

Parish of Yeovil with Kingston Pitney

Annual Report of St John the Baptist Church for the Year ended 31st December 2022

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Administrative Information

St John's Church is situated in the centre of Yeovil and has a daughter church, St Andrew's, which is about one mile from the centre. They are part of the Diocese of Bath and Wells within the Church of England. The correspondence address is: Church Street, Yeovil, Somerset BA20 1HE. This report covers the activities of St John's church and of the Parish. St Andrew's Church has produced its own report covering its own domestic issues. The Parochial Church Council is registered under the Charity Commission, registration number 1134345.

The PCC comprises members from both churches with the Incumbent, Readers, Wardens and elected representatives to the Deanery Synod. The following members have served on the PCC during the last year.

Incumbent	Revd James Dudley-Smith	Chairman
Associate Minister	Revd Ben Graham	
Curate	Revd George Beverly	
Representatives on Deanery Synod	Rob Dean Janet Dean Kate Scorer Phil Juggins Beth Farrington	St Andrew's
Member of Diocesan Synod	Rob Dean	
Member of General Synod	Jam Cary	
Wardens	Lin Hann Keith Ovenden	St John's
Deputy Wardens	Brian Gay	St Andrew's
Elected Members	Nick Chatwin Chris Frazer Roger Fox Mary Irwin Caroline Jeeves Phil Juggins Tom Oaks David Matthew Calum McFarlane Tim Osborn Ann Thurgood Tim Thurgood Helen Truett Chris Tune Les Whittle	
Co-opted Members	Janet Dean Alan Irwin	Secretary Treasurer

Structure, Governance and Management

The method of appointment of PCC members is set out in the Church Representation Rules. All church attendees are encouraged to join the Electoral Roll and stand for election to the PCC at the time of the Annual Parochial Church Meeting. They have prime responsibility for managing the affairs of the church. St Andrew's Church has its own Church Council (DCC).

Objectives and Activities

St John's PCC has the responsibility of co-operating with the incumbent, Revd James Dudley-Smith, in promoting in the ecclesiastical parish the whole mission of the church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical. It also has responsibility for St John's Schoolrooms and St Andrew's Church Hall.

Achievements and Performance

This report covers the activities of St John's Church. St Andrew's Church produces its own report.

- 2022 has been a year of recovery after the difficult years of the Covid pandemic.
- Keith Ovenden stepped into the breach as churchwarden to replace Rob Dean who had served for seven years in the role.
- We were delighted that George Beverly was ordained priest in July and remains as our curate.
- The financial affairs of the church are as good as can be expected after the unusual circumstances of the pandemic.
- Congregations at our services grew throughout the year as people regained confidence regarding meeting in public places.
- Services continued to be live-streamed as this has been especially beneficial for those more elderly members of the congregation or those who are unwell at home.
- Tuesday morning communion continued.
- A new gathering was begun on Friday mornings entitled Friday at Nine, or FAN as it has become known.
- The Gone Fishing Café is once again thriving on Thursday mornings.
- Youth activities continue.
- Holiday Club took place in July and was well attended.
- First Wednesday prayers continues but has remained on Zoom as this proved a popular option for many.
- Fellowship groups were able to meet in person once again though one group continues to meet via Zoom.
- Tiny Toes, for mums and babies, and Footprints, for mums and toddlers, were able to meet again during the year.
- Christians Against Poverty continued to provide a vital service for increasing numbers of people having problems with unmanageable debt.
- The Tech Team, ably led by David Matthew, are to be greatly commended for their continuing work and dedication; they continue to livestream services for those who wish to watch services at home each week.

There is, therefore, once again a tremendous amount going on in the life of the Church and we are indeed blessed by the number of people willing to get involved.

Janet Dean
PCC Secretary

Report on PCC Meetings

The PCC met on four occasions during the year and were generally well attended. The minutes of all PCC Meetings can be viewed on the St John's parish website.

Apart from the routine business of finance, services and fabric matters, much of which is covered in other sections of this annual report, the following items were discussed.

- The continued burden of paying the Parish Share
- The future reordering of the church
- Mission giving
- Data protection
- Safeguarding
- The fabric of St John's and the repairs to various areas
- The importance of on-going mission and evangelism

*Janet Dean
PCC Secretary*

St John's Wardens Report

It is a real privilege to serve the church as Church Wardens. I started the year alongside Rob Dean, who stopped in March after a very lengthy and much appreciated time of service and was then joined by Keith Ovenden in November. 2022 did feel as if we had finally surfaced from the Covid pandemic and were getting back on track. We would probably all say that we learnt a lot through that time and found ourselves having to depend on God both spiritually and practically in ways we had not before.

The role would not of course be possible without the help of a large number of other people. Terry has continued faithfully as Facilities Manager, Emma as Church Administrator and Shauna who keeps the schoolrooms spotless.

Help also comes from three amazingly helpful Committees: Standing Committee, Fabric Committee and Finance Committee. This help is a real testimony of how the church family is made up of so many gifted people willing to give their time and energy to support church life in so many different ways.

Last but not least, we should mention the eleven deputy wards who faithfully open up the church and close, twice each Sunday and for special events, weddings and funerals. This is an often unseen role, but we would grind to a halt without them.

We should of course mention the church boiler at the end of 2022 which finally ceased to work and left us without heating in the church for a considerable length of time. We are hugely grateful to Keith for both obtaining a Faculty so quickly and for overseeing the installation of a new boiler.

Lin Hann, Church Warden

Sidepersons Report

2022 saw all of our church services return to what felt like normal after the Covid pandemic and the need for Sidepersons (which we now call Welcomers) was ever more evident. We continued to recruit to the role for both Sunday mornings and Sunday evenings as well as for special events like Easter and Christmas events and carol services. Throughout 2022 we had 25 Welcomers which included two families. We saw a number of new people attending our services post pandemic and it was very important that they received a welcome on arrival.

In July we had breakfast together, partly in order to say thank you to the team for the wonderful job they do, but also to share the joys and challenges and any changes that might be useful. It was a really useful time, and so many people present expressed what a joy the role is. James joined us and shared with us how important he believes this role to be. We have such a diverse number of people coming through the doors each Sunday, what a privilege it is to make them all feel welcome as soon as they arrive. Taking those first steps of coming through the door can be really hard for both visitors and also for members of our church family. Lots of very useful suggestions were made and it was agreed that we would meet annually.

Lin Hann, Church Warden

Report on the Electoral Roll

Following the 2023 revision of the electoral roll for St John's, the total on the roll currently stands at 181. Five members either died or left the area in 2022 and a number of people have joined St John's during the last year.

Emma Handcock, Parish Administrator

St John's Finance Report on the accounts for the year ended 31st December 2022

The statutory accounts of St John's also include the accounts of St Andrew's. However, this report covers only the finances of St John's, which are managed by means of several funds. The General Fund can be spent at the discretion of the PCC and mostly covers the day-to-day running costs of the church. Several Designated Funds hold money set aside for specific purposes, such as the Schoolrooms and the Fabric Fund. Restricted Funds can only be used for the purposes for which they were originally set up, such as the Peter Wakely Community Fund and the Christians Against Poverty Fund.

The General Fund

Regular general giving to St John's in 2022 amounted to £142,587, with other donations totalling £50,166 and the tax recovered was £48,437. This makes a total for general giving of £241,190.

In addition, we also received hugely generous responses to several specific appeals through the year; two separate appeals for our mission partners in Moldova (c.£16k) and one appeal for funds to replace our expired boiler (c.£26k in 2022, supplemented by c.£16k in 2023). With approval of the PCC, £48k was drawn down from the Peter Wakely fund in order to support our pastoral and outreach work in 2022 (and 2021).

Our regular expenditure in 2022 was dominated by staff costs (c.£70k), Repairs and Cleaning (c.£11k) and the Parish Share, which is paid to the Diocese of Bath and Wells (c.£148k). When other costs are added, the general monthly expenditure was around £2,500 more than our general monthly income. We donated £22k to our mission partners and a further £22k in mission giving to catch up with our commitments from 2021. A mission giving budget of £24k was set for 2023, which is 10% of the general donations received in 2022.

Excluding the donations received for the boiler appeal and not yet spent, the balance of the St John's general fund at the end of 2022 was approximately £27k, which is basically unchanged from 2021.

Designated Funds

Movements in most of our designated funds were not major in 2022.

The Fabric Fund balance reduced by c.£6k to £52k, mainly due to a fall in the value of investments.

The Youth Development Investment Fund increased by approx. £300 interest to almost £46k.

Restricted Funds

There are four funds categorised as restricted:

The Restoration Fund

Apart from accumulated interest, there were no significant transactions in the Restoration Fund in 2022, leaving the closing balance at £13,246.

Christians Against Poverty (CAP) Fund

This fund raises and spends money in support of the Yeovil CAP Debt Centre, managed by Steve Hart. A total of £51,287 was given and raised to support this ministry. The expenditure, comprising the monthly salaries of the manager and debt coach, a monthly payment to CAP HQ, and other operating expenses, amounted to £49,765. There was a surplus in the year of £1,522 and the balance carried forward to 2023 was £27,584.

The Peter Wakely Community Fund

This fund was set up with the proceeds of the legacy received from Peter Wakely. The funds are invested in a unit trust administered by CCLA on behalf of the Church Commissioners. During the year we sold shares amounting to £48,000, which was used to help pay for our pastoral and outreach ministries. The fund value was also affected by a significant fall in the stock market during 2022 and the closing balance was £266,702.

The Tom Setter Belfry Fund

During 2022, the Tom Setter fund paid for some general and electrical repair work in the bell tower. The final balance was £12,078.

The Balance Sheet

The balance sheet shows where our total funds of £472,802 are invested. Most of this is accounted for by designated or restricted funds with a relatively modest £27k represented by the General Fund. A total of £306,754 is invested in unit trusts administered by CCLA on behalf of the Church Commissioners, £52,167 is on deposit with CCLA, £107,882 is in three current accounts with NatWest bank, which pay some interest, and £6,000 in National Savings.

Looking forward to the remainder of 2023, James Dudley-Smith, our rector, has already spoken to church members about the challenge that we face in the need to increase our income. While our regular expenditure continues to exceed our income, our reserves and investments must be used to fill the gap.

Operating costs are expected to continue rising this year. Our staff need a pay rise to help them with the rising cost of living. Utilities costs will jump sharply when our very advantageous fixed price contracts expire during 2023, and the Parish Share continues to increase (although at a more gradual rate than in past years).

Of course, our own individual domestic finances are being pressurised in a similar way and for that reason, we are particularly grateful for the ongoing generous donations from church members and others. My request to all in 2023 is that we should actively and regularly review our level of giving to the work of St John's, and increase it if that is appropriate. If you can commit to regular giving by standing order, this method helps to make our income more stable. Of course, donations using the envelope scheme or in other ways are equally welcomed and appreciated. Please also ensure that you add Gift Aid to your donations if you are a UK taxpayer. Last year we reclaimed more than £48,000 from HMRC and could not have managed without it.

While regular planned giving meets our day-to-day running costs, a legacy in your will offers the opportunity to donate to St John's out of your estate, perhaps for specific purposes. The largest legacy that we have received in the last few years is £189,895 from Peter Wakely, but of course legacies of any amount are valued. Such gifts can be invested and may provide a lasting and valuable resource for many years. We have produced a leaflet about legacies and a copy is available at the back of the church. If you

are considering including a legacy to St John's in your will, please discuss this with the treasurer or a warden who can advise you on the needs of the church.

On a personal note, I would like to express my appreciation to all those who have helped me to settle into the job of Treasurer in 2022. In particular, I owe a large debt of thanks to Emma Handcock for her administrative support and to Judith Brookes for managing our Gift Aid scheme.

Alan Irwin -Treasurer of St John's

Gift Aid Report

Thank you for your generous giving to the work of St John's through 2022. I am pleased to report we were able to reclaim £45,379.09 from the government through the gift aid scheme – broken down as follows.

£ 36,855.58	General
£ 3,012.25	CAP
£ 2,557.50	MOLDOVA
£ 2,447.50	Boiler
£ 427.50	Youth
£ 30.00	Bellringers Investment Fund
£ 26.25	Floral Group

You will appreciate this represents an enormous help to our church finances.

If you are a UK taxpayer and have not yet added Gift Aid to your church giving, please contact me to find out how you can boost your donations at no extra cost.

Judith Brookes

St John's Fabric Report 2022

The 'Fabric Committee' is a sub-committee of the PCC which normally meets regularly to coordinate and report on the state of the church fabric and to monitor the planned regular maintenance and repairs and other work stipulated in the Quinquennial Surveys (the last being in 2017). In 2022, the committee met in January, March, May, July, October and December, in addition to coordination through emails and other ad hoc communication.

Church Boiler

The most significant item associated with the church building in 2022 was the failure of the heating boiler. The problem was first identified on 12th October by Bamfords in the annual boiler inspection. The boiler failed a gas leakage test and a warning notice was issued, with the boiler not to be used with immediate effect, and hence no heating available in church until further notice.

Bamfords provided a quote for a new door seal, but warned that there were no longer spare parts available for the boiler, so if that repair did not work, it would be condemned. The new door seal was fitted on 27th October and a repeat leakage test carried out on 4th November, which showed that the new seal was insufficient to solve the leakage. Bamfords advised that the (40 year old) boiler was beyond economic repair.

The replacement is a condensing high efficiency boiler, small enough to be located in the vestry toilet rather than the old boiler room, with the exhaust flue routed through what had been a skylight over the boiler room entrance (with glass awaiting repair after vandalism), avoiding the expense of re-lining the old flue chimney. The defunct old boiler remains in place currently.

Quotes for the boiler replacement were obtained in November and Faculty permission granted by the Diocese. After delivery of the new boiler in early 2023, it was commissioned and the heating switched on again on 6th February.

Necessary maintenance and repair work on the building was continued through 2021, including activities as follows:

- Plant growth was cut back on the South Chancel external wall
- Battery packs in all overhead nave lights were replaced and a switch added to extinguish bulbs that shine on the Nave main screen
- The Schoolrooms doorbell/intercom was replaced
- Church roof cleaning was completed with assistance from a young group (20-somethings! Thanks!)
- Extra lights in the tower and an additional Crypt stairs mains light were fitted
- Clock access hazards were addressed in the tower by a grab-rope at the top of steps and a split trap door
- Floodlights were re-instated after wiring in the schoolrooms building had been disturbed by builders.

The church continues to be generally in good material condition. Several more significant items were deferred to the Quinquennial Survey for architect's advice. These included the re-plastering and decorating of the Vestry internal east wall, following water damage in 2020 (addressed by roof drainage improvements in 2021). There also remains the task to put the fitted cupboards (1908 originals) back into place in the office, which awaits confirmation from the Survey that the walls have dried out satisfactorily. The architect has advised that quotes can be pursued for this work, following his visit in January, together with re-plastering work in the South Transept, required after water damage behind a banner board (now removed).

Schoolrooms - After previous major flooding and damage in the foyer/toilet following a downpour, re-plastering and decorating have been completed, with actions required to improve roof drainage and debris netting to prevent a re-occurrence. This is a responsibility of the Landlord, but is subject to an on-going dispute over the lease, concerning maintenance payments and building use restrictions, for which solicitors have been engaged at Diocese level.

The review of Health and Safety risk assessments has continued, with Lin Hann. The two-year programme starting in 2022 has progressed, to update all risk assessments to a common format, present them progressively to the PCC for approval and make them available on-line.

The next Quinquennial Survey of the church building was due in June 2022, to be undertaken by the church architect John Beauchamp. The architect's office has not been able to support this timescale. We are now expecting the Quinquennial Survey in May 2023, with a new church architect (from the same practice), Michael Vaughan. Michael, who had already been involved in re-ordering discussions for St John's, visited the church in January 2023 to review some items for the survey in advance. The full survey (and the initial review) generates renewed actions for maintaining the fabric of the church.

With thanks to all who continue to take care of our building!

Phil Juggins, Fabric Committee Chair

St John's Reordering Project

Back in 2017 the reordering project was initiated with the fundamental vision to remove pews from the church to modernise, increase flexibility of use of the church space and to improve our welcome to all but mainly to new worshippers and visitors.

To do so would also require a review and modification to heating due to need to remove some radiators, provide opportunity to upgrade the servery area and to improve our creche.

We engaged church architects *benjamin and beauchamp* to develop the plans and consulted with the DAC and others on the way forward, And then COVID hit, followed by the cost of living crisis and uncertainty within the Church of England.

At its meeting on 29 March the PCC decided that in the current climate and considering the factors above that the project would, sadly, be put on hold.

Rob Dean

St John's Bell Ringers

Some sense of normality has been felt since the restrictions around Covid have relaxed in that we have managed to ring the bells on most Sunday Mornings. But that normality hasn't been ideal. In recent years the number of ringers has fallen, generally through moving away for genuine family reasons, but we have failed to attract new ringers from members of St John's. The only way we can manage to ring on Sundays, or for weddings, etc, is to welcome ringers from nearby towers, Odcombe in particular, and East and West Coker. In return, we have deserted St John's once a month, to help those Churches hear their bells.

This year has been particularly busy ensuring that as many bells as possible could be rung for the Queen's Jubilee in the Summer and for her funeral in September. The public in general expects bells to be rung for such occasions. In fact, Operation London Bridge, the code of practice put in place for the death of the Queen, included instructions as to when and how bells should be sounded. However, they failed to recognise that there were too few ringers, nationwide. Besides that, there were different interpretations of the rules, both for ringing and the flying of flags, which often falls to the ringers to deal with! Nevertheless, by joining forces with the ringers from other churches both the Jubilee and the Funeral were suitably marked in Yeovil and elsewhere. In October the same group of ringers had an enjoyable day's outing to Exmoor where the bells of five churches were rung.

In the autumn we arranged a visit to the tower by the young people of St John's, with Ben Graham and Candy Price, hoping we might get some youngsters to take up ringing. But to no avail. Next year we will have the King's Coronation and it's hoped this might be a focus for recruitment. Please spread the word, or soon our bells will fall silent.

Roger Fox and Annette Organ

St John's Young Adults (SJYA)

SJYA meet on the third Wednesday of each month. We do a range of social activities based around the seasons, but we nearly always end up at the pub! Bowling, games nights, bring and share dinners, walks, all with plenty of great conversations and encouraging fellowship. We are relatively small in number, but that has enabled us to build strong friendships and grow as a group. We are lucky to have a mixture of individuals - those who are from other churches, those who are curious about faith, and others who are regular church goers.

We hope in the next year to see more new faces - if you find yourself talking to someone in the 18-30 age bracket who may be interested in the group, please feel free to pass on either of our email addresses to them.

Tim and Hannah Osborn

Junior Church

It continues to be a joy to be involved with the various Sunday morning groups. Junior Church meets on the 2nd, 3rd, and 4th Sundays of each month during term time, wonderfully organised by Melissa Cary. A creche for the under 3's runs every week, under the guidance of Roby Maitland. Most Sundays in 2023 we welcomed about 30 children.

Scramblers (Age 3 to Year R), Climbers (Year 1 – 3), and Explorers (Year 4 – 6) meet in the School Rooms during the 10:30 St John's service. We gather altogether for a song before Scramblers head off to their group. Then the 2 older groups learn a memory verse together and review last week before splitting off for the current week's teaching and activities.

In the spring term we did a series on Jesus, the King of God's Kingdom, working through chapters 4 to 8 of Mark's gospel. In the summer term we explored the early church through the eyes of Peter, then in the Autumn we did 2 series in Judges and Samuel, and another called a Prophetic Christmas.

People moving and changing roles has meant that we are not operating with a full complement of leaders. Consequently, the team are working very hard, and it is currently a challenge to staff the groups each week. I am very grateful to the team for their committed service and for giving so much of their time to keep these groups going while we are under-staffed. Please join us in praying for two more leaders who would be willing and able to lead and teach.

Candy Price

Youth Ministry

Pathfinders is our Sunday morning group for youth in year 7 and up. We had a big group of children move up from Explorers in September, so we now have 12-14 present each Sunday. They meet in the crypt on the 2nd, 3rd, and 4th Sundays of each month during term time. In 2022 we did multiple mini-series on Genesis, Easter, Joshua, Philippians, Christmas and some stand-alone sessions in the epistles and Acts. We are considering using new material which allows us to work through Bible books more systematically. Please pray for wisdom as we consider that.

Friday youth meets for an hour and a half in the school rooms on Friday evenings and is attended by roughly 24 young people aged 11-18 each week. We start with a group activity in the room upstairs and then listen to a Bible talk from one of the youth team before splitting into 3 groups for discussion and prayer. In 2022 we started with a Bible Overview, then did a series on relationships, and one on the "radical Jesus". We finished with a series in Judges.

We had an amazing weekend away in Dartmoor National Park with a variety of activities and four Bible talks from George Beverly. We are looking forward to another weekend away with talks from Ben Graham: 50% more young people signed up, and there will be an even greater selection of activities.

I am particularly thankful to Jon Peace and James Maitland and the committed and capable team of youth leaders who love to serve so sacrificially and who make these groups such a joy to be a part of.

Candy Price

Tiny toes

Tiny Toes parent and baby group remains a popular event with local families and is well spoken of in the area. Approximately 28 parents have attended during the year, most of them having no obvious previous church contact.

We provide an important service for new parents who are facing the huge changes that a new baby brings. However, we also ensure we promote relevant church events, with several parents attending as a result. This was particularly true of those with older, school aged children who then attended Holiday Club. We also promote the Footprints group and a number of parents have then transferred to attend that.

For the first part of the year we had a group of parents who attended very regularly, until the break for the summer holidays. Many of these parents returned to work at that time and their children also became too old for the group, This left us with reduced numbers during the autumn term, but despite this we have averaged 7 or 8 attenders each week, 2023 has started with improved numbers.

Our thanks go both to the team who help to set up, run the sessions, provide cakes and clear away afterwards.

Ann Thurgood

Footprints

Footprints is a toddler group which runs on a Monday morning 10am till 11.30am in term time. We have around 15 toddlers turn up with their parents/carers each week. We tell them a bible story, sing songs, have play time and snack time. We have a real range of church going families and non-Christians. It is a great opportunity to support and talk to parents and carers. The aim of the group is to tell children and carers about Jesus, show them his love, support them in their stage of life and invite them to church events. We currently have 8 helpers and are looking for more to join the team. We value ongoing prayer for this group.

Doreen Maitland

Holiday Club

Lights Seekers 25th – 29th July 2022

The overall aim of the club was to show the children aged 5-11 how God can transform our lives. The teaching was based on the memory verse:

“Jesus said: I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness but will have the light of life” John 8:12

The daily programme, which ran from 10.00 to 12.30 each day included:

- Registration and then into the Space Station (our church was wonderfully decorated by Jennifer and David Matthew and their team).
- The children went to one of 6 ‘Space Shuttle’ groups around the church for teaching.
- The groups then gathered in the pews for messy games, drama, worship songs and further teaching (using ‘Saddleback Kids’ videos as a resource). These were about characters in the bible whose lives were transformed by God.
- The children then rotated through a series of games, activities, refreshments and more teaching.
- At the end of the morning, everyone gathered once more for more drama and closing prayer.

On the following Sunday there was a Holiday Club service where the children and their families joined the regular congregation in church and shared some of the activities and learning from the week

We were very blessed by the large number of adult and young leaders who volunteered and made Light Seekers a success. We could not run this week without them.

Holiday Club 2023, entitled 'Splash!' will run 24th - 28th July.

Roz Chatwin

Pastoral Care Report for APCM April 2023

The priority of pastoral care in our churches is that of encouraging and supporting, praying for and with others, to enable them to keep their hope and faith in the God who is holding on to them, and remember His great love for them during often difficult, unexpected, and inexplicable situations. This work is for all of us to be engaged in, and the care of others is often found in practical ways - the lift to church or to an appointment, in the making of a meal or doing some shopping, meeting for a coffee to listen and chat and pray, and a host of all different things. It is so wonderful to see a church family caring for one another, and it is a joy to be able to help co-ordinate some of this support when needed.

As with all years, for many of us there have been joys and sorrows: new babies, new jobs, new homes, new illnesses, new treatment, new loss and separation. For many of us, it will be the continuation of all that year on year, and that is life in our broken and fallen world. Through it all, we are reminded that God is faithful and will uphold us and strengthen us for all that happens, supported and helped and loved within the community of our church family. On a personal note, I can testify to knowing that deep sorrow and grief, which still sweeps over me, and am grateful for the love and support of all those who have prayed and listened and pointed me to the arms of my loving Saviour.

What has 2022-23 brought A winter of cold church and warm hubs (warm hubs elsewhere - St Peter's was a good place to take a laptop and work), visits again in care homes and hospitals, treatment for some, surgery for others, car accidents, bereavement, illness and difficulties, celebrations (Queen's Platinum Jubilee), weddings, funerals, ordinations (George Beverly our curate in June 2022) and much more!

As always, my grateful thanks to the Pastoral Team – Abi Graham, Beth Farrington, Jenny Jones, Hannah Osborn, Chris Salberg, Jenny Salberg, Ann Thurgood and Heather Voizey. We have met across the year and prayed together and sought to use the gifts we have in the pastoral setting. Thank you to Keith Stevens who does a tremendous amount of work in the Hospital Chaplaincy Team and in visiting and taking Communion to those who are housebound or in residential care homes.

Fellowship Groups

These are a key aspect of our church life and growth together as Christians, as we meet and read the Bible and pray together, as we drink coffee and laugh and chat and share life together. We have 14 groups meeting on Tuesday and Wednesdays (most in the evenings). This year we have studied the books of Hebrews and James and are now on a series entitled 'Certain Truths for Uncertain Times'. If you would like to join a group – do get in touch with me.

Gone Fishing Cafe

Companionship and friendship are at the very heart of the café and our strapline is 'nobody alone'. We enjoy delicious home-made cake and good fair-trade coffee. Laughter, prayer, listening, merriment – it all happens at the café. It's good. Why not join us? Thursdays 10am to 12 noon.

A huge thank you to all who bake cakes and those who come and serve at the café, and to Terry for setting it out every week and for the CAP team's presence there. If you'd like to get involved, do contact me.

Caring for the Carers: We have continued to meet every couple of months, with the aim of supporting one another in the role of caregivers: those who look after relatives – both near and far. I am grateful to those

who have come and shared openly about the joys and stresses of this role and who support one another so kindly.

Church Family News

We have lost some dear church family members this year, and since last reporting: Rosemary Vowles, Sylvia Thompson, Chris Gray, Joy Maidment, Gordon Gallop and Betty Woolridge (who was very proud to reach the ripe old age of 104!). We have said a warm 'hello' to baby Naimh (daughter of Naomi and Liam) and it has been a joy to provide the family with meals in the early days of having a new baby in the home. Congratulations to Hannah and Tim Osborn on their wedding last August at St John's.

Captain's Table

The Captain's Table lunch club continues to be a source of joy to many, and we meet for lunch on the 1st Saturday of each month at St Andrew's Church Hall. It has been a delight to work alongside such a gracious and kind team who are unflappable and get on with serving Christ by looking after the elderly and more fragile members in our church families, providing an excellent two course meal, coffee and tea and chocolates, entertainment and a Gospel message (all in 2 hours!).

The Holiday at Home in September 2022 went to India, which started with mango lassi and ended with chai latte, with curry, poppadoms, naan bread and other starters and lots going on. We learned some Hindi with Eugene and Bhavana, and Jon and had quizzes. Thank you to Eugene who spoke on God's great love for the world (John 3:16). What a wonderful start to this year of Captain's Table lunches. Some of those who thought they didn't like curry went away surprised!

One of the most exciting things about this venture is the link between young and old, with families and young people coming to lay tables, serve food, and eat together. We are one big happy family at Captain's Table. We have had testimonies from teenagers, storytelling, folk music, flute playing, quizzes and the wonderful Gospel message presented to us by Ben, James, Mary, Candy and George. If you have hidden talents and want to entertain us, then do let me know. There are also lots of behind-the-scenes jobs if that's more your thing: washing up, laundering the tablecloths/napkins, setting up, providing transport ... all important tasks that need doing! Thank you to all who come and volunteer in any way, especially to those who provide a means of people getting to St Andrew's and especially to those who have their hands in the sink, you are amazing!

Jesus is our Good Shepherd. Psalm 95 reminds us of the greatness of God and the fact that we are the people of his pasture, the flock under his care (v6-7).

Helen Peace, Pastoral Care Co-ordinator

Parish Prayer Chain Report – April 2023

A few church members from St John's and St Andrew's make up the Parish Prayer Chain, who are willing to provide prayer support for the specific needs of church family members as and when they arise. All requests are dealt with in a sensitive manner. Prayers are offered to the Lord in faith and we leave both people and different situations in His loving care.

If you have a request for prayer, perhaps for yourself or a loved one, who is undergoing surgery or has an emergency of some sort, then you can contact me (Helen Peace) and I will set the Parish Prayer Chain in motion, and the people on it will pass the message along the chain and pray for your situation, bringing it to the Lord and asking for His help and strength. The request needs to be made in a short concise way, enabling those on the chain to pass the message on without losing or adding information or distorting the original message.

Each request made is treated confidentially within the boundaries of the prayer chain, and there is no 'follow-up' or further contact with you to find out the outcome. The person on the prayer chain contacts and informs the next person on the list and so it goes on until it reaches the beginning again.

Philippians reminds us ***“Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your request to God”.***

Helen Peace

Fellowship Groups

Huge thanks, as always, to leaders of Fellowship Groups, who work hard to make them enjoyable and worthwhile. Huge thanks to Helen Peace who does the work of placing people into groups – which (as you can imagine) is not always easy. Huge thanks to Ben who has shared with me in writing study notes: this year the groups have studied the letter of James, followed by four studies on 'Certain truths for uncertain times.'

Helen and I always reflect, after our meetings with Fellowship Group leaders, on how encouraging the ministry is. The groups are generally functioning really well, and helping members to enjoy time with others and with God, to grow in the study of his word, and to pray and be prayed for in a supportive group. Attendance is good in most groups, and there are countless examples of loving care in practical ways, from one member to another. So a huge thank you also to all who belong in groups – we would be a much diminished church family without these amazing groups, carrying on, often unseen and untrumpeted, doing a great work for the Lord.

We have currently 140 people in 13 Fellowship Groups.

James Dudley-Smith

Safeguarding Report

The Parish Safeguarding Officer, Ros Bush, resigned In June and the role transferred to Ann Thurgood. We thank Ros for her hard work and organisational skills that ensured DBS checks, etc, were completed or renewed on time, and for her vigilance in the role.

There are currently 105 people who are actively volunteering to help with church activities that require Safer Recruitment processes to be followed, which include DBS checks. These need to be renewed every three years and so 18 new or repeated checks were undertaken during the year.

The change of Officer meant the safeguarding posters, etc, which have to be displayed in all buildings, became out of date and have been renewed. The Policy was also updated with new terminology and approved by the PCC in November.

The Diocese has recently offered the use of an online audit tool for safeguarding practices in the church, called The Safeguarding Dashboard. This has been completed and a subsequent action plan drawn up and approved by the PCC. This audit has proved to be very reassuring. It shows that we are already following the guidance, but with a few minor adjustments to ensure our practice is exemplary.

Ann Thurgood

Genesis

Genesis has been running on and off now for many years. Becky led it faithfully when I arrived three years ago with my then toddler, Theo. It was an incredible support to me to meet with women during the week to look at the Bible. Even better was to have my toddler looked after so I could do this. It provided support and friendships in the harder times of being at home with the boys, solidarity with other Mums and a fixing

of eyes upon Jesus. The ladies who came to look after the children provide a very special help and encouragement. I want to thank them all for their kindness and generosity to all of us over the years.

Genesis has served to support women in church with fellowship and Bible teaching. Sharing with each other in prayer time and encouraging each other to walk closely with the Lord. Recently we have reviewed the need for Genesis and after prayerful thought decided that it has, for now, run its course. Friday 24th March 2023 was our last meeting together. We are very grateful to the helpers who have come and cared for our little ones. Those ladies have given up their time to serve us in that way over many years and we really have been blessed by that. We pray on for each other and go forward lifting up the name of Jesus and supporting each other.

Abi Graham

St John's Social Media Report

"You are the salt of the earth.... You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead, they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house."

We continue to have four social media outlets: our website, Facebook page, and Instagram page, and our YouTube channel. As mentioned in last year's report each of our media outlets is run by those who have a strong and clear idea of what they are for, how they should be used, what message we want to convey, and a desire to show the world who we (at St John's) are and who is the person at the centre of all we do - Jesus Christ.

As an update on our current status here are just a few interesting statistics for you to mull over as you contemplate the wonders of social media...

- Our Facebook page currently has 613 followers, which is up 60 on this time last year. Our followers are from ten different countries, 90.4% are from the UK and our overseas following has grown by 6.5% this past year for some reason. 59.8% of our UK followers are based in or around Yeovil, and the most enthusiastic age bracket is 35-44 year olds.
- Instagram now has 88 followers (thank you Hannah Osborn for your work on this).
- Our YouTube streamed services have settled into more of a regular pattern with 40-50 people watching live each Sunday, and with most services being watched approximately 170-180 times, although this can go up significantly for particular services (for instance the carol service had 421 views, and Easter 2022 had 298 views).
- On the church website, the page with the greatest number of visits was, like last year, the one showing details of the Christmas services. But, here's a new fun fact... Fridays are three times more popular for those visiting the website than any other day of the week.

But facts and figures only take us so far and to many of us involved in our church's social media our 'consumers' are a bit of a mystery, who are all these people who watch or read our posts? And why do they watch or read it? We can make some guesses but ultimately, perhaps we don't need to know, we just have to pray that we are watering the planted seeds, standing our lamp on the stand, and seasoning the world around us with a bit of God's salt.

And, as a final small add on, I (Jennifer) am looking to step down from editing the FB page over the coming months, having done it for many years. Are you interested in this? Would you like to have a conversation about what it entails? Is there someone else you think might be interested? Please do get in touch, I would love to have a chat with you about it. Thank you.

Jennifer Matthew

TCP (Tea, coffee, croissants, and prayer)

Meeting on the fourth Saturday of the month, downstairs in the Schoolrooms 9.00 am -10.30 am for an informal breakfast, fellowship, and prayer. Ladies from both our churches chat over coffee/tea and croissants, sharing their news much laughter and covering a diverse range of subjects. This fellowship gives us the opportunity to support one another with encouragement and to pray together. All ladies are more than welcome to join us.

Roz Chatwin

Crafty Ladies (Craft Fellowship)

The group meets fortnightly on Thursday evenings downstairs in the Schoolrooms, 7.30 – 9.30 pm. We range in age from teenagers to retired ladies. To date, we have made a number of the banners which hang in the church, including ones for Christmas that are displayed throughout December. We also stitched the hangings on the stands for the music group and are currently working on a harvest themed project.

The atmosphere is very relaxed. We share a cuppa, enjoy a chat and stitch. There is no need to come with anything other than enthusiasm as all the materials are supplied. No level of skill is required, just the ability to thread a needle. New members are always welcome to join us.

Roz Chatwin

St John's Music Group

Band Report: 2022 saw the band fully back in a live setting leading worship in church. We learned a lot during lock- down and we have enjoyed singing and playing together as a live unit, sharing fellowship and supporting each other in learning new songs. The inevitable colds and flu hit us all during the winter and at times were only able to field a small band. We have prayed continuously for God to swell our numbers and we have been blessed with Rob Rawle joining the band, playing keys for the evening service. More recently we have been blessed with Chris Pavey playing his trumpet on Sunday mornings monthly and also Virinda will be joining us next term with male vocals.

The Tech Team of David, Matt, Greg and Michael and supported at times by Judith, continue to amaze us with their ability to live stream the services and we are always on the lookout for new members to that team that would enable them to take more of a break.

We have experimented with a raised platform in the corner and this has helped us provide a better visual lead when leading worship and also helps us feel more connected to the congregation. The aim is to tidy up the area and conceal the cables, and then carpet over the platform which, although classed as a temporary structure, will have the look of something more robust and semi-permanent.

We continue to pray for God's blessing and direction in the style and nature of our worship. If you feel you have a heart for leading worship through vocals or playing an instrument in St John's please do have a chat with either Jane, Judy, Becky or Keith.

Keith Ovenden

Floral Group Report

There has been a Floral Group in St John's church for many years; I don't know how many years but Anne Beable joined the Floral Group over 60 years ago when she first came to St John's as a teenager. The members of the group are responsible for planning, setting up and taking care of the beautiful floral arrangements in our church every week, and the spectacular displays for our festivals of Easter, Harvest and Christmas, as well as floral decorations for many of the weddings at St John's. Throughout the year the group also organises fundraisers to cover the cost of the flowers. We presently have 12 members of the group.

In 2022 the group provided floral decorations for the wedding of Hannah and Tim Osborn, Martin and Karen Stokes, and a naval themed red, white and blue display for another wedding. The group also decorated the church for Heather and Graham Voizey's Diamond wedding anniversary. The ever popular Sunday morning cake sale raised £120 for the group funds.

In 2023, floral decorations for weddings and anniversaries will be co-ordinated by Jennifer Matthew, church festivals co-ordinated by Mary Brooks and the general rota by myself.

Having served as chairperson of the Flower Group since 2009, Mary Brooks stepped down from this role in October 2021. As nobody has stepped up to take her place, the group is now in danger of disbanding if we cannot find a new chairperson.

Mary Irwin, Floral Group Secretary

St John's Model Railway Group

The group has enjoyed getting back into a more normal pattern of regular meetings in 2022-23. We continue to meet every third Thursday evening of the month in the Schoolrooms, with a typical attendance of up to around 10 people. These meetings tend to involve a lot of putting-the-world-to-rights and a little bit of railway modelling! In addition we've held some longer sessions on occasional Saturdays to enable a bit more of the build of the model to be completed, importantly breaking for bacon rolls and coffee!

We were extremely sad at the loss of Chris Gray last year. Chris was amongst our earliest members and he contributed a great deal to the build of the model railway so far. He was always a cheerful encouragement to all our efforts.

Membership is very informal but remains roughly at the ten to fifteen mark. We would welcome any newcomers, and anyone is welcome to come and see what we're up to!

Tim Neville and Terry Bush

Friends of St John's Report, 2022

In the 29 years since the Friends started in 1994 we have raised over £95,000 towards the fabric of St John's.

In 2022 we had a very successful fund-raising evening at the Swan Theatre in March, with 50% of the house for the play *Go Back for Murder* by Agatha Christie. Funds raised from ticket sales and a raffle came to £816.50. Many thanks are due to the Swan Theatre for offering the charity night, for which we started at a more modest 30% of the seats then gained confidence to go to 50%, selling all but three of our allocated tickets.

Then in the Autumn, THE BAND WAS BACK! The Phoenix Brass Band came to St John's Church to entertain us with a superb evening of music on the 22nd October, raising £412 for our funds.

So far in 2023, we have had the pleasure of an evening in St John's church with the Dorset Police Male Voice Choir on 25th March, an enjoyable time attended by 55 or so in the audience (and 30 in the choir), which raised another £421 for our funds.

Last year it was the rain: We donated £7117 towards repairs to the south turret and the vestry roof at St John's to keep the rain out! But this year it was the **COLD!!!** The church boiler was out of action and urgently needed replacing and the Friends committed £5000 towards the considerable cost to do so.

Income – Our net income for 2022 was £2658, including donations, tax refunds from donations and income from the two fund-raising events.

Supporters were updated with a Christmas Newsletter and committee meetings were held in April and September (both via Zoom) and the AGM in St Andrew's Hall in June. At the AGM, Nick Chatwin joined our committee and Phil Juggins expressed his intention to stand down as Chair but continue as Secretary. He has continued as Chair in the interim, awaiting a replacement.

Committee - We have a small committee to run the Friends. I am expecting to step down from Chairperson at our next AGM after 6 years in the role. Gill Brookes is also stepping down from the role of Treasurer. ***We need replacements for both roles if the Friends of St John's is to continue!*** (Commitment for committee members is involvement in 2 or 3 meetings and running 2 or 3 fund-raising events per year). If you would like to volunteer to help in any way, please see me or contact the Friends by email at friends@sjyeovil.org.uk. The need to support work on the magnificent St John's building continues.

Many thanks to all our supporters and committee members!

Phil Juggins, Chair

St John's Bookstall

The book stall has been selling books that POINT PEOPLE TO JESUS for £1.00 and this has proved (unsurprisingly) very popular. Emma in the office has been wonderfully helpful in producing pre-service announcements and we plan to continue selling books at this price. The bookstall is non-profit making - simply buy x number of books for £1.00 (very often from the 10 OF THOSE CHRISTIAN BOOK COMPANY). I then pay myself back from the cash received. The simple accounting is money paid to the book company and the same amount is paid back to me. We do not pay shipping costs as orders are always above £25.00.

Iain Maitland

Yeovil College Chaplaincy

Pastoral care: I meet with a few students 1-1 for pastoral chats. These times are often sad, eye-opening and hopeful.

Tutorials: I have had the wonderful opportunity to help with tutorials particularly around the Christian holidays of Christmas and Easter. A tutorial involves engaging with a group of students (a group between 10-60). I have taught the meaning of Christmas and Easter to 100's of students.

One-off Events: Remembrance Service, carol service, Queen's memorial service and input into the social worker course. Each is an opportunity to reflect from a Christian perspective.

Christian meeting: After not having a meeting for most of the year there is hope of starting a Christian meeting for students: two students have expressed an interest in meeting to talk about faith.

Ben Graham

Deanery Synod Report 2022

Deanery Prayer : Father God, through your spirit reveal your heart's desire for our parishes and your calling of all in the service of your Gospel. May we have courage to follow, commitment to one another and faith to see your Kingdom come through Jesus Christ, your Son. Amen

The Deanery Synod met three times in 2022 once on zoom and twice, thankfully, in person. Our Lay Chair is Val Barker of West Coker and Area Dean is Bruce Faulkner of Ilchester.

We met on Zoom on 8 February where we had presentations on the pastoral and spiritual care of Chaplains in the Deanery. There are chaplains in hospitals, schools, prisons, village communities, etc, where they reach out to people where they are.

Mike Haslam is the Chaplaincy Adviser to the Diocese, which means that he facilitates and enables a network of 300 chaplains across the Diocese. He advised that he also helps people become chaplains or organisations who wish to create a chaplaincy. Chaplaincy is growing with over fifty new chaplaincies being created over the past five years alone.

Linda Hann is the Chaplain at Yeovil Hospital where she has been for five years. She says the role is generally about meeting the needs of people with a Christian faith. She began her career as a nurse, then as a hospital manager but now finds herself in this challenging but fulfilling full-time role where she is assisted by twelve dedicated volunteers for whom this is a calling.

Helena Power is Chaplain to Rockwell Green Estate and Primary School near Wellington. After taking part in an Exploring Christianity course. She acts as a link between the children and the school. She also works in the village community and with those who are not well, lonely or are refugees.

Rev Ben Graham. Ben works part-time as Chaplain of Yeovil College and he spoke of the process of developing relationships with staff and pupils in different settings to be able to speak with and talk

In June, we were able, at long last, to meet in person at Tintinhull and received a very interesting presentation from Nicola Chesterton, Head of Chilthorne Domer C of E Primary School, and Hayley Robinson, Head of Tintinhull C of E Primary School, who gave us a most insightful talk about their experiences of school life during the Covid pandemic. They had both taken on their headships just months before the pandemic began.

By the time of the second lockdown, it had become clearer how to operate. They kept in touch by telephone with parents of children who did not come into school and they were aware of the importance of vulnerable children coming to school so that they could be monitored.

County became more supportive as they too were on a learning curve, and it was a time that their staff became a good team. Children had not been able to mix, play music or sing during this time, and it was hard for them to get back into a normal routine for fear of doing something wrong.

Community links, too, became stronger as a result of the pandemic and it had proved a good time to make links with the wider community.

With regard to the Diocesan Environment Policy and its impact on the Parishes, Sara Emmett, Climate Justice and Environment Adviser, had kindly agreed to speak at our meeting. She is currently studying for a PhD on Zero Carbon, and she too started work just before Covid struck.

She spoke of the need to reduce carbon emissions in our 569 churches and 181 church schools. The carbon footprint of each building needs to be measured. (The diocese also looks after 269 properties and 2,800 acres of glebe land.) Advice can be sought on the best environmental options for replacing boilers, etc, as switching is a great way to reduce carbon emissions.

At the meeting in October Bruce Faulkner spoke of the importance of Parish Plans feeding into the Deanery Plan for Mission and Growth as the input into where cuts in clergy may fall in the drive to balance the diocesan budget.

In a similar rather depressing vein Mat Callaghan of the Lord's Larder and CAP Yeovil spoke of the impact of the Cost of Living Crisis on those struggling financially.

Rob Dean

Yeovil CAP Debt Centre Report - 2022

With a vision to see *Transformed Lives – Thriving Churches – An End to UK Poverty*, our mission remains to *'serve the poor, save the lost, with the Church, across the nation.'*

Debt Centre

Across the UK network of three hundred debt centres, the number of people calling the 0800 328 0006 helpline post pandemic has started to increase. Our Debt Centre continues to be busy with new clients and throughout the year we've been close to full capacity of four new appointments per month.

The three debt coaches (Mary, Anne Charlotte, Steve) have continued to give their very best to sometimes the most vulnerable of people in poverty. There have been some very difficult situations when all three have had to dig deep and continue to bring the Lord's blessing into very chaotic situations, for some of the most desperate, isolated, and vulnerable members of our community. All of us are humbled and honoured to be working together.

We have continued to bring transformation for eternity into the lives of those reaching out for help, and in June we saw one person make a first adult response to Jesus during a visit.

Seeing a record eighteen households go debt free, we would like to thank Rev James Dudley-Smith and the church family of St Johns for their dedication and commitment to keeping God's heart for the poor at the very centre of St John's ministry. Seeing the vision and the birth of a CAP Life Skills group started in St Johns in May, went a long way to confirm this.

We're keen to continue linking all clients with a befriender, and though that hasn't been easy, we are pleased that we have fourteen from ten different congregations. They continue to carry out an excellent job in staying connected with clients – we couldn't do our job without them.

CAP Life Skills

We are thrilled that our Life Skills course has now run 3 courses, having completed its first full year. Each group has been slightly different, as the group members contribute and shape their individual course, but each one has been a joy and a real pleasure to be part of.

We also have to acknowledge the enthusiastic and supportive contribution of our team of volunteers, of whom we have 17 in addition to our 4 life skills coaches. For each course we aim to have 10 members of the team, which has allowed us to spread the load, and enrich the group with a wide range of life experiences, practical skills and ideas. We greatly value the prayer support of an amazing group of people who pray for us and the needs of the Life Skills members, receiving a weekly prayer email for the duration of the course.

The work continues to feel blessed by God in so many ways, not least in The sUpper Room, which evolved as a result, and which will hopefully provide an opportunity to extend the relationships we have initiated.

CAP Money

We are pleased to have two CAP Money coaches from YCC, Bridget Turner and Peter Gibson, who provide a budget course each term. These courses are for anyone, and primarily there to stop people getting into debt.

Christmas

At Christmas we reverted back to small groups from around various congregations making up the forty Christmas Hampers, and in addition the Centre added fresh food (mostly joints of meat) to each hamper. We were so blessed by so many giving towards the Centre covering off this fresh food purchase. We were also able to have our annual Christmas Tea, where we saw a record number in attendance.

Emergency Aid

We continue to provide emergency aid, where necessary, which can range from food parcels from the Lord's Larder, fresh food top ups, electric/gas/phone top ups, white goods, and a number of various other needs. On average, we continue to request from the Lord's Larder two food parcels per week for our CAP families. We thank and Praise the Lord for this incredible community ministry, helping people in desperate situations. We just can't see people go without food on the table, especially when parents often go without to feed their children.

Finances

In addition to the forty-nine people who donate to the local work of CAP via monthly standing orders, without whom we couldn't budget each year. We also saw many other individuals donate to the work. St Johns and several of its individuals, other congregations, plus local organisations have also been very generous (Reborne, Martock Christian Fellowship, St James/St Peters, YCC, ABRI housing association, Sherborne Faith in Action, to name just a few). St James & St Peters continue to be local CAP mission partners in their commitment and support of our work. In the last quarter of the year, we saw £15k come in from SSDC and just over £12k from the AVIVA Community Fund.

Publicity

We continue to find favour with the Western Gazette and Yeovil Press editors who so kindly publish our press releases; we had excellent one page and two-page spreads respectively. We are thankful for their support and we believe God has given us a voice that many in 'this space' don't have.

Management Committee

Regarding the CAP Management Committee, we saw a new Chair, Rick Pudner, befriender Caroline Reeves (Baptist), and CAP Money Coach Peter Gibson (YCC) join the existing committee of Gill Brookes and Alan Guy (YCC).

Supporter Updates

Whilst we thank the Lord for the one hundred and seventy-five who receive our three-weekly 'Turning the Tide' update (email or post), we continue to seek people who will join us in support of our community transforming ministry. If you want to find out more about this work, please contact Steve or Mary on stevehart@capuk.org or maryirwin@capuk.org

Prayer

Core to our ministry is prayer. We have a team praying for our weekly visits/appointments and every last Tuesday in the month at 4pm, we have our CAP Hour of Prayer, which we've continued to carry out both on-line and face to face in the upstairs School Rooms. Please get in touch if you'd like to join us in prayer.

We have continued to make the most of every opportunity and pray with our clients and share the love of Jesus.

St John's

The church family in St John's continues to show their amazing support and commitment to prayer and financial giving. It continues to be a pleasure and a privilege to serve and work with the St Johns' church family, in what can only be described as a ministry where there is ALWAYS HOPE! Thank you, St Johns, for your dedication to serving the poor and helping to lift them out of poverty.

Finally, we continue to press on and not give up, relying on God's outrageous love, working in His strength and power, with all humility and gentleness, as we serve those who reach out to us, and of course, making the most of every opportunity to share the hope that is in the gospel, to the glory of our Lord Jesus.

Steve Hart (Debt Centre Manager)
Jennifer Matthew (Life Skills Manager)

The Lord's Larder and The Lord's Larder Community Fund

To All our Friends at St John's Church, thank you for your support over 2022. Thank you so much for all your support of Yeovil Christian Support Trust. The past year was a busy year for the Lord's Larder Food Bank, helping over nine thousand people in the community where we live.

The Lord's Larder Food Bank

I would like to share with you how with the support from St. Johns, we have been able to help people in South Somerset. Last year we *gave out over 183,000 items of food* which went into the *4151 emergency food parcels* to help a total of *9749 local people*, up 20 % on the previous year:

5624 adults
4156 children
1575 families

Through December the Lord's Larder, with our standard food parcel requests, helped 830 people; we had 300 Christmas Parcels requested by agencies for their most needy clients, and were able to help another 433 adults and 395 children over Christmas 2022.

The Lord's Larder Community Fund

The Lord's Larder Community Fund continues to make a huge difference to people's lives using donations to the fund to provide small grants for *53 adults and 51 children* last year who have no other way of buying essential household items, like beds, furniture and cookers. These included families and single people whose only option would be to go to loan sharks, or go into debt.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all those in St John's for choosing to continue to support the valuable work of Yeovil Christian Support Trust (YCST), The Lord's Larder and Lord's Larder Community Fund; and to pass on the heart-felt gratitude from all those we are able to help each year.

May we give thanks to God for his faithfulness: serving the local community since 1991, we have always found we have enough food donated to the Larder, and last year we were able to give out 183,000 items of food, putting them into food parcels, so that no one goes without food, and no one goes hungry.

Thank you everyone at St John's Yeovil for your continued support of Yeovil Christian Support Trust, Lord's Larder Food Bank and Lord's Larder Community Fund over the past year.

Mat Callaghan