

## **APCM 2024**

### **Reports for Jan 2023 - April 2024**

Please take time to read these – they contain lots of encouragements and some exciting plans. God is at work in us and through us and these reports certainly reflect that.

**Fabric report** – *this is prepared by the churchwardens and is a summary of the building and maintenance work in both churches.*

**Deanery Synod Report** – *this is prepared by Caroline Manders, one of our deanery synod representatives and summarises the activities of the Abingdon Deanery Synod (of which we are a part) this past year.*

**Safeguarding Report** – *this is prepared by our Parish Safeguarding officer, Ruth Atkins and outlines key safeguarding actions.*

**Youth worker report** – *Rob Finch gives a summary of Youth Work this past year and some of the key focuses for the year ahead.*

**Mission Committee report** – *James Gilbert, chair of the newly-formulated mission committee gives a brief summary of what the team have been up to and their future plans.*

**Men's Ministry report** – *Adam Grady writes on behalf of the Men's Ministry team about the activities of the past year and plans for the future.*

**Women's Ministry update** – *Tamsin Gilbert provides a brief update of what has been happening in women's ministry.*

## **Fabric Report 2023- 2024 - Prepared by Chrystal Poon & Neil Rowe**

Quinquennials for both church buildings were completed in March 2024, and show no immediate urgent work is required on either building. The 5-year electrical inspections were completed for both church buildings in February 2024 and also show that no urgent electrical work is required. Electrical PAT testing was completed in January 2024.

### **All Saints**

We carry out routine maintenance work to ensure the building is in good condition. We are very grateful to Doug Simmons and James Crafer who undertake much of the day-to-day maintenance and upkeep.

- 1) The parish council carry out routine maintenance to the churchyard, including grass-cutting and tree surgery. Some areas of grass are left to grow long to increase biodiversity in the area.
- 2) The long-awaited new church pathway was laid, greatly improving access to the church.
- 3) A new marquee was erected as part of the Genesis One funding project, providing a space for outdoor children's church as well as space for informal gatherings such as Women's bible study and Men's beers.
- 4) In July 2023 we undertook repair work to the churchyard wall following accidental damage.
- 5) In March 2024, replacement of damaged tiles and coping stones above the vestry was undertaken.

### **Pending Jobs for 2024**

- We are in the process of planning a major church re-ordering project, details of which can be found on the church website. We are in the process of applying for grants and a Faculty for this project, and have already secured a substantial amount of funding for this for which we are thankful to God.
- The parish council are considering whether they might be able to make improvements to the path running behind the church building.

### **St Luke's**

We are very grateful to those who have worked hard to maintain St. Luke's over the last year, especially Tony Carter, Pamela Carter Moore and Carolyn Whiting. The church remains in good overall condition.

- 1) New church lighting has been installed to improve visibility, especially for evening services.
- 2) A portaloos has been installed on the farm just outside of the churchyard. This is serviced several times a year.
- 3) The heating system has recently been repaired.
- 4) The church bell is in the process of being serviced and re-hung.

### **Pending Jobs for 2024**

- We are hoping to install a tap to allow access to water, particularly to provide refreshments for services and other events.

**The Parish of Marcham with Garford**  
**Abingdon Deanery Synod Report for the year 2023**  
**For Church APCM, 21 April 2024**

Our Parish is part of Abingdon Deanery, and we can send three elected lay representatives to our Deanery Synod, who are also (ex-officio) members of our PCC. In 2023 your representatives were James Gilbert, Tim Jack and Caroline Manders. Our vicar, Nick Weldon, also attends, as well as meeting with other clergy colleagues in the Deanery Chapter.

The main role of the Deanery is to encourage, link and co-ordinate the work of adjacent parishes. It is arranged in four geographical clusters; we are in the western cluster together with Appleton & Besselsleigh, Dry Sandford, Fyfield & Tubney, Kingston Bagpuize & Southmoor, and Shippon. As a deanery, we raise the Parish Shares which go to support the diocese meet the costs of ministry, training and mission, and (at deanery level) the support of local mission activities. The annual cycle of agreeing Parish Shares is led by Martin Steel, our Deanery Treasurer. He does a brilliant job of developing a just and equitable means of allocating the shares that are to be paid by each parish and (in the meeting at least), enabling us to understand the means by which this allocation formula has been developed.

We met as a Synod on four occasions. In May there was a Prayer and Party meeting in Milton and in October we met in person again in Radley, where we welcomed and were introduced to our new Associate Archdeacon, Jane Haslam. We met on Zoom in November, and in breakout groups in the middle of the meeting, we discussed either the topic of reaching out to residents in new housing development in our parishes, or the relationship between regular midweek activities for different sectors of the community and regular Sunday service attendance. The meeting in February was at Marcham (you may have attended this), when Prudence Dailey gave an enlightening talk on how General Synod operates.

Other regular business includes the sharing of news updates from each parish, including outreach initiatives and new ideas, as well as times of prayer.

Our Area Dean is Revd Rob Glenny (Radley, Sunningwell and Kennington), and our Revd Nick Weldon is Associate Area Dean. Sue Scott (St Michael's, Abingdon) continues as Lay Chair.

Caroline Manders, James Gilbert and Tim Jack  
Lay Representatives  
16/4/2024

# YOUTH WORKER REPORT APCM – 21 APRIL 2024

## HIGHLIGHTS FROM OUR REGULAR EVENTS

### SUNDAY MORNING YOUTH:

*Usually 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Sundays during Communion services.*

- New families welcomed and a part of our regular sessions.
- **Highlight** – experimenting with using outside space on a regular basis, using the natural world to help explore the Bible. Perhaps you saw our Palm Sunday artwork over Easter.

### SUNDAY NIGHT YOUTH:

*Sunday evenings during term time.*

- This remains the powerhouse of our regular youth events.
- We have welcomed new members and have had some weeks with 20+ attendees.
- **Highlight** – we have sought to engage with familiar festival in new ways including our *Immersive Nativity Experience* and our *Easter Escape Room*.

### MUGA MONDAYS:

*Monday evenings for an hour at the village sports court. An opportunity for young people to meet, play sports together, get some exercise and link with our Youth Work Team.*

- **Highlight** – we have maintained many regular attendees, and welcomed new ones.

## OTHER HIGHLIGHTS

### LINKS WITH OTHER CHURCHES:

- We have continued our ongoing link with Christ Church, Abingdon, joining together for a weekend residential at Youlbury in February and termly joint youth meets.

### FRIDAY CLUB:

- The Youth Worker has continued to regularly attend Friday Club, not only to build relationship with young people approaching secondary transition, but also with the wide array of young leaders. Outreach to these young leaders who are not already a part of our regular Youth activities is a priority for this coming year.

### YOUTH BAND:

- Our Youth Band has begun to play more regularly at church services and events and we look forward to this continuing. Particular thanks to Martin Poon for all his hard work in drawing the band together and coordinating efforts. To allow Youth Band to play regularly on set Sundays, we are encouraging this by introducing flexibility into which Sunday mornings contain regular, separate Youth work as a trial.

### VOLUNTEERS:

- It has been our pleasure to begin to welcome new faces to our regular Sunday Night Youth team and to have some 'visitors' as well. To increase this is another key focus for the coming year.

### NEWS FROM THE YOUTH WORKER:

- Having had my teaching role at the University of Reading made permanent, this ensures a stable financial situation for the Finch family at present, which in term hopefully helps lend longevity to being able to be in the Youth Work role.
- I have been able to use time in the last year to undertake a term's (Sept-Dec) placement, assisting a high school chaplain for one day a week. This has been a very encouraging and positive experience.

## **The Parish of Marcham with Garford**

### **Annual Safeguarding Report for APCM, Sunday 21 April 2024**

Safeguarding is always a team effort, and as a Parish and PCC we take it very seriously. Sadly, as we all know, churches have not always been places of safety for children or vulnerable adults, and a vital part of your PCC's work is to ensure that our church does not become a place where harm or abuse can occur without being prevented, detected or stopped.

As your Parish Safeguarding Officer, I am enormously grateful for those who have supported me in so many ways over the past year, and without whose hard work and commitment we could not have achieved these aims. In particular, Shaena Porter, who maintained our required records of Safeguarding Training for PCC members and those working with children, young people and vulnerable adults. Similarly, we are grateful to Jill Rowe, as Families' Minister, and Rob Finch, as Youth Worker, for the consistent care and responsible oversight they both exercise, and not least in supporting our many volunteers in their roles in these crucial ministry areas.

We have a small number of ongoing safeguarding cases, which we try to deal with carefully, confidentially, sensitively and lovingly. Those involved work and pray tremendously hard, often over long periods and under significant personal pressure. This is not easy or straightforward work, and it entails personal sacrifice, unseen by others.

We continue to work in close cooperation with the Diocese too, as we are required to. We are grateful for their support. We have appreciated their advice and intervention, especially in areas of complex multi-agency involvement, where getting the necessary balance between confidentiality and inter-agency communication and cooperation can be hard.

Ruth continues to be involved with a Diocesan Parish Safeguarding group and this is beneficial to our parish and the diocese.

We are all grateful for your support and understanding, and please, as always, do not hesitate to be in touch with me, in confidence, should you have any concerns. Thank you.

Ruth Atkins,  
PSO,  
April 2024

## **Mission Committee Report**

### ***Background***

In June 2023 the PCC agreed to re-establish a Mission Partners Group (MPG) following a long period of time in which the MPG had been dormant. This vision to recommence the group was particularly in light of a number of 'Mission Focused' Sunday Services including the MAF Sunday with a plane in the churchyard, and the recognition that the Mission partners of All Saints had changed and evolved. Several individuals with an interest in mission and / or connected to current mission partners volunteered to be part of the group. Formal notice of the group was announced in a church service and the notices for that week, to inform the wider church family of the group and provide opportunity for membership and input. The group first met and formally went live in August 2023.

### ***Group Members***

James Gilbert (JG) – Chair

Neil Rowe (NR)

Nick Weldon (NW)

Julia Davies (JD)

Alison Lyndon (AL)

Sue Lawton (SuL)

Jane Weldon (JW)

Sarah Lunn (SaL)

### ***New Vision and New Strategy***

There was a real sense that as the group re-formed it needed to do so with a new focus and ideas of how mission partnerships develop and grow within All Saints including monetary support, as well as consideration of the broader elements of mission. The group decided to no longer be referred to as the Mission Partner Group but, will instead be called the '**Mission Committee**'.

At its core, the Mission Committee will look to focus on all elements of mission that see us as a church:

*Prayerfully, Practically and Financially partner with organisations and people based on need.*

The Committee will be accountable to the PCC and any proposals / recommendations will be put forward to the PCC in the first instance and, where necessary to the wider church family.

### ***Current Partners***

There are many organisations and individuals involved with mission at a local, national, and global level that as a church we have some sort of connection to. The Mission Committee have recognised that we cannot partner with all of these but similarly we do not want to be exclusive. We have therefore put in place a combination of '***Mission Partners***' and '***Mission Links***'.

Mission partners will be those individuals or organisations where there is a deep connection to the church family and a commitment to regularly pray for and support in a two-way partnership. Mission links by contrast will be those individuals or organisations that we have an interest and affiliation with but don't necessarily a deep personal connection. The work of the link organisations may be a part of our church activities for example, prayer for the persecuted church.

## **Mission Partners**

Marcham Moldova Lifeline

Ripple Effect (formally Send A Cow)

Thirsty Café

Andy & Emma Dipper

## **Mission Links**

Tearfund

Open Doors

Mission Aviation Fellowship (MAF)

Church Missionary Society (CMS)

Food Bank

Samaritans Purse

MANNA

### ***Becoming Mission Focused***

The group has developed several ways in which we as a church can become increasingly mission focused and some of these include:

- Mission Partner / Mission Link notice board at the back of church
- Link person for each of the partners who can provide prayer requests, personal updates etc.
- Incorporation of a Mission Partner into weekly Sunday Service prayers
- Mission Partner slots / updates a couple times per year in a Sunday Service
- Monthly prayer meeting to periodically focus on mission.
- Encouraging short term mission projects to the church family

At the heart of all of this is Jesus' teaching to us on what mission was to Him and what it should be to us as seen in His 'Great Command' (Matt 22 v 37-39) and 'Great Commission' (Matt 28 v 18-20).

## Men's Ministry APCM Report 2024

Our strategy is to be growing and delivering a men's ministry programme that includes social, spiritual and pastoral support. We achieve this via Men's Drinks, Breakfasts, and Evening Events.

At the breakfasts and evening events our aim is to encourage men to come together, share in food and hear real life stories from fellow men underpinned by the gospel message of how Jesus impacts those men in their lives. This generates thought and discussion and is currently working well. Lots of men remain keen to meet monthly for breakfasts, there are good consistent numbers and we may have a capacity issue soon.

The guys seem to be appreciating the contribution of home-grown speakers on subjects personal to them. There is a gentle evangelistic and testimony-based approach. There has been a lot of honest sharing from the front, and this is producing a growing sense of relationship and support amongst the men. It was great that some men engaged with the recent Hope Explored Course.

### Events

Since last April there have been 8 breakfasts with 324 attending and over 300 breakfasts being served. There were three evening social events, with a total attendance of 132. Men's drinks has been back at the Crown since September on the first Monday of the month and we've opened up the Marcham Centre bar on the third Monday of the month. There are between 10 and 20 guys who will join us regularly.

### Plans

There is little evidence to make any big changes. However, a review in the new year would be timely. Areas for potential development in the future are;

- To focus on fostering spiritual growth among the men.
- Do another course like Hope Explored.
- Consider more Bible studies and prayer.
- Consider a mentorship program where experienced men guide younger members in their faith journey.
- Better utilise the various communication channels (website, social media, email) to keep men better informed about events and updates.
- Encourage further accountability within the group where men can openly share their challenges and victories.
- Establish a strong prayer support system within the ministry.
- Plan and meetings further in advance.
- Regularly assess the effectiveness of our strategy through surveys, feedback, and self-reflection.
- Identify and nurture potential leaders within the ministry.
- Ensure a safe and inclusive environment, where all men feel welcome regardless of age, background, or experience.
- Seek God's guidance for the future through prayer.

We would really value your prayers for God to be glorified in everything we do.





# Women's Ministry

GROWING TOGETHER AS WOMEN OF GOD

## **Women's Ministry Update 2024**

The purpose of our women's ministry is two-fold: to nurture and encourage each other as sisters in Christ and secondly to reach out to the women in the communities in which we live in love and care and pointing them to Jesus.

Over the past year or so we have continued this in two main ways:

A monthly Bible study which is open to all women who wish to join. We have an average attendance between 8-15 each session. Last year we looked at the book of 1 John and also explored what the Bible says about topics like celebration, heaven & remembrance. This year we will be working our way through the Apostles Creed.

Our women's evenings have continued to be popular. These consist of a meal together here in church and a short talk given by a woman from the church family. We average 30-50 women each time and a good number of these are non-church women who come time after time.

The Ladies coffee and chat on a Wednesday morning at Thirsty Café means that there is always at least one woman from church at Thirsty, so that anyone hesitant about coming on their own or wanting meet others can be sure of a warm welcome. Numbers vary from just a couple to a full table. It's good to be able to spend a relaxing hour or more with fellow church members and to get to know new friends. We are happy to pick up anyone wanting a lift.

The Women's ministry WhatsApp group is further source of encouragement and prayer as well as a useful place to find practical help.