busy and does seem to start at the end of November and go through to January which is a challenge for the watering and refresh team. It was good that we still had a number of the team not succumbing to ‘flu and other viruses available to pack up and put away the decorations in January.

This February the advert in the church Newsletter for volunteers to join the team attracted two and possibly three new recruits so we organised a workshop in the church to give them some idea of what is involved. The result; they have signed up for the rota. This year is already proving to be busy with Easter, a wedding, and the Coronation on the agenda. We are hoping to organise at least one workshop as they are very popular but squeezing it into the calendar is a challenge.

Gwen Miles & Jenny Masterton Smith
12/02/2023

Gift Aid Secretary Report 2021-2022

The report covers the claim year April 2021 -2022

The total amount of tax claimed from HMRC amounted to £14968.91

Blue Envelope Scheme and Pledges total Donations Received £16558.79 which is an increase of in the region of £7,000 on last year

Regular Standing Orders, total Donations £35,272 which is down by about £2,500 from last year.

From the Gift Aid Small Donations Scheme (GASDS), this covers the donations which are usually cash donations during the services at St Dunstons’ and St Peter & St Paul at Owlswick. This year we were able to claim a tax refund of £2011.21, which is included in the above total amount claimed of £14,968.91

We still receive a number of donations in Blue Envelopes, which do not qualify for a reclaim as they are incorrectly completed or totally ineligible. These are usually from people attending weddings or funerals who would not be known to us. Our Tax Re-claim is probably reduced by about £30 to £40 each year because of this. Where I know or recognise the donor of an incorrectly completed blue envelope, I do complete these myself and include them in the claim.

Nick Tyler

Newsletter

The editorial team has remained unchanged this year, so many thanks to John McKay for the production, June Timms for managing the advertising, Penny Hollings for the distribution and Jane Curry for the proof-reading. All have given a lot of time, skill and commitment to ensuring the Newsletter continues to be a reliable and, we hope, entertaining magazine not only for the St Dunstan’s congregation, but for the whole parish.

Looking through the issues of the magazine since the last report, it's wonderful to see the gradual opening up of the community and of church life reflected in their pages - fewer references to restrictions and more space needed to advertise events! For the first time since 2019, the latest issue advertises the welcome return of the "Pop Up" Cinema and the return of Monks Monkeys.

As well as keeping everyone in touch with all the St Dunstan's services and societies, we also like to provide more general interest articles for the community and are especially grateful to Susanne Carr who continues to provide a terrific service to us all with her entertaining art tickles. We also thank David Keysell for his series on his Pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela, which has been so interesting and informative. He will be giving us some more articles in future issues, which will pick out some highlights from the final stages of his journey across Spain. In our Christmas issue, we had a fascinating World of Work interview with Caroline Godden and, in the latest issue, two articles focusing on our local environment and church history, from Francis Gomme and Rev Arthur Taylor respectively. There are always too many contributors to mention individually in this report, but every entry is important and much appreciated.

We have lost a few advertisers this year, which possibly reflects how difficult it is for small businesses at present, but on the plus side, we had a very good response to our gift aid envelopes, which we hope means that people are finding the magazine interesting and helpful.

We thank our printers South Bucks Business Products, who have again given us excellent service, and our stalwart team of distributors who ensure every house in the parish receives a copy. We are now looking forward to the summer months, when we have a number of exciting events coming up which will be fun to highlight. Make sure you keep in touch!

Morna Hinch

APCM Report for Safeguarding

Safeguarding Policy

The Safeguarding Policy for the parish was reviewed and accepted at the PCC meeting on 13 February 2023. It can be seen on the website and on church notice boards. A list of local and national crisis and help lines is included.

Safer Recruitment

8 DBS applications have been processed and approved in the last year.

Safeguarding Training

8 people have completed the Basic Safeguarding course.

9 people have completed the Foundation course.

Parish Safeguarding Dashboards

We joined the Safeguarding Dashboard project in summer 2021. The dashboard brings together and streamlines safeguarding policy and practice. It is intended to support parishes in understanding the Church of England safeguarding requirements, and to track progress in meeting these requirements.

The dashboard consists of questions about safeguarding practice in the parish and rates the answer to each as green (completed), amber (work to do) or red (urgent action required). As information is added to the dashboard, it generates an action plan detailing which areas of safeguarding are still to be progressed.

The parish dashboard is complete at the time of writing this report.

Angeline Vere

Parish Safeguarding Officer

APCM Report for Pastoral Care Group and Prayer Group - 5 March 2023

We continue to keep in touch with parishioners who are housebound, unwell, or going through a particularly difficult time. This includes home and hospital visits.

If anyone knows of somebody needing support (e.g. bereavement, sickness, accident) please inform one of us. We can then offer support.

We have a good nucleus of people who come regularly to the monthly Parish Prayers held on Fridays. A Prayer Request Box has been put in the church and the requests (which can be anonymous) are read out at the Thursday morning service. This has proved to be very worthwhile.

We have had several meetings with the Pastoral Care Co-ordinator from St Mary's to see if we can work together on some aspects of pastoral care. Angeline produced a Risk Assessment and Role Description for pastoral visitors which has been shared with St Mary's. Angeline has also advised on the requirements for DBS checks and safeguarding training for pastoral visitors.

Angeline Vere

Jill Iredale

Annual Fabric Report

Owlswick and Monks Risborough, Quinquennial Inspection Reports were received at the end of May, and we have begun to work our way through implementing the recommendations.

Since the last annual report, planning permission to extend the church hall lapsed. The feeling of the PCC is that it is better to let it lapse, rather than rush into initiating the work, as the requirements for the hall will have changed, and need to be re-examined.

At various times the central heating systems in both the church and the church hall have proved problematic. The core issue with both boilers is water pressure loss. The reason for the pressure loss in the church boiler is easy to identify – an obvious leak in the gland of a cast iron pipe, close to where it joins the boiler in the boiler room. Heating engineers have been asked to attend and rectify any issues in both boilers.

The hot water system in the church hall has been investigated, and the lack of flow is due to the input to the boiler becoming blocked. I.e. it isn't being caused by scale build up inside the boiler itself, or in the outlet. As discussed, the most appropriate remedy appears to be a free-standing boiler, which looks similar to the existing boiler, save for it not being fixed to the wall. The advantages are that installation can be undertaken without fear of contravening Part P regulations, and its eventual replacement will be equally simple.

Minor fabric issues such as converting the lighting in the boiler room, and the corridor and toilet in the church hall from compact fluorescent to LED has been completed, as well as installing a shelf in the hall toilet to enable cleaning equipment and materials to be kept off the floor. All the locks for the main entrances to the church and the hall work well, and a register of keyholders is maintained. A shelf in the cupboard under where the kettles are plugged in in the hall failed due to overloading. Surprisingly little crockery was broken, and the shelf has been reinstalled and some reinforcement added.

Members of the bell-ringing team are doing regular safety checks on the bells in the tower, most recently on Friday 4th February, and all is well.

Our 160-year-old church organ is showing its age. Various mechanical functions no longer work properly, or are unreliable. We are arranging an open meeting with the Diocesan Organ Advisor in June to get expert advice and to help us understand our options - more details will be provided nearer the time.

The church alarm has received its annual maintenance visit, and has been remarkably trouble free over the last 12 months. We were looking for an opportunity to replace the existing alarm with a much more modern type, but that depends on having a fast, stable Internet connection to the church, and that has so far proved elusive. For this reason, Ace Defence have converted the existing system from battery to mains operation at no cost. As the previous system needed to have 6 Saft 3.6V Lithium Thionyl Chloride D batteries replaced every year at £25 each, this should produce savings, even if the alarm is approaching the end of its life.

The alarm system we were looking to adopt is made by a company called Ajax. Ajax has made remarkable progress since its inception in 2011 with 40 employees, and has become the largest manufacturer of security systems in Europe with 1,250,000 users – a testimony to the effectiveness of their products. One unfortunate issue is their headquarters is in Kyiv. Perhaps another reason to hold off purchasing an Ajax system until it is clear that Ukraine is undoubtedly winning the war with Russia.

We are delighted to report that the sound boards have now been replaced, and the new ones look to be capable of lasting for decades.

The coming year should see the focus shift to ensuring St Peter's Owlswick has overdue maintenance

Events Team Report

It is great to be able to report on a year of “getting back to normality” for events at St Dunstan’s in 2022.

We were blessed with warm weather for the Gourmet Village Barbecue, to celebrate our Patronal Festival. The hot food was cooked by Jim of Orchard View Farm, who is always keen to support us. Salads and puddings donated by parishioners were amazing and everyone had the opportunity for seconds, if not thirds!

To celebrate our late Queen’s Platinum Jubilee in June we served prosecco after a special evensong service and a good number of people stayed after the Sunday service for a “bring your own lunch” gathering.

At Bucks Art Week in July, we returned to what we do best and our home-made cream teas and cakes were served over two weekends. It is great to have the time and opportunity to chat to people visiting our church for the first time, as well as those who return every year.

In September we hosted local band Banjovi Revival, who entertained with well known gospel songs and spirituals.

Following the success of the drinks and canapes style harvest celebration last year, we decided that it is more sociable to gather together in church for this event. This year’s finger buffet gave more people the opportunity to stay and chat after the service and we hope we can build on this format in the future.

Advent saw the church bursting with purple creativity. Our second Christmas Tree Festival had contributions from 44 community groups, charities, shops and businesses based on the theme of Advent but often reflecting the shop/charity they came from. Highlights included a balloon Christmas tree on the pulpit by Days to Remember and origami trees made by the Ian Rennie Bookshop. We had interest from so many stall holders that we were needed to make use of the hall as well as the main church space. With refreshments, recitals from our talented group of organists, stalls and tree exhibits, we welcomed in excess of 500 visitors and made a massive £2,000 profit.

In December, despite the freezing conditions we were thrilled to welcome back Chinnor Silver Band for a concert by candlelight. A packed church, with stunning decorations, the opportunity to listen to popular pieces and to join in with singing carols, it was just perfect.

So many people contribute to the success of our events and we have so much talent, creativity and generosity within our congregation. Thank you all.

2023 looks to be even busier. If there is an event you would like to see at St Dunstan’s be it fund raising or social, please let us know. Our small Events Team meets every few months and we would be thrilled to have some new people join us. We are lively and like to laugh!

Cathy Farquhar

(Events Team: Cathy Farquhar, Penny Hollings, Sue Ingram, Gwen Miles, Ann Myers, Johanna Powell, Rachel Ungi, Jo Wade)

Hody’s Charity

The Trustees were glad to finally be given authorisation to act as signatories to the charity’s account, which had proved to be a frustratingly protracted process. Two applications (received in late 2021 and early 2022) were granted in full.

The Rev’d Peter Godden