

Annual Report 2023



St John's Methodist Church ***Potters Bar***

stjohnspb.org.uk
Registered Charity 1130633

St John's is part of the St Albans & Welwyn Circuit
midhertsmethodists.org.uk



Revd David Jebb
Minister in charge of St John's Methodist Church Potters Bar and
the Superintendent Minister of St Albans and Welwyn Circuit

ANNUAL REPORT 2023 FOR THE GENERAL CHURCH MEETING

Dear Members, Adherents, and Friends of St John's,

It gives me great pleasure to introduce this annual report of the life and work of St. John's Methodist Church, Potters Bar, for the Connexional year 2022/ 2023. I hope everyone associated with this church will read it with satisfaction at the amount of work that is done through this church. You will find on these pages reports from all the various church and non-church groups about their activities.

Not only does the annual report provide a valuable record of the church's life during the past twelve months or so, but it also reminds us of the broad range of our church work and witnesses from Jumping Johns to the Friday morning coffee and Bible Study & Prayer Groups etc.

Of course, even an annual report cannot record the whole picture. The Minister, Pastoral secretary, Pastoral contacts, and individual church members undertake a considerable amount of pastoral work within and beyond the family of the church. I firmly believe that pastoral care should receive the highest priority in the life of the Church and also to extend our pastoral care to all beyond the church walls.

As Minister, I am uniquely placed to survey the life of the church. What I see makes me feel very enthusiastic about the opportunities facing the church at present and the potential for developing the ministry and mission of the church.

I want to stress that the most significant resource that the church has is its people. We are fortunate in this church to have a core of committed new and old members with a variety of gifts to contribute. But I am also aware of the pressure under which many of the church families are living because of work and family commitments. Stress is a real feature of life at the present time. Securing volunteers for offices in any local church (or other charitable groups) is never easy. In view of this, the content of this report is cause for celebration rather than guilt at what cannot be achieved because of a lack of resources. In all our church work, to God be the glory.

CHURCH STEWARDS

First of all, let me express our sincere thanks to Myra Sloper for her commitment and care during the early part of this Connexional year which were very much appreciated and also thanks to our current Church Stewards Robin Burns, Helen Jeckells, David Carter and Sally Gunning and their continued leadership and commitment for which we are grateful indeed. Robin Burns has agreed to continue as senior church steward during the Connexional year and will step down at the General Church meeting in the summer 2024. That means we are looking for one or two more people to join the Stewards Team in September 2023 and 2024. If God calls you, please speak with one of the church stewards or me. Church Stewards Training will be given in autumn 2023.

The church stewards are corporately responsible, with the Minister in charge exercising pastoral responsibility in relation to the Local Church for giving leadership and help over the whole range of the church's life and activity. They are particularly charged to hold together in unity the variety of concerns that are contained within the one ministry of the church. To this end it is their responsibility to uphold and act upon the decisions and policies of the Church Council. In the discharge of their responsibilities, they are encouraged, whenever possible, to draw other (new and old) members with appropriate gifts and skills into a leadership team to be appointed by the Church Council.

WARM SPACE, BIBLE STUDY & PRAYER MEETINGS

Since last autumn, the church has been open on Tuesdays from 11 am to 4 pm for 'Warm Space' for anyone to come and have a time together over a cup of coffee and a light lunch which are very popular. We started Saturday morning prayers on Zoom from 9 am to 9:45 am and had a successful Lent Bible study on Zoom and in person, which were very well attended. The presence of church members on the premises during these times reminds those who use our facilities that this is a Christian Church to serve. I am grateful to those who give time once a week to open the church and make the necessary arrangements for the Sunday Worship, Coffee / Bible Study & Prayer meetings, other activities, etc. We need a few more volunteers to help. Please let the stewards know if you could help at least once a month.

OUR FUTURE

We will see in the future of St John's Methodist Church that:

- it is confident in God
- it has a greater awareness of its heritage
- it is a welcoming church for all.
- it calls people to follow Jesus in deepening discipleship
- it gives attention to worship which nourishes people spiritually, enabling them to serve in the community.
- it is a praying church
- it seeks in its decision-making to discern the will of God
- it is where we watch over each other in love and treat everyone equally

because we believe the goal of the Christian life is to love God with all your heart, soul, mind and strength, and to love your neighbour as you love yourself. From the beginning of the Methodist movement, we were known as "reasonable enthusiasts," those who are both

spiritually and intellectually engaged. We value passionate worship, relevant and Biblical preaching, small groups to hold Christians accountable to one another, and serving those who are in need. We value spiritual disciplines and take a “methodical” approach to grow in the faith. Methodists value the full participation of women and men, people of all backgrounds, in every facet of fellowship and leadership within the church.

AWAY DAY AT HOME: Please book Saturday, 8th July 2023, from 10 am to 4 pm in your diary. We are to look at the visions and options for our future to be a healthy-looking church! Andy Frost – the Director of Share Jesus International, has been invited to explore the theme of ‘Where do you want the church to be in 5 – 10 years?’ We look forward to careful and prayerful consideration together of what God is saying to us through this and what actions we might take in the face of the increasing effects of age on our congregation and its mission to the local community.

THANK YOU

God has blessed and used his Church to change lives, transform communities and renew the church for the 82 years or more. This is just the beginning, and we are committed to building our future together.

Our team of church stewards and all the church officers are passionate and committed. They provide leadership for the ministries and programmes of the Church, and in doing so, they help shape the heart and character of this church.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you all, for your service to the church during the year. But there are many more without whom the church could not function. I hope that everyone who contributes to the life of the church in any way finds their service to be a source of satisfaction and joy rather than a burden.

Thank you all, whatever parts you play. We give thanks. We keep praying. We ask you to pray a little more if you can!

Lastly, my thanks to Guy Fenner for compiling and printing this report.

With every blessing

Revd David Jell

LEADERSHIP TEAM

The Leadership Team consists of our minister, the stewards and the treasurer and meets monthly to oversee and plan the life of the church, in accordance with the strategy, direction and decisions made by Church Council.

In addition, the stewards are responsible for organising and co-ordinating the arrangements for all worship services, weddings and funerals.

Since the last report in 2019, various ministers have at times held pastoral responsibility for St John's and been part of the leadership team – I would like to thank Rev Ali Facey, Rev Rosemary Fletcher, Rev Andrew Prout and Rev David Jebb for all their work in this along with their other responsibilities.

I would also like to thank all the lay people who have worked as part of this team since then those who have now stepped down as stewards -Peter Barlow, Chris Humphreys, Myra Sloper, Gill Goldfinch, David Best

those who are currently stewards – Helen Jeckells, David Carter, Sally Gunning and our treasurer - Robert Ward

We need more stewards! We really need at least one more steward to start in September 2023 so that we can provide continuity as stewards change. Please speak to me or anyone else on the team if you think you might be able to help. Stewards do have to be members of St John's.

Robin Burns - Senior Steward

REPORT FROM THE TREASURER FOR THE YEAR TO 31ST AUGUST 2022

The Church has three main funds, the General Church fund, Shenley Church fund and the Nursery Playgroup fund. From 1st September 2021 Shenley became a class of St John's so its finances must be included within the accounts produced for St John's.

1. General Church Fund

This fund is responsible for supporting the costs of Circuit ministry and the maintenance and repair of the Church buildings.

The main source of income is regular giving from the members and friends, and this includes the related Gift Aid reclaimed from HMRC.

Other key sources of income are:

- external lettings to local groups which have now recovered to the levels of the pre-COVID years.
- a contribution from the Baker Street setting of our Playgroup for use of the premises during their term times.

We were fortunate to receive a donation of £10,000 from the relatives of a deceased member, Mrs Rita Hayes; this is not subject to any restrictions on its use but will be used for training or outreach work rather than property projects.

The total income of £122,548 can be summarised as follows, along with comparative figures for the previous year:

Prior year 2021 £	Income	Year to August 2022 £
58,617	Members' regular giving	56,270
14,028	Gift Aid on above	13,473
6,953	Lettings	17,135
14,744	Nursery Playgroup	16,385
1,941	Other donations	15,518
0	Jumping Johns	999
1,972	Sundry income	2,163
0	Fund raising	605
98,255	TOTAL INCOME	122,548

The main recurring expense we have is our share of the Circuit Assessment; this is the cost of supporting the Circuit ministers, their manses and the funds which the Circuit must pay to support Methodism at District and National levels.

The big, one off, expense for the year was the replacement of some old single glazed windows in the Church and the main hall. This project had been anticipated for several years and reserves were built up to pay for the cost.

In addition, to improve the display of words and images two large TV monitors were purchased to replace the existing screen and back projection arrangement in the Church. These costs are shown under the heading of equipment.

We are fortunate that long term fixed price contracts for the supply of both gas and electricity were entered into in 2020 before the big price increases of 2022. This has meant that the energy bills are not quite the burden that they could have been. These fixed price contracts will continue until late spring 2024.

Our total expenses of approximately £143,228 can be summarised as follows:

Prior year 2021 £		Year to August 2022 £
65,400	Circuit Assessment	65,400
2,764	Building repairs and maintenance	3,550
0	Property improvements	26,430
432	Equipment	5,228
3,951	Church donations	4,096
6,488	Insurance	5,906
5,033	Gas, electricity and water	6,609
8,611	Cleaners' wages	9,506
8,059	Other costs	16,503
100,738	TOTAL COSTS	143,228

There was an overall deficit of £20,680, but this is attributable mainly to the expenditure on replacement windows.

It has been necessary to use some of our reserves, including those held in designated and restricted funds intended for property related expenditure, to cover the cost of the replacement windows. At 31st August 2022 general fund reserves stood at £93,000. In accordance with Charity Commission guidance the bulk of this is held to cover at least 6 months of normal expenditure should elements of our income suffer a sudden decline. The balance is to cover other costs such as future property work including the replacement of the remaining old single glazed windows in the church.

2, Shenley Church fund

Shenley had the following transactions during the year and the balance of funds, or reserves, at the year-end was £16,918. The funds raised and donated locally more than covered the costs of running and maintaining the Church building during the year.

Income	£
Members and adherents giving	6,255
Gift Aid on above	1,250
Fund raising	906
Lettings	234
Other income	353
Total Income	8,998

Expenditure	£
Gas, electricity and water	4,846
Property expenses	1,032
Other costs and expenses	508
Total expenditure	6,386

3. Charitable Giving from St John's

Following appeals to the congregation during the year to 31st August 2022, the following amounts (including Gift Aid where applicable) were collected from members and friends and sent to the following charities:

Charity	£
Christian Aid	526
Whitechapel Mission -Harvest appeal	2,146
Action for Children	189
All We Can (Methodist Relief and Development Fund): Haiti appeal	648
All We Can: Ukraine appeal, Spring 2022	3,822
Methodist World Mission: Easter offering	278
Noah's Ark: Christmas 2021 appeal (excludes donations via Just Giving site)	1,131
Total	8,740

4. Nursery Playgroup Fund

The Playgroup had a very successful year financially achieving an operating surplus of approximately £45,000 probably one of the highest ever achieved. The overall financial aim of the Playgroup is to cover its costs year on year. This exceptional result can be explained to a large degree by a record number of pupils at the Oakmere School setting and it has been necessary to rent additional classroom space from the School.

The total income of the Playgroup for the year to 31st August 2022 was £362,000 compared to £283,000 in the previous year. The majority of the income, 88%, comes from pupil hours paid for by Hertfordshire County Council with the balance being paid by parents.

The major cost of the Playgroup is staff wages and related employment costs which represent 96% of total costs.

From September 2022 the Playgroup board, which reports to Church Council, has had to make significant increases to staff hourly wage rates to reflect both inflation and comply with statutory and Connexionally recommended minimum wage levels.

It is unlikely that the outstanding financial performance of last year will be repeated. Pupil numbers have been lower this year and along with higher wage costs this will impact adversely on the financial outcome for the current year to 31st August 2023.

The Playgroup maintains its own reserves which at 31st August 2022 were £155,000. These reserves are held to cover years when operating losses are incurred and for the payroll related costs which would be incurred if any part of the Playgroup had to cease operations at no or short notice. It should be noted that any costs or liabilities of the Playgroup which could not be covered by these reserves would fall as a liability of the Church's managing trustees.

Conclusion

The Church's finances remain in a satisfactory shape, and we are fortunate to have a large number of members and friends who contribute very generously to the work of the Church.

The church's formal accounts and trustees report will be presented to the Church Council, as Managing Trustees, for their approval. They will also be subject to an independent examination by a firm of accountants to comply with Charity Commission requirements.

Robert Ward - Church Treasurer - April 2023

BADMINTON

A small group of players meet on Mondays for an evening of fun and a bit of exercise. We're very pleased that Jenet has joined us recently and so far this session we've managed to get four players each evening meaning we can play 'doubles'.

We have a meal out together in January and again in July at the end of our season.

Margaret Bland

BIBLE GROUP AT ST JOHN'S

Our Bible Group continues to meet fortnightly during term time at St John's (Clifton Room) on Wednesday evenings 7.45 – 9.00 pm.

At the moment we have 4 regular members with one or two more who come when they can.

During the last year, we have used Study Guides to explore the Holy Spirit, the book of Ruth and the Gospel of John. We also joined the online Circuit Advent study "Unexpected Jesus" and Circuit Lent Study "Jesus the I Am".

As always, we would welcome anyone who is interested in finding out more about the Bible and how very relevant it still is to our lives today.

We are quite an informal group. Our sessions begin with refreshments and chat, followed by roughly an hour's bible discussion which some of us take turns to lead. There is often a short time of prayer at the end of the session. We value everyone's thoughts and questions, but if you just want to listen quietly, then that is absolutely fine.

So, if you have been considering coming, don't put it off any longer. Just come along and join us. Session dates are on the notice board outside the Clifton Room and on the St John's website. You are welcome, of course, to contact me for more details.

Lesley Humphreys. 01707 851320

BYNG DRIVE HOUSE GROUP

This house group still continues to meet on a fortnightly basis since the last report, although we have now moved from Friday afternoons to mornings. During COVID most of us were able to meet on Zoom, which was a great support and kept the momentum going, so we were ready to restart again once we were free! We currently have 10 regular members (and often two dogs!) – which, due to the limited size of our lounge, is our capacity if everyone comes.

We choose our study books together and over the past year or so have explored the subjects of 'Acts', 'Fruit of the Spirit' and 'Thessalonians' and are currently doing a Lent Course based on the 2021 musical film of 'West Side Story' (running true to form we missed the Easter completion target!!). Sometimes the studies have been challenging and tough and usually raise more questions than answers, but it has been a privilege to share thoughts, ideas and experiences with such a supportive and caring group of Christian friends!

Dawn Fenner

CHURCHES TOGETHER IN POTTERS BAR REPORT 2022

A "Walk of Witness" took place on Good Friday. This was in a different format from previous years in that participants walked from their own churches to meet at the War Memorial for a short service.

There was a service at Our Lady and St Vincent Roman Catholic Church to mark the 20th Anniversary of the Potters Bar Rail Crash on May 10th 2022. This was well attended and was a very moving occasion.

A service to celebrate Pentecost and the Queen's Platinum Jubilee took place on the afternoon of Sunday 5th June. It had originally been planned as a picnic in Oakmere Park but as the weather was inclement, it was held at St Mary's in the Walk. The St John's worship band, led by Margaret Rhodes on keyboard, provided the music for the occasion and this contribution was much appreciated.

A very successful Holiday Club was held at Pope Paul School from 20-26th August for 5 mornings. Just over 60 children attended and there were 36 volunteers including 8 from St John's. The Teen Team (older children) did a great job supporting the adult volunteers. The theme was "Teambuilders-", and the children learnt about being on God's Team through songs, drama, activities, crafts and games. A lunchtime barbecue for the children and their parents finished off an enjoyable and worthwhile week.

A Churches Together in Potters Bar Service of Evensong in thanksgiving for Her Late Majesty Queen Elizabeth II was held at St Mary the Virgin and All Saints Church on Sunday 18th September. This was well attended with representatives from all the churches in the area and several clergy from various churches took part in the service.

"Discover Christmas" 2022 was again held at St John's with crafts and Nativity Drama. Feedback was very positive, but it was acknowledged that the children mostly came from church families. It was agreed that wider publicity should be employed next Christmas.

Saturday morning prayers, which take place on the first Saturday of the month at 8.30 am, are now attracting more people - there were 22 at the meeting on 1st October at St John's which was led by David Jebb. It is good to meet with Christians from the other churches in Potters Bar and share prayers and breakfast.

Myra Sloper

CHURCH FLOWERS

The small group of arrangers continue to provide a beautiful pedestal of flowers at the front of the church for the Sunday services. At festival times we decorate the vestibule, entrance area and other parts of the Church if we can! Recently we've been doing the pedestal every other week as, unfortunately, some of our group have "hung up their scissors". We are delighted to welcome Iris to our group.

A big 'Thank-you' to all who have pledged a donation towards the flowers recently. If anyone would like to contribute to remember a loved one or on a special date – or for any other reason – please add your name to the list at the far end of the vestibule or speak to me about your gift. I would like to thank the decorating team and if there's anyone who feels they would like to join our group they'd be very welcome.

Margaret Bland

CIRCUIT REPORT FOR 2022

Stationing With the departure of all but one of our Circuit ministers at the end of August, the main focus for the Circuit Leadership Team (CLT) during 2022 was that of stationing. For financial reasons, the decision had already been taken to reorganise the Circuit and reduce the number of ministers from five to four. It was agreed that we would seek a new Superintendent Minister, a Probationer Presbyter and a Deacon to join Rev Andrew Prout on the ministerial team from September 2022. The Circuit was successful in filling all these posts, and Revs David Jebb, Rosemary Mutopo and Deacon Nigel Perrott were welcomed into the Circuit. From September, the CLT once again entered into the stationing process, following Andrew's decision to seek a new post for September 2023.

Appointments The Circuit also found itself with a number of other, non-ministerial vacancies to fill:

1. **Circuit Administrator** Chris Hancock took this role on, temporarily, following the tragic death of Ann Huntingford. Unfortunately, two attempts at recruitment failed to find a suitable replacement; but Chris agreed to remain in post until August 2023, after a review of his contract.
2. **Circuit Safeguarding Officer** A volunteer has recently been found for this role. The Circuit has four trained trainers for Safeguarding foundation level, but organising dates for training sessions has been proving difficult, especially during the Covid years. With a new officer in post, it is hoped that the process can now be restarted.
3. **Circuit Treasurer** Since September, Stuart Johnson (Senior Circuit Steward) has been dealing with the Circuit finances while a new Treasurer is sought.
4. **Manse Secretary** The Circuit was, and remains, in need of a volunteer to take this on. Members of SJPB kindly carried out the work during 2022, as there was much to do in preparing and updating accommodation for our new ministers.

Circuit Churches From September 1st 2022, Shenley Methodist Church became a class of St John's. At the same time, Digswell Village Church ended its LEP arrangement with the local Anglican Church and became a Methodist Church in its own right, although the two churches will continue in an Ecumenical Partnership.

Connexional strategies:

Strategies being looked at by CLT include:

1. New Places for New People "new ways of being church (Fresh Expression Church)". There is a need to identify where there may be opportunities for our churches to explore this initiative.
2. Equality Diversity and Inclusion (EDI)/ Justice, Dignity and Solidarity (JDS). The Circuit wishes to set up a group to look at these issues and form a Circuit Plan to help address them.
3. Circuit Outreach Mission, Evangelism, Family, Lunch and Youth (COMEFLY)

Val Parker

COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE

The communications committee looks after the general communications from the church – both internal and external. We meet every other month to discuss policy and plans. The committee consists of Rev David Jebb, Robin Burns, Chris Humphreys and Margaret Rhodes.

The main areas we manage are:

- Our website, www.stjohnspb.org.uk . (Chris) We work hard to keep this up to date but depend on others to let us know when things change! A recent addition is a monthly blog from our minister.
- Our newsletter, St John's News (Mags / Robin) This is produced monthly except in January and August. This is emailed to 69 people, and we usually print about 80 or 90 copies. There are two similar versions – one created in Apple software and one in Microsoft software – have you noticed the difference?
- Our emails (sent from info@stjohnspb.org.uk). Following some earlier technical issues we now use an Internet service run by Mailchimp to send and manage our church emails. This also allows users to subscribe or unsubscribe from our 3 mailing lists:
 - Emails about events and activities aimed primarily at adults
 - Emails about events and activities aimed primarily at children
 - St John's News
- Our noticeboards (Mags). We have a range of noticeboards both external and internal, some for church use and some for other organisations that use our premises or community groups.

- Our screens (Chris). We have recently started showing rolling notices on screens in the main foyer and the Nursery Playgroup waiting area. It has taken a while to overcome some technical issues and the system is still bedding down. Once we are sure it is stable we will open this up to other groups that use our premises.
- Our Facebook page (David). Another new initiative which is still bedding down. David posts a range of notices and articles there.

As well as these, we produce flyers when appropriate, and send articles and information to Potters Bar Community News and the Circuit Methodist Reporter.

Robin Burns

CREATIVE CHURCH - ACTIVITIES AND CELEBRATION

Our thanks to the Creative Activity Team for another year of crafts and cooking to support our Creative Church and Celebration.

Creative Church is on the 3rd Sunday of each month and the families arrive from 10.30am onwards. We start in the Rainbow Room with the Activities. A plan shows those arriving what is on offer and highlights the bible story and theme for the day. Normally there are 4 crafts which can include making, modelling, painting, decorating, sticking or colouring. There is also a cooking table which is always popular. There is enough time for participants to have a go at the cooking and craft activities. There is also a creche area for the very young. Refreshments are available during the morning too and thanks to Lesley for providing the snacks each month.

At 11.30am we get ready to join the service in church for the Celebration. This is where we tell the bible story and share what we have made, linking this to the bible story. Two related songs complete the Celebration. Thank you to the band for leading these and to the SongPro team and Don for putting the screen display together.

Creative Church has been happening for some time now and we have been able to recycle and update material from previous years. The main bible passage and theme can be used by the minister or preacher so there is a common link throughout the morning.

We are encouraged by the positive atmosphere in both the activity area (Rainbow Room) and in church which is helped by the support and encouragement from the congregation, so thank you.

We look forward to continuing this work as part of the outreach by St John's.

David and Margaret Rhodes

ENVIRONMENT

St John's has been keen to promote respect for the environment over many years. Accordingly, we have worked to obtain the Bronze Eco Church Award Certificate. Eco Church is supported by the Church of England, the Methodist Church and the United Reformed Church. This certificate covers aspects of church teaching, building energy efficiency, individual lifestyle choice and involvement with the community. To this end St John's also has a published Environmental Policy which corresponds with the Methodist Church overall policy.

The church team have looked hard at the building. Most of the easily achievable energy saving targets have been met and further savings require significant capital expenditure. As a check we have compared our church building with St Charles the Martyr who had recently completed an environmental audit. Their conclusions generally corresponded with ours.

There are still improvements to be made. Some of these are in hand with the Monday Fix It group. Improvements in hand are relatively minor upgrades to building insulation and modifications to the rainwater drainage to recover water for garden watering. These modifications may enable us to achieve an Eco Church Silver award.

We also have an exercise in place to study the temperature gradient in certain rooms. Study of these results will allow us to optimise setting of the room heating system. At present the interim results suggest certain undesirable effects but the results need to be studied in full before firm conclusions can be drawn.

As to the future, we should continue to encourage our membership and others in the church community to have due regard for environmental issues, specifically the carbon footprint of individual people. Any major developments await evolution of the Government energy policy. Currently gas heating is the best financial option and change to alternative system must show a running cost saving in order to justify it.

Heat pumps and Photovoltaic cells are in the future. The church roof arrangement is quite complex and may preclude economic use of PV cells. Currently heat pumps are expensive and do not show a saving in running cost. However, the trend of history is towards reduction of our carbon footprint so the situation may change in the future.

David Carter 25 March 2023

FIX IT GROUP

The Fix It group meets every Monday morning officially between 10am and noon. These times are variable dependent on what tasks we have programmed in for each particular day.

On average around 12 /15 people, both male and female, join us each week and we undertake any jobs and repairs which are necessary around the Church property. With a high usage of our facilities this keeps us quite busy.

We are extremely lucky that we have a few 'experts' amongst our number so are able to undertake some major and complex tasks which saves our treasurer a huge amount of money. (Not personally of course!) We have a dedicated team who look after our garden which receives much praise from passers-by.

As much as it is a working morning the social aspect is as important, if not more, than the work element. We break for coffee and cakes and a chat which is always a bit of fun.

Please do feel free to come and join us even if it is only for coffee and chat-you will be made most welcome.

Roger Croughton

FRIDAY COFFEE MORNINGS

We have been holding Friday Coffee Mornings at St John's for many years. During that time Pat Goodwin organised the coffee rota with a willing band of volunteers, who took their turn every 5 or 6 weeks.

Sadly, Pat died in 2021 but due to COVID restrictions from March 2020, Friday coffee mornings were stopped for many months.

Initially, when we restarted, numbers attending were low and, with a couple of volunteers unable to continue for various health reasons, there was some doubt as to whether we would continue, after the end of July 2022.

When approached, most of the previous helpers were only too willing to carry on, for which we continue to be very grateful and an appeal for some extra volunteers brought a good response, in that 4 new people signed up. This has meant that each pair, on the current rota, take their turn every 6 weeks.

Numbers do fluctuate, for all sorts of reasons, but average about 10 and it is great to be able to meet together for coffee and conversation.

If you are able to join us on a Friday, between 10.30am and 12, you will be made very welcome and we look forward to seeing you.

Valerie Vessey

HOLIDAY AT HOME

We have now run a summer Holiday at Home for seniors for 2 years. In 2021 it lasted two days and in 2022 one day. We are delighted to welcome guests from our church and from the community.

We offer various entertainments and activities during the day –talks, flower arranging, knitting, play reading, chair exercises, bingo, craft, music, singing and more. And, of course, plenty of food - coffee and biscuits, a cooked lunch, tea and cakes.

At Christmas we host a “Christmas lunch” too – last year this was after the 10.30 Nine Lessons and Carols which worked very well.

This kind of event can’t happen without a lot of help; many thanks to all those who volunteered their time and skills to make it possible.

We are now planning the summer Holiday at Home for 2023!

Robin Burns

JMA REPORT

JMA currently has 3 collectors, all of which are families. If any child, or family would like to start collecting for JMA, please see Sandra Bowler and she can explain more; saving some of your loose change for JMA is all that you need to do, any amount would be gratefully received. The Tiddler/loose change jar at the back of the church is still well supported and makes a valuable contribution to the overall amount raised. As well as this, Sandra and David Bowler continue to run their stall selling home-made jams and preserves on several Sundays throughout the year. Total amount raised last year for JMA amounted to £140.60, broken down as follows; Collectors £6.10, Tiddlers £20.50, Fund raising £114.00. Thank you to everyone who has contributed in any way to raising the figures above.

Sandra Bowler

JUMPING JOHNS

The Toddler group continues to attract between 12 & 15 families, with an average of about 20 children coming along on a Monday morning. The “sit-in” cars are generally the most popular toys with the play Kitchen and shopping trolley a close second. We have 2 activity tables, one with a simple craft and the other with building blocks, Lego, puzzles and model animals. We end our sessions with some singing and rhymes and sometimes a story.

At Harvest and Christmas we take the children and adults into church for stories and singing. Margaret and David have led the sessions for us recently.

As in previous years we had a visit from Santa just before Christmas. In December '22 our usual Santa was unable to ride his sleigh over the snow from Brookmans Park and we're grateful to John for stepping in, dressing up and giving a gift to every child.

My thanks go to Lesley, Sue, Frances, Jackie and Heather and also to Liz who helps out from time to time.

Margaret Bland

JUNIOR JOHNS

Our Junior Church, which we call **Junior Johns**, is for children ages 3 to 11 years and meets in the Garden Room for a Bible story followed by games and crafts to help the children remember the Bible teaching. We run every week of the year except for the Creative Church week on the third Sunday of the month.

It would be fair to say that we usually get children who are six and over, but that changes on the Scout parade weeks when we get siblings from the Beavers, Cubs and Scouts Sections. Parade weeks are planned by Maggie Day, and Jackie Hart and Nico Bekooy help on the day.

The other weeks you will usually find Jackie and Nico in charge, but Heather Crichton and Leslie Humphreys provide very welcome extra support when the usual leaders are away.

We usually provide activities for children from three to eleven based on a Bible passage, with different versions available for different ages. There is always a craft activity to help bring the Bible alive and this is adaptable for the wide age range. The session is available from 10.15am until 15 minutes after the service is complete so that parents can stay for coffee and a chat.

Nico Bekooy and Jackie Hart

LENT BIBLE STUDY COURSE 2023 - 'Jesus 'The I AM'

This year's Lent Course has been based on the book 'Jesus 'The I AM' written by Margie Williamson and Benjie Shaw. Having sent for the book, I saw we were covering 8 'I AM' sayings and each saying has 5 separate sections to read and ponder beforehand. The course aimed to pick out key points from these sections, as time prevented covering every aspect.

When we were first invited to sign up for this course, I was undecided whether to join the Zoom sessions on Wednesday evenings organised by Revd David Jebb or come to the face-to-face meetings on Thursday mornings at St. John's, led by Rev. Gareth Powell. In the end, being free, I decided to do both and have felt that, for me, it has been the most inspiring experience.

Each session, whether on Zoom or at St. John's, has taken either one or sometimes two together, of Jesus' great 'I AM' sayings, to study and discuss largely through the words of St. John's gospel.

We started with combining 'God is the I AM' and 'Jesus I AM the Bread of Life' and concluded with 'I AM the Resurrection and the Life. The two ways of studying complimented each other, each bringing a different perspective and I was pleased I could visit both.

The Zoom study was joined by people from around the circuit and included visual aids, some beautiful songs, pieces of music and videos prepared by the leader. We were put into break out groups 2 or 3 times during each session to discuss certain questions from the book. Breakout sessions can be daunting for some people but, generally they worked well despite some challenging questions.

Although the pattern was reversed for the last 2 sessions, initially the Zoom "I AM' study was followed by the same study the next morning, with the Rev. Gareth Powell, adding a further deep thought-provoking dimension. For an hour, and never has an hour gone by so swiftly, he kept me completely focused on every word. I think I can say the others present felt the same, as he led us through the "Jesus I AM' studies with sincerity, conviction and some excellent light-hearted observations.

I would like to thank Revd David Jebb and everyone who worked to make these studies so meaningful and enjoyable as we went through 'the bright/sad season' of Lent (a quote from my Lectio 365 app for nighttime prayers) to Easter Day when we celebrate Jesus Christ and 'I AM the Resurrection and the Life'

Valerie Vessey

OUTREACH COMMITTEE

The Outreach Committee is in the process of being refocussed under the chairmanship of David Jebb. Graham Phillips has stood down as chairman in an attempt to manage his workload, but continues to play an active part in the way forward.

The focus is to look at what we want our church to be in the next 5 to 10 years and to find routes to achieving that end. To move in this direction we are holding an 'Away Day at Home' on Saturday 8th July. This will be led by Andy Frost a Director of Share Jesus International. Together we will look at the visions and options for our future as we seek to grow as a healthy and dynamic Church.

One question our committee members can ask themselves is 'what makes a successful church?' Is it size of the congregation? Or quality of worship? Or involvement in the community? Or quality of our music? There are many ways of measuring success, what we target should focus our actions. Certainly we need to gain younger individuals to replace those of us who are 'older'.

Certainly Creative Church and Jumping Johns have been successful in bring new faces into the building. We are working hard to encourage some of the attendees towards the centre of our worship.

We are also working to develop the parade services so that they have a distinct message and can be enjoyed by both participants and their parents. The aim is fewer but more focused services.

The Outreach Committee is not a social committee, however it will use social events to encourage casual visitors to come and understand our faith. The Potters Bar Carnival is a case in point. Here we meet lots of people from all parts of Potters Bar. We intend to create a stand this year which has items of interest for the average visitor and include features of evangelism such as a new course, 'Alpha for All'.

The future is in our hands and with prayer and discussion we will find the way ahead.

David Carter – March 2023

PASTORAL COMMITTEE

Pastoral contacts are assigned to every person on the community roll. They are a point of contact at the church for each person to turn to with good news or difficulties. We have a team of 20 pastoral contacts and I am always grateful for the care given by our team in so many different ways during the year. Ann Walters retired as a pastoral contact in September. Ann had carried out her role with diligence for over 50 years and for that we thank her.

At St. John's we currently have 142 on the community roll of which 91 are members and 51 adherents.

This year David and Andrea Best moved to Dorset and John Wilson moved to Devon. Memberships were transferred to their new churches.

The annual Thanksgiving and Memorial service this year is planned to coincide with All Saints Day and will be held on October 29th at 3pm. During the service names will be read out and those present are invited to come forward and light a candle for family, friends and loved ones.

Helen Barlow

RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Since our last report in 2020 we have become the Resources Committee with the added responsibility of our IT provision and response. This is added to the issues of Property, Finance and Employment that we already held. Along with Church Council, we have also had to take on responsibilities for Shenley who have become a 'class' of St John's due to their low numbers.

Very importantly we express our gratitude to the Monday Morning Fix-It group and to all who have worked at other times and contribute so much to the upkeep of our buildings and gardens. Numbers attending have dropped in recent months due to moves away and increasing age and the responsibilities are falling on a decreasing pool of ability. A more detailed report of their work is elsewhere but any new faces who can contribute to the progress or the fellowship will be most welcome.

Health and Safety

The COVID pandemic produced a lot of additional work for this area which was handled mainly by Myra Sloper, as Senior Steward, Chris Humphreys as Lettings Secretary with help as needed for Risk Assessments and coping strategies. We lost significant Lettings Income equivalent to about a year.

Regular testing of gas system, fire alarms, emergency lighting, fire extinguishers, lightning conductor and electrical safety have all taken place as required by legislation with remedial works as needed. The five yearly inspection and test of the main electrical system was completed with almost no corrective work required.

A revised Health & Safety Policy and Fire Risk Assessment were both progressed and approved by Church Council. Shortly after this we received a short notice inspection by the Fire Brigade of our building and systems which we passed easily. Their only suggestion was to centralise the electronic holding of all safety related documents away from the Church Building, so that they could be accessed following a major incident to prove that we did follow all legal requirements. This has been done using the Church "Dropbox" system.

First Aid and Fire Training will be repeated this summer.

Building Report

Following the 2020 Quinquennial Inspection we needed to look at three main areas.

- The Car Park surface which had become hazardous and impossible to continue patching was replaced at a cost of just under £8,000
- After careful thought the lower-level metal Crittall windows in the Worship Area, Minister's Vestry, Stewards' Vestry, and Minister's Toilet, along with the windows on the far side of the Main Hall were replaced with double glazed upvc at a cost of £26,430. Only the Main Hall windows are expected to deliver a meaningful saving to our heating costs. The heating of the other areas is so sporadic, and particularly the losses through the Worship Area roof are such that there will be little difference. The decay of the Worship Area upper windows was not as great but these will need to be changed within a few years.
- Roof expenditure has dropped, but some continuing work will be needed. More of the capping stones to the parapet walls will need to be done later this year.

At the time of the Clifton Room extension, we had the surface of a number of bricks re-faced due to erosion. There is now a number of other bricks in similar condition and this will be looked at during the summer and quotes are soon to be sought, having been delayed by COVID. There are also some areas of pointing that need to be replaced. Total cost may be in the region of £5,000 to £8,000.

Other works

- Redecoration of the areas affected by the window replacement continues. The two side aisles of the church have been completed but the band area and vestries are now in progress by Fix-It.
- The Scouts paid for various works to the Scout Hut including external decoration.
- Fix-It replaced all the pointing to the flagstones in the Courtyard Garden.
- The doors between the table store and Rainbow Room have been replaced and insulation to the store has been enhanced to reduce what we consider to be a significant heat loss in a part of the building which is well used.
- Other upcoming work includes further redecoration of the rainwater downpipes to the Worship Area and Hall. Replacement with plastic will be considered which will then reduce maintenance considerably.

The next Quinquennial Inspection is already due next year!

Contents and Technology

This has been a busy period.

- The Worship Area projector has been replaced with two new super-bright led screens – again by the Fix-It group - which has been very successful. Cost was less than £5,000.
- Two new Information Screens have been fitted in the Foyer and the area where parents wait to collect their Nursery Children. Cost has been less than £1,000. The system repeats notices from Sundays and other information to increase our reach to those who use our premises. The screens turn off at night.
- The photocopier has been replaced on a new contract which better reflects the lower usage now that the Marlborough Rd magazine is printed elsewhere.
- There have been a number of problems with the sound system due to data interference, and a new equaliser is in the process of being fitted.
- The computer used for worship has also been replaced with a laptop following a couple of awkward failures!

We are currently investigating the provision of a new Nativity display for the front Vestibule window, which is larger, better lit and more striking.

Environmental Issues

There is a separate report on this work which is now led by David Carter. We achieved the milestone of a Bronze level Eco Church award which was very close to Ali's heart which, due to everything that was already in place, was relatively straight-forward. We are now working to see if a Silver Award is within our reach – but this will be more of a challenge. Significantly, all our works are now looked at with regard to the effect on the environment.

Oakmere Nursery Playgroup – lease

Negotiations for a new lease with Hertfordshire County Council at Oakmere School for the Oakmere Nursery have been particularly slow and difficult, and the requirements of the local school have now changed again. It is hoped that this can be resolved finally by the summer.

Lettings

Due to the work of our Lettings Secretary we have recovered from the losses which were a result of COVID and income is back to the original level, although some of the users have changed – sometimes more than once. Chris does a very good job in this respect and the Committee is aware of the way in which some of the needs can occur suddenly and at awkward moments.

Staff

Sadly, we said farewell to one of our cleaners, Debbie Hunt, who moved out of the area last summer. Debbie also helped with our flower arranging and provided first class help with both of her duties. We will miss her.

We are pleased to welcome Julie Fidler who now joins Sarah Dicker on our team.

IT and Data Issues

A number of issues needed to be addressed before the new annual return to the District could be signed with regard to Data Protection. A significant issue has been resolved during this year by the people connected with St John's all being placed on a single central list from which all other lists are derived. This makes updating and certification much simpler. All those on the list have also been invited to reconfirm the accuracy of the data held.

A new Wi-Fi access code has been introduced for the church building in line with the General Data Protection Regulations, and to improve security everyone using the code is now required to agree that they will not pass on the password to anybody so that we are aware of who is using the system.

Shenley

Responsibility for the building and finances now sits with the SJMC Church Council. The local members asked for help when they received notice of a fire brigade inspection in the autumn. We managed to get this deferred by a couple of months which gave time to deal with the various issues which needed improvement. In this time a Fire Risk Assessment was obtained, a Health & Safety Policy was approved, the smoke detectors were replaced (only 2 of 5 were working), an emergency lighting system was installed, and the overdue gas inspection was completed. The local members have now appointed a "Responsible Person" as required by the regulations for Fire Risk management who is John Sterland. PAT testing remains outstanding.

The hall and other areas have been decorated in the past two years and there is a need to replace the hall carpet and attend to pointing and loose bricks in the wall with the adjacent property. The external noticeboard has been refurbished.

There is an issue with the licence for the adjacent house to utilise some of the church outside space as additional garden – which is being progressed.

Peter Barlow - Chair Resources Committee

SATURDAY MORNING PRAYERS – ‘LET’S PRAY TOGETHER’

We launched this new online ‘Let’s Pray together’ group in autumn 2022, attracting people from St John’s, St Alban’s & Welwyn Circuit and beyond, including the South African Methodist Fellowship group. We were so pleased to meet a couple of former members of St John’s who joined us at the morning prayers.

Saturday Prayer Meeting takes place on Zoom and is led by one of the Circuit Staff or Local Preachers or Worship Leaders every Saturday Morning between 9.00 am and 9.45 am. Leaders have led some very interesting and thought-provoking reflections, followed by open time for prayers.

We bring to prayer any concerns we have and share these. If you have a concern, you would like prayers for and cannot join the meeting, please write your prayer request and hand to us in person or by email, and we will do so. Confidentiality is always kept where requested.

Prayer isn’t meant to be an afterthought, a last resort when nothing else has worked. It’s meant to be your guiding star, the most crucial conversation of your day. Prayer is your conversation with God and how you can develop a personal, meaningful relationship with the God of the universe who loves you.

Prayer is important for St John’s church or any other church because it helps us be aware of the spiritual forces at work in the congregation and outside the church. Every local church must be united in unceasing and intercessory prayer, as there is much power in united prayer. Prayer reveals to us the heart and mind of God.

Sometimes it feels like our lives are rushed and overwhelmingly busy with life and the church’s business. We often find it hard to find the time for rest or renewal in God’s presence since our attention is constantly moved by responsibility and needs. And yet, the Lord’s word is so clear on how important it is to establish the priority of worship into our week. Morning prayers can be inspiring and insightful. Your morning meditative prayers allow you to reflect on God’s Word, note what He has revealed, and ask for guidance and help.

We thank all the prayer leaders and warriors for your insight and input in the prayer ministry.

1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.

Revd David Jebb and Jenet Jebb

SCOUT GROUP - 4th POTTERS BAR

The 4th PB is a uniformed Scout group which is sponsored by the Church. It consists of three Sections – Beavers (6-8), Cubs (8-11) and Scouts (11-14), which meet at St John's on three consecutive nights during term time. Helping the Sections is the Executive, who provide control, and raise extra money through events such as Jumble Sales, Christmas Market and Quiz evenings.

We are still the largest group in the district. Although numbers vary, there are around 100 children (boys and girls), teenagers and adult members meeting on a regular basis, and there is usually a waiting list for all the Sections. All the leaders and Executive members are volunteers.

Chris Sullivan heads up the Beaver Section which meets early on a Friday night. The regular programme has badge work as well as games. Melissa Norton is acting Akela for the Cub Section after Sarah Munn took a sabbatical earlier this year. This section follows on from Beavers, with more challenging badge work and activities. Dick Waterhouse, helped by both daughters and several young leaders, runs the Scout Section.

As well as weekly meetings, there are many opportunities to camp and enjoy outdoor life – some examples are Camping at Lees Wood, Phaesels Wood and Tolmers. The Green Beret and Fire & Ice are winter camps for Scouts. Lochearnhead is a Scout Training Centre in Scotland, which gives opportunities for more challenging outdoor activities, and will soon be open again after recent refurbishment.

Although this is a successful Group, we should be aware of challenges. Foremost there is the staffing situation, which is a constant concern. We have been extremely lucky to recruit some new (and younger) members to run these large Sections, but personal circumstances can and do change.

We have been fortunate to raise extra cash through events like the Jumble Sales, Spring Fair, Christmas Market, and Quiz evening as well as some smaller events. It is our policy to keep camping and term fees affordable and fund raising is therefore essential. It is wonderful that St John's provides us with light, heat and shelter and tolerates noise, jumble and wet tents on the Stage. (We do try, through an annual voluntary donation to the Church, to offset the cost of the heat and light we use!)

We do greatly appreciate the support and encouragement of the Church and its individual members, in enabling us to continue with this valuable work with so many young people - thank you!

Nico Bekooy (Secretary of the Executive Committee)

SHENLEY ANNUAL REPORT

Our small worshipping community at Shenley is very grateful to St Johns, Potters Bar Methodist Church for continuing to care for our needs as a Class.

Worship

Sunday mornings

We regularly have half a dozen or more in the congregation. Being able to welcome preachers from around the Circuit is a joy and not something that we take for granted. It is much appreciated that local arrangement is kept to once a month, however it is a good opportunity for everyone to join in on these occasions. Local arrangement often takes the form of cafe church due to the flexible nature of the worship area.

Margaret Dalziel continues to give generously of her time so that our singing endeavours are guided by the organ. She is joined by John Southey on keyboard and Richard Webster on a variety of recorders.

Sunday afternoons

Having been started by our then youth worker Tracy, Messy Church meets at SMC on alternate months. The average number of children attending is now 30 and there are over 50 as members. It is also usual for both parents to attend.

This success has been achieved in no small part by the incredible work put in by Heather Moir. As one of our congregation she took on the task from Tracy and continued to keep in contact and deliver crafts to families throughout COVID and organised every session whilst St Martin's Church had their interregnum and for some time after the installation of the new vicar.

Outreach

Fellowship

A monthly fellowship meeting continues to be provided for seniors by Yvonne Perry. It takes the form of a talk or activity followed by a time to socialise over coffee and cake.

Lunches, usually twice a year, are also popular with this group. They show their appreciation by raising money for charity on these occasions, Mercy Ships was the last recipient.

Shenley Village Fête

The church feels that it important to have a stall each year to reinforce our presence in the village. It offers a good opportunity to engage with locals and visitors. The church has also benefited from grants awarded from monies raised by the fête.

Finances

We are very thankful to Robert Ward for taking on the work of treasurer. Our congregation gift mainly to the church online.

With fewer members of the congregation our fund-raising efforts for the church are limited to two sales a year. A Plant Sale in May and another general sale in the Autumn.

Lettings continue to generate income and also maintain the church as a community hub.

Groups which meet regularly are :

Rainbows, the Women's Institute, Parish Council run board game group, Fete committee and Craft group

Ecumenical

A joint Bible study group with St Martin's Church meets fortnightly.

A soup lunch is held as part of a series organised by St Martin's throughout Lent. The money raised this year will be forwarded to the Fund for Human Need.

We continue to host the Easter Sunrise Service in the Walled Garden of Shenley Park. This has been attended by members of churches throughout the Circuit and many neighbouring Anglican churches. The collection is sent to an external charity.

Maintenance

Day to day maintenance is undertaken by Yvonne Perry who also oversees many of the lettings. John Sterland has volunteered to deal with property matters, renovating the notice board amongst other things.

We are grateful to St John's for practical help in the recent upgrading of our security lighting.

The community room was decorated last year and new flooring will be laid in the coming months. Both of these being gifts in memoriam.

The organ was recently serviced. Our thanks to John Southey who is ensuring the best conditions for its future functioning.

There is a problem with the heating which is being addressed.

In Memoriam

Yvonne Perry attended the funeral of one of our adherents Barbara Woods.

Louise Bourton

STRAFFORD GATE HOUSE GROUP

This group had its origins in the House Group ran by Frank and Joan Manners at their home quite a few years ago. The format and meeting places have varied over the years but support has been steady and the desire to seek our Lord's word continues. We had, a few years ago, spent time studying various internet papers and topics suggested by members but in recent times have found a source of relevant books. We are currently studying the Twelve Disciples based on a book by Douglas Connelly alternating with the study of one of the Psalms.

The group meets in the Carter household once a month. The members have considered meeting more frequently but find it near impossible to find a second day we can all attend. We are currently 7 in number and attendance is good. Discussion is lively and often makes comparisons between Jesus' days and the current era.

We are not afraid to vary the topic of discussion. A short while ago we used one of David Jebb's café Worship services as a basis. Time had run out on Sunday evening and there was still a lot to explore. The result was a very interesting session. Some time ago we explored the history of 'Covenants with God' ending with the Methodist Covenant service, that most powerful of annual commitments to our Lord. At that stage we had Alan Combes amongst our members.

Another study we completed some time ago was 'Paul the man'. It was very interesting to investigate all that was known about Paul and to learn something of his character and how he came to change from a persecutor of Christians to one of the greatest champions of Jesus in the early Church.

We always welcome new members. If you are interested contact David Carter

David Carter. March 2023

TUESDAY WARM SPACE MEETINGS

During the autumn of 2022, the rising costs of living were beginning to worry people everywhere. We at Potters Bar Gems W I, wanted to help the community if possible.

The Hertsmere Community Officer, Antonia Mori made herself known and offered funding to start up a Warm Space. At the same time the Methodist Church asked that all churches should consider if they could offer a warm space. After discussions it was decided to use the facilities at St John's Methodist Church and offer a warm space on Tuesdays.

Leaflets were designed, printed and displayed in shops, cafes, supermarkets, chemists and Residential Homes in the area.

Coffee is served in the lounge from 11:30am, a simple soup, roll and cheese lunch, followed with fresh fruit and drinks is served in the dining room from 12:30. We ask for a donation of £2.50 to cover costs but if folk are unable to contribute, that is not a problem. Coming to meet others and share a meal together is far more important. In the afternoon dominoes, draughts, Jenga and other games are available as well as knitting, card making etc. Tea and cake are served in the afternoon before we all go home.

To date we have 11 members of St John's congregation and 13 members of the Potters Bar Gems WI helping on a rota, with 59 guests joining us over the last 5 months. Most weeks now we have between 22 and 27 people for lunch, after a slow start in November. Some just come for coffee and a chat.

There is always a warm welcome, plenty of chatter, lots of smiles and quite a bit of laughter each week. A few have met up with old school friends or colleagues not seen in ages! Several guests have commented that they have enjoyed the company and especially sitting down and sharing a meal, rather than always eating on their own, as we had to during COVID!

Originally the project was to last until the end of March but now, because the group wants to continue to meet, we will go on until the end of June, not meet in July and August and start up again in September. It has also decided that we needed to change the name, so in future we will be known as the Welcome Space. New leaflets are being designed and will soon be distributed to replace those in the local shops etc.

Antonia Mori has just encouraged us to mark the King's Coronation by putting on a special Celebration Meal on Tuesday 9th May. We are applying for funding which is available from Hertsmere Council to cover the costs for about 40 guests to enjoy a two-course meal together, have some fun games before tea and cake in the afternoon. This is similar to what we did at Christmas which was enjoyed by all.

Over this winter the Warm Space meeting has been a good collaborative project that has helped people in the community and given them something to look forward to.

Barbara Thompson

WOMEN'S GUILD

Numbers have been affected by COVID but there are still a stalwart few who attend most Mondays. They have between 6 and 8 generally on a Monday afternoon, where they share fellowship by doing quizzes, playing favourites songs, bringing a treasured possession, etc. They occasionally have a talk by outside speakers on an interesting subject. The last two talks have been attended by a wider audience as Dawn has advertised the talks to the wider Church. Dawn recently gave a talk to the group on the subject of Switzerland. Jo Hutton has been organising the sessions recently after Barbara Biaggini's fall earlier in the year. Their program continues, and you are welcome to join the group on a Monday afternoon in the Clifton Room between 2:30pm and 4:00pm.

Guy Fenner in consultation with Jo Hutton

WORSHIP GROUP - MARCH 2023

The Worship Group is a band of singers and musicians who lead and support the Church's worship through song. We attend most services including Holy Communion, Church Parade and Creative Church, and we take a leading role in the music for the special Christmas services.

The highlight of 2022 was probably the Circuit Welcome Service on 2nd September which saw a full house of worshippers led by more than a dozen singers and musicians. Some of these singers have become regular members of the group, meaning we have a solid core of around 10 people who frequently join me in a now rather cramped "music corner".

We have occasional rehearsals midweek but most of the practice takes place immediately before the service. I'm very grateful for those who give up their time and particularly to Margaret Rhodes for all her work.

Paul Guppy



CHURCH COUNCIL AND TRUSTEES 2023 ST JOHN'S METHODIST POTTERS BAR

Rev David Jebb	Minister, ex officio
Kathryn Krause	Secretary, ex officio
Robin Burns	Senior Steward, ex officio
David Carter	Steward, ex officio and Environmental Rep
Helen Jeckells	Steward, ex officio
Sally Gunning	Steward, ex officio
Peter Barlow	Property Steward, ex officio
Robert Ward	Treasurer, ex officio
Helen Barlow	Pastoral Secretary, ex officio
John Sloper	Chair Playgroup Board, ex officio
Myra Sloper	CTPB
Dawn Fenner	Playgroup Board Rep ex officio
Steve Matthews	Safeguarding, ex officio-
Rev David Jebb	Outreach Rep, ex officio
Stephen Krause	Church Rep elected 2020 and Health & Safety ex officio
Jo Hutton	Women's Guild Rep, ex officio
David Bowler	Church Rep elected 2016
Roger Croughton	Church Rep elected 2017
Pat Griffith	Church Rep elected 2019
David Rhodes	Church Rep elected 2021
Maggie Day	Church Rep elected 2021
John Sterland	Shenley Church
Val Parker	Circuit Steward, ex officio
Non Trustee-	
Celia Mills	co-opted re Nursery Playgroup