

Ecumenical Partnership of Stantonbury

**St James New Bradwell**  
**an open, growing presence for Christ.**

**Annual Review 2023-2024**



**St James Church community warmly welcomes  
EVERYONE to journey with them as they live out their  
calling as followers of Jesus, in the love of God and the  
power of the Holy Spirit.**

# Annual Review 2023 – 2024

## Contents:

### Page no.

1	List of Church Officers
2-3	Vicar's report
4	Licensed Lay Minister, Helen's report
5	Inclusive Church report
6	Open Door report
7-8	Churchwardens' and Fabric report
9	Financial Report and 100 Club
10-13	Financial Statements
14-15	Safeguarding report
16	Environment report
17	Methodist Circuit report
18-19	Stantonbury Ecumenical Partnership report

**2023-2024**

**Church Officers**

Vicar	Reverend Doctor Paul Smith
Non-stipendiary Minister	Reverend Duncan Barnes
Licensed Lay Minister	Helen Rouse
Church Warden	Mary Kennedy
Church Warden	Graham Crisp
Treasurer	Mary Kennedy
Secretary	Irene Farr
Safeguarding Officer	Gill Wood
Electoral Roll Officer, Newsletter Editor	John Porter
Sacristan	Prue Errington
Wedding Administrator	Shelley Sullivan

**Church Council Members/ Congregational Leadership Team**

Revd Dr Paul Smith	ex-officio
Revd Duncan Barnes	ex-officio
Revd Nicola Martyn-Beck	ex-officio
Helen Rouse	ex-officio
Mary Kennedy (Treasurer)	ex-officio
Graham Crisp (Chair)	ex-officio
Irene Farr (Secretary)	ex-officio
John Porter	Notices, live-streaming
Mary Borrett	Green Champion
Peter Galsworthy	ex-officio
Gill Wood	Safeguarding
Jo Roberts	Outreach

**Stantonbury Ecumenical Partnership Trustee**

Vacant

**Deanery Synod Representative**

Vacant

**Stantonbury Partnership Ecumenical Council (SPEC) Representatives**

Mary Kennedy, Helen Rouse

**Parochial Church Council of Stantonbury and Willen Councillor**

Robert Llewellyn

**Methodist Circuit Representative**

Peter Galsworthy

**Stewards**

Robert Llewellyn

John Porter

Irene Farr

Jayne Wakefield

Peter Galsworthy

# **STANTONBURY ECUMENICAL PARTNERSHIP**

## **ST JAMES, NEW BRADWELL AGM 2024**

### **VICAR'S REPORT**

#### **Introduction**

Many people gradually reduce their working hours as they approach retirement as a way of managing the significant change in their lives. I never envisaged doing so, but the events of the last year has more or less forced that on me! Three months of the time was planned, in that I took a sabbatical. However, a great deal of time over the autumn and early into 2024 has had to be given over to sick leave. I am enormously grateful to the commitment and grace of lay leaders and ministerial colleagues for all that they have done over the past year to ensure the worship, witness and life of St James continues to flourish. We are privileged to have our two wardens, Mary Kennedy and Graham Crisp, and our authorised ministers, Helen Rouse, Mary Cotes and Duncan Barnes, on whom, with the support of many others, I've been able to rely over the past few months.

#### **Constitutional Change**

Although it may have happened in the background, there has been a significant constitutional change in Stantonbury Ecumenical Partnership in that the SEP has become a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO), with its inception on 20<sup>th</sup> April 2023 at the inaugural annual general meeting. For a lengthy period, I was involved with a small working party meeting at online meetings, starting during the pandemic lock-down, and developing the details of the group of governing documents that make up the new constitution. It is a relief to look back and know that is a task completed! The most immediate change for us is that the former Church Council is now operating as "St James Congregational Leadership Team" (CLT) and has a more task-orientated function than is implied by the term "council". The people stay the same and much of our agendas are taken up with similar concerns, however! All the members of the CLT are to be thanked and commended for their energy and work on behalf of St James church.

#### **Ministerial Changes**

For most of her time with us, our Methodist colleague, Rev Nicola Martyn-Beck spent the quarter-time allocated by the Circuit to the SEP, to ministry amongst us at St James. Towards the close of her time, she moved to supporting Christ Church, Stantonbury during their lengthy ministerial vacancy. It was with joy and sadness that we bid Nicola and her wife, Carol, farewell on 23<sup>rd</sup> July 2023, in a memorable afternoon service with Bradwell Band present, and many friends, colleagues and church members from the wider MK Circuit. Although the Rev Dave Haseldine has now filled Nicola's place in the Circuit, his time in the SEP is reduced to 20%. As Christ Church continues to need pastoral support during its ongoing ministerial vacancy, it was agreed that Dave should continue where Nicola left off. In the Anglican deanery we've also bid farewell to the previous Area Dean, Rev Tim Norwood, as he moved on to a national ecumenical role with the CofE. The Deanery awaits the appointment of his replacement and I have been involved, in the context of the Chapter (the local Anglican clergy meeting), in some reflection and discussions about what the role involves and what the needs of MK Deanery might be. We look forward to news of a new Area Dean in due course.

The two full-time stipendiary vacancies in the SEP are not yet filled and we continue to work, pray and seek the Lord's will for the appointment of a Baptist Minister and an Anglican Team Rector. Although I have been Rector for many years, the plan is for me to step back into the role of Team Vicar and allow a new Rector to overlap with the remainder of my time in the parish.

## **St James**

It has been heartening to see aspects of St James' life develop over the past year. The autumn activities included our usual "Glow in the Dark" party which was very well attended. We provided five candidates for Confirmation at the city-wide service in November. Others took the burden of preparations for these, but I'm pleased to have been able to continue supporting the Remembrance Parade (along with Duncan), as well as the CLT and the Worship Planning Group. Funerals and a couple of weddings have also taken place during the year, mainly taken by colleagues here in St James. I have been particularly pleased about the establishment of the SEP-wide Green Champions' Role Huddle, gathering members of congregations committed to our environmental mission for mutual support. St James was the first to achieve the Eco Church Bronze Award in the SEP, thanks to Mary Borrett's ongoing work. Since then Christ Church has also been recognised at the same level.

## **Other Ministerial Commitments**

I have shared the bulk of my time between St James and Bradwell Church for the past year, especially supporting Bradwell as they celebrated the 800<sup>th</sup> anniversary since the first vicar, Henricus, was appointed there. A number of celebratory initiatives drew congregation and local community together, especially the summer village fete in August. My interfaith interests and commitments include co-chairing the Oxford Diocesan Committee for Interreligious Relations (ODCIR) and attending InterFaith MK at their monthly meetings. At diocesan level ecological concerns and interfaith commitment came together as we worked to put on two interfaith eco-conferences in other parts of the diocese over the past year.

## **Sabbatical and Retirement**

My sabbatical was spent exploring different forms of ministry which I might be able to get involved with in retirement. The focus was on supporting Anglican chaplaincy in Turkey and Santiago de Compostela. There is a small Anglican congregation on the Aegean coast with several ex-patriot members who live there year-round. I got to know the folks there a little. I spent ten days in the pilgrimage centre of Santiago (northwestern Spain) being a chaplain to English-speaking pilgrims arriving in the cathedral city, working with local Anglicans. Being a volunteer chaplain with experience of pilgrimage is valuable to others who make this historic journey of faith, often on foot over many days or weeks. I also read, reflected and saw to some practical arrangements in connection with impending retirement.

## **Conclusion**

Since the autumn I have begun to do things for the last time before leaving the parish. It was a joy to be able to take a couple of Christmas services despite being part-time on sick leave. I look forward to celebrating Easter at St James, a highlight for me being the dawn service. All this will be an enormous change for Jeanette and me. 21 years is a long time to stay in one parish, but the various changes in pastoral charge over the years have helped make this possible. I have found St James a happy congregation to be involved with and commend you all to the Lord's keeping for the future! Thank you for the long years of support and acceptance of my ministry which have been very fulfilling and fruitful! Praise and thanks go to the Lord for leading us together for these past years, and, as we anticipate a parting of our ways, may we do so in good heart when the time comes in the autumn! My farewell service will be 3pm on Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> September 2024 at St James, New Bradwell, to which you are all very welcome!

## Helen's LLM Report 2023-24

This is now my 5th year of ministry since my admission as an Anglican 'Reader' and licensing as a Lay Minister within the Oxford Diocese, in November 2019. I am grateful to everyone who has supported me, both personally and professionally throughout. I am pleased to serve not only at St James' but in the wider Stantonbury Ecumenical Partnership. I have enjoyed preaching and leading morning worship at St Mary Magdalene, Willen; Cross and Stable, Downs Barn; St Lawrence, Bradwell and Christchurch, Stantonbury as well as at St James'.

My varied LLM ministry has included taking Morning Worship services, and the occasional Holy Communion by Extension, leading, with Mary B., the Good Friday 'Stations of the Cross' devotions, and the All Souls' bereavement service.

Last July, I enjoyed leading Evensong at Willen church with the choir 'Quorum'.

I have also continued as one of the SEPC (Stantonbury Ecumenical Partnership Council) Representatives for St James, together with Mary K. This coming year I wish to step down from that role and would invite anyone who wishes to learn more about the organisation and work within our Partnership of 6 church congregations to offer to stand as our Representative on the SEP Council.

Regarding pastoral matters, I believe it is important that those, especially elderly, members, who are no longer able to worship in church, for a variety of reasons, still feel part of our St James' family. Several of us try to keep in good touch with them by phone and visits. Very sadly, however, our friend Janet Skeats died on 4<sup>th</sup> January this year. Her loss is felt by all of us who knew her at St James' and our heartfelt condolences go out to her daughters Linda and Julie and their family. It was my privilege to lead Janet's funeral service and a number of other funerals this year, all of which have been unique and special. I would like to express my continuing good wishes to all the bereaved families and friends whom I have met in the course of my funeral ministry.

I am also a musician and so, of course, music is, for me, an important part of worship. I share most of the organ duties at St James' with Mary B, and I also enjoy visiting Willen church and Cross and Stable monthly as organist. Our St James' services have continued to be greatly enhanced by the contributions of our choir, especially on occasions such as the Carol Service. Amongst other notable Christmas events were the Christmas Fair (thanks to Mary K), Café Carols (thanks to Jean) and the Crib Service (thanks to Duncan). Once again, I had the great pleasure of leading the New Bradwell School Christingle services. It is wonderful to have a close relationship with the school, - strengthened through the year by the occasional visits of year 6 to St James and their enthusiastic discussions with Graham about the church. I have been privileged to share again, with Margaret Moakes LLM, the Willen church Christmas Eve crib service, which this year included Christingles.

On a personal musical note, I continue to accompany the Northamptonshire Carers' Choir and several singers in the MK Festival of Music and the Arts in March each year, as well as musical activities with friends. A great joy and inspiration is my continuing study of ancient Hebrew with Rev Peter Ballantine's reading group.

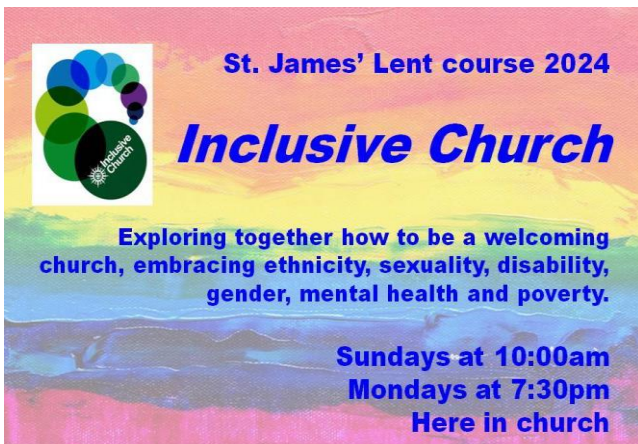
There are many challenges facing us in the months and years ahead. So, let us pray that the Holy Spirit may direct our steps as we work towards making St James an ever more open, inclusive, safe and growing presence for Christ. Helen x

Helen Rouse February 2024

## St. James *Inclusive Church* report 2024

It is exciting to be writing this report in the midst of our *Inclusive Church* Lent course and sermon series.

The idea for exploring joining the *Inclusive Church Network* sprang from 3 green shoots:



- 1) Championed by Mary B and others, St. James' had been successful in applying for the **Bronze Eco Church Award**, to show our enthusiasm for sustainability and creation-based thinking;
- 2) We always have been a welcoming, inclusive congregation – it's part of our DNA as a church;
- 3) A Methodist document on sexuality, brought to the Church Leadership Team in November 2022, which received widespread support.

Throughout the summer and autumn of 2023, one or two of us began to explore the website [www.inclusive-church.org](http://www.inclusive-church.org). We found that there were 800 churches subscribed to the network, including some other churches in MK; we downloaded the 6 topic-area study material.



The idea was suggested to use the material as a Lent Course for 2024. With a unanimous endorsement from the Church Leadership Team in January, a small group was formed to oversee the preparations for the Course and accompanying sermon series. Since then, teams have formed to lead each of the 6 services through Lent, gathering together for mutual encouragement before the series began last month.



The worship services have featured inputs from members of our congregation and wider Partnership. Grace and Danny took centre-stage for the first week – ***Including Ethnicity***, Maggie, Karen and Bev challenged us with ***Including Sexuality***, Gini and Graham taught us more about ***Including Mental Health***, and Helen, George and Mary B spoke about ***Including Disability***. Today, we have heard from Mary C and Jo on ***Including Gender***, and next week, a speaker from the *Food Bank* will help us think about ***Including Poverty***.

The Monday evening Lent Groups, offering a chance to talk further about each of the topics, have been very well attended, and highlighted the welcoming and positive nature of our church. They have shown that we are a church keen to engage in current issues, with a shared sense of Jesus' love for all who we meet week by week.

Our *Open Door*, on 14<sup>th</sup> April, will be an opportunity to bring the series together, and hear more about the next steps we can take to become part of the ***Inclusive Church*** network. If we vote to join the network, we undertake to hold a service every year to promote inclusivity, and can proudly display the logo/banner to help those seeking a welcoming church community to try us.

Our thanks go to all those who have given of themselves to help the church in this journey – and to all of us who, week by week, welcome and include everyone.

## St. James Open Door report 2024



Every two months, on the second Sunday at 10:00am, various members of the church work together to lead **Open Door**. Now in their 14<sup>th</sup> year, the Open Door services provide opportunities to engage with important Christian issues in a service of worship, reflection and celebration.

We've had some great highlights in the 6 services of this past year:

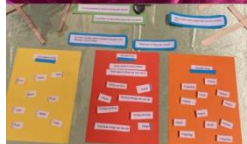
In **April**, we celebrated **Palm Sunday**, rejoicing with John, Grace and their family on their 50<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary. We had sensory prayer stations around the church to reflect on the key events of Holy Week – The Last Supper, the Crucifixion and Holy Saturday. We were encouraged to taste vinegar to remind us of the cross, and write prayers.



**June's** Open Door took place outside, which was appropriate, as the theme was **Eco Church**. We heard an update about our successful Bronze Award bid in the beauty of the churchyard; we sang hymns, chatted to passers-by, and spent time on a prayer-walk, taking us around the church.



**August**, our holiday month, was another opportunity to be outdoors (our first ever 2-service-outdoors year!) The theme was **Re-wilding** – which was symbolised by the areas of the church environment that we choose to give over to wildlife. It helped us to reflect on how, sometimes, God needs us to have lives that are untidy at the edges, so that He can do his work in us.



**Ultra-Processed Faith** was the topic for our **October** service, when Arti Fishal-Additive led us on a journey of awareness about what we eat (UPF is in a surprising number of unexpected places in our food these days); we were challenged about eating healthily, as well as being authentic in our spiritual journey.



**December** saw a perennial favourite service – our **Christingle**. Once again, people were encouraged to create their own Christingles; we turned off the lights and sang *Away in a manger* in our beautiful church.



Finally, our **February** Open Door was the launch of **Inclusive Church** Lent Course. Some great discussions were had about how we are as a church, and what we want out of the next weeks up to Easter.

So many great services – opportunities to meet with God and one another, thinking about important issues and showing the creativity of St. James'.

Thank you to everyone who is involved with these services. Hopefully, as part of the progress of **Inclusive Church**, we will be able to include more people, of all ages, in our future planning and leading of these services.



## **St. James Churchwarden and Fabric report 2024.**

I always find it intriguing to watch visitor's reactions when they come into St. James church for the very first time. They are often taken aback by its beauty, especially by our stained-glass windows. Many make comments on how warm and friendly the church is.

I have had the privilege of welcoming several newcomers into the church in the past 12 months, from the Mayor of Milton Keynes, the new Head Teacher of New Bradwell school to the person who services the Fire Extinguishers! All were very complimentary about the church. Our Church social events and special services have also attracted people into church for the first time including our hugely popular Christmas Eve Crib Service, our Glow in The Dark event in October and our summer churchyard Bradwell band concert in August.

Whilst, sadly, I don't expect that our visitors will come flooding to our regular church services, I can only hope that they have been touched spiritually by their visit and that maybe one day they will decide to come to one of our services. This strengthens our aim to open the church for everyone as often as we are able and reinforces our mission for the church to remain at the centre of our community and to pursue our mission to be open and growing presence for Christ.

The church is looking even more beautiful now that at long last our lighting has been restored. It has taken several years to get to this stage, and I would like to thank my fellow churchwarden, Mary Kennedy for her support, to John Porter and to Mike Kennedy for their support and technical input. Thanks also to everyone who have given me the encouragement I needed to keep pressing on with the project at the times when I felt so frustrated with the lack of progress and the thought that it was never going to be completed.

As well as the replacement and additional Nave lighting, a new organ footwell has been fitted along with a new light-sensitive bulkhead fitted to the outside porch wall which illuminates the church path at night.

The church roof has been repaired, guttering cleaned out along with the waterproofing of the boiler house roof, thanks go to Mary Kennedy for overseeing this project.

The additional lighting will help with the live-streaming of our services and thanks go to John Porter for his work with this.

The churchyard is currently in its winter hibernation, but thanks go to all those who help with the mowing and weeding including Mary and Mike Kennedy, Tony Farr, Richard, David Forsyth and to Denise for her regular year-round tidying up and litter-picking missions around the churchyard.

With its new heating system and new lights now in place and with its recently repaired roof, the church is in fairly good shape. However, keeping an old building and large churchyard well maintained takes a lot of manpower, time and money. If you feel you can help us in any way, please speak to Mary Kennedy or I or any member of the congregational leadership team.

I would like to mention that work is ongoing to divest the church of its links and responsibilities with New Bradwell Community Centre. Mary and I would like to thank Adrian Prisk for his tireless work dealing with the complex legalities that this process involves.

A final thanks from Mary and I go to our friends in the family of St. James church for the help and support given to us. It is very much valued and appreciated.

On a personal note, 2023 was a very difficult year for my family and me. I would like to thank you all for your prayers and support with the loss of my sister-in-law Jenny who passed away in August. Thank you especially to Paul for his love and support and for being with the family at our time of need.

Thank You.

Graham Crisp

Churchwarden

Our Churchwardens, Mary Kennedy and Graham Crisp fundraising at Christmas.





**St James New Bradwell**

**Financial Statement  
For the year ending 31 December 2023**

	Unrestrict ed Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Endowment Funds £	TOTAL FUNDS 2023 £	TOTAL FUNDS 2022 £
<b>INCOMING RESOURCES</b>					
<i>Incoming resources from donors</i>					
Planned giving:					
Gift Aided	24,804.00			24,804.00	21,037.72
Income tax recoverable on Gift Aid Not Gift Aided	6,321.52	800.00		7,121.52	5,517.60
	3,739.26			3,739.26	1,452.34
Collections (open plate) at all services	2,118.77			2,118.77	1,998.07
Gift Days/special collections	568.65			568.65	17,977.66
Income tax recovered on special collections					4,292.50
Small Donations	574.00			574.00	195.00
Transfers	(1.46)			(1.46)	
	38,124.74	800.00		38,924.74	52,470.89
<i>Other voluntary incoming resources</i>					
Donations, appeals etc.					3,087.75
Legacies and Memorials					
Refreshments and Flowers	1,306.53			1,306.53	1,691.98
Fetes, bazaars, other fund-raising events	1,892.65	1,678.06		3,570.71	3,171.74
Grants	3,542.00	1,050.00		4,592.00	9,107.80
	6,741.18	2,728.06		9,469.24	17,059.27
<i>Income from charitable and ancillary trading</i>					
Fees - Weddings/Funerals	1,506.00			1,506.00	1,886.00
Church letting					
Church hall letting					
Chapel letting	100.00			100.00	
Other trading					
Other lettings					
Other Fees					
	1,606.00			1,606.00	1,886.00
<i>Other ordinary incoming resources</i>					
Insurance claims					
Sundry refunds					
loan					
s					
<i>Income from investments</i>					
Dividends					
Interest on CBF Accounts					
Interest from bank accounts	4.53	111.64		116.17	7.95
Income from sale of invested capital	4.53	111.64		116.17	7.95
	4.53	111.64		116.17	7.95
<b>TOTAL INCOMING RESOURCES</b>	<b>46,476.45</b>	<b>3,639.70</b>		<b>50,116.15</b>	<b>71,424.11</b>

**St James New  
Bradwell**

**Financial Statement**

**For the year ending 31 December 2023**

	Unrestrict ed Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Endowment Funds £	TOTAL FUNDS 2023 £	TOTAL FUNDS 2022 £
<b>RESOURCES USED</b>					
Missionary and charitable giving:					
Overseas Church Societies Mission					
Home Missions					
Relief & development agencies	400.00			400.00	836.00
Relief & development agencies	233.10			233.10	535.00
	633.10			633.10	1,371.00
<i>Activities directly related to the work of the church</i>					
Parish Share	24,000.00			24,000.00	24,000.00
Insurance	4,033.10			4,033.10	4,199.63
Repairs and Maintenance	629.50			629.50	25,274.40
Quinquennial Work	1,185.00	7,544.00		8,729.00	960.00
Utilities	9,136.05			9,136.05	2,706.57
Churchyard upkeep					
Other Church running expenses	432.00			432.00	368.00
Worship Equipment	1,172.87			1,172.87	1,107.58
Expenditure on church letting					
Expenditure on church hall letting					1,847.40
Expenditure on other trading					
Junior Church and Youth Club		479.73		479.73	42.39
Sundry Project	6,315.60			6,315.60	2,570.95
	46,904.12	8,023.73		54,927.85	63,076.92
<i>Fund-raising and publicity</i>					
Costs of fetes, bazaars, other fund raising events	79.00			79.00	
Transfers	(11.46)			(11.46)	
	67.54			67.54	
<i>Church management and administration</i>					
Administration:					
Printing and stationery	122.77			122.77	124.00
Subscriptions					
Bank charges					
Loan interest/repayment					
	122.77			122.77	124.00
<b>TOTAL RESOURCES USED</b>	<b>47,727.53</b>	<b>8,023.73</b>		<b>55,751.26</b>	<b>64,571.92</b>

**St James New  
Bradwell**

**STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES  
For the year ending 31 December 2023**

Notes	Unrestrict ed Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Endowment Funds £	TOTAL FUNDS 2023 £	TOTAL FUNDS 2022 £
<b>INCOMING RESOURCES</b>					
Incoming Resources from Donors	38,124.74	800.00		38,924.74	52,470.89
Other voluntary incoming resources	6,741.18	2,728.06		9,469.24	17,059.27
Income from charitable and ancillary trading	1,606.00			1,606.00	1,886.00
Other ordinary incoming resources					
Income from investments	4.53	111.64		116.17	7.95
Loans					
<b>TOTAL INCOMING RESOURCES</b>	<b>46,476.45</b>	<b>3,639.70</b>		<b>50,116.15</b>	<b>71,424.11</b>
<b>RESOURCES USED</b>					
Grants	633.10			633.10	1,371.00
Activities directly relating to the work of the church	46,904.12	8,023.73		54,927.85	63,076.92
Fund-raising and publicity	67.54			67.54	
Church management and administration	122.77			122.77	124.00
<b>TOTAL RESOURCES USED</b>	<b>47,727.53</b>	<b>8,023.73</b>		<b>55,751.26</b>	<b>64,571.92</b>
<b>NET INCOMING (OUTGOING) RESOURCES</b>	<b>(1,251.08)</b>	<b>(4,384.03)</b>		<b>(5,635.11)</b>	<b>6,852.19</b>
<b>GAINS AND LOSSES ON INVESTMENTS</b>					
- realised					
- unrealised					
<b>NET MOVEMENT IN FUNDS</b>	<b>(1,251.08)</b>	<b>(4,384.03)</b>		<b>(5,635.11)</b>	<b>6,852.19</b>
<b>BALANCE BROUGHT FORWARD AT 1 JANUARY 2023</b>	<b>6,613.40</b>	<b>16,180.21</b>			<b>22,793.61</b>
Fund Transfer	(66.65)	66.65			
<b>BALANCE CARRIED FORWARD AT 31 DECEMBER 2023</b>	<b>5,295.67</b>	<b>11,862.83</b>		<b>17,158.50</b>	

**St James New  
Bradwell**

**BALANCE SHEET AT 31 DECEMBER 2022**

	Notes	2023 £	2022 £
<b>FIXED ASSETS</b>			
Tangible fixed assets			
Investment assets			
<b>CURRENT ASSETS</b>			
Stock			
Debtors			
Short term deposits - eg CBF Deposit Fund		11,862.83	16,180.21
Cash at bank and in hand	inc p/cash	5,295.67	6,613.40
CAF Deposit A/c closed			
		<u>17,158.50</u>	<u>22,793.61</u>
<b>LIABILITIES</b>			
Creditors			
			<u>                    </u>
<b>NET CURRENT ASSETS</b>		<b>17,158.50</b>	<b>22,793.61</b>
		<u>                    </u>	<u>                    </u>
<b>FUNDS</b>			
Unrestricted			6,613.40
Restricted			16,180.21
Endowment			
			<u>                    </u>
			<b>22,793.61</b>
		<u>                    </u>	<u>                    </u>
<b>Balances on Individual Funds</b>			
General Fund	Unrestricted	5,295.67	6,613.40
Junior Church	Restricted	1,369.96	733.44
Fabric	Restricted	8,989.97	10,518.12
St Peters	Restricted	896.56	896.56
Project	Restricted		3,723.75
IT Fund	Restricted	308.34	308.34
Musi	Restricted	298.00	
			<u>                    </u>
		<b>17,158.50</b>	<b>22,793.61</b>
		<u>                    </u>	<u>                    </u>

Approved by the Church Council on

and signed on its behalf by:

(The  
Chairman)  
Date  
:

(Member)  
Date:

## **Safeguarding Report February 2024**

***St James' Church is committed to safeguarding as an integral part of its life and ministry. Safeguarding is about the action the Church takes to promote a safer culture. This means we will:***

- ***promote the welfare of children, young people and adults***
- ***work to prevent abuse from occurring***
- ***seek to protect and respond well to those that have been abused.***

I have continued as Safeguarding Officer since last writing in the Spring of 2023. In this role I have continued to oversee those people in the church who have needed to have DBS checks verified. I have kept in contact with other Safeguarding Leads in the SEP and attended regular safeguarding update meetings led by David Jones. These have been useful in keeping up to date with the Methodist Safeguarding Policy which all churches in the SEP follow.

In September 2023 Helen kindly invited me to raise the profile of safeguarding with the congregation and I spent a few minutes explaining a little about what safeguarding looks like in our church. I briefly talked about my role as safeguarding officer. This was during a Morning Worship service.

As part of my role, I edited the job description of the Stewards for the Sunday services. With services being live streamed at St James, it was felt that Stewards should understand that those who did not wish to be on camera should be directed to "Safe Spaces" in the Church. Also, a reminder to those attending services that the use of personal video recording or photography is not allowed.

In November I helped to provide guidelines on how to support anyone who might find themselves in the difficult position of being asked for money or some kind of financial support by a visitor to the premises. This was borne out of an incident that had recently taken place at a social event.

I have applied for renewal of the Advanced Safeguarding Training that I did pre-pandemic and am waiting on the details to begin the course.

Gill Wood

February 2024.

St James' Church New Bradwell

### **Guidance on dealing with individuals who arrive unexpectedly at our church asking for financial help.**

We recognise that our Church is considered by some as a place of sanctuary where they may demand or expect help. We are mindful of Christ's teaching that we should love our neighbours as ourselves and we strive to be an inclusive church where all are welcome. We support the work of the Food Bank and we regularly make charitable donations to support those who are less fortunate than ourselves. Unfortunately, isolated incidences have prompted leaders of our church to consider what would be deemed safe practice in dealing with some individuals.

**No member of the Church should be in the building on their own when the Church is open to the public.**



On being approached by an individual for money/food:

- Move to an area of the Church building where you can be seen.
- Immediately involve another person to support you when talking to the visitor.
- Emphasis that there is no cash kept on the Church premises.
- Under no circumstances hand over your credit/debit card
- Be mindful that some individuals can be persuasive and take advantage of your goodwill.
- Do not share your personal contact details.
- Do not permit anyone to use your personal mobile phone.
- If practical, offer refreshment to the person but be firm in your explaining that you are not able to provide them with money.

In the event of you taking the personal decision to accompany them to provide financial help (eg buy them a train ticket), it is imperative that you do not travel with them on your own. Ask a member of the Church to accompany you. Do not get in their car or their friend's car.

**We all have the right to feel and to be safe in our Church Building. Should the person start to become aggressive or abusive, you must call the police. No one should feel threatened.**



## **Environment Report 2024**

### **MK Eco Church Network**

Since writing my last report the Milton Keynes Eco Church Network has been set up. At the first meeting in June, which Irene and I attended, I was interviewed about the process of getting an Eco Church Bronze Award after which we broke into groups based on the Eco Church headings: Worship and Teaching, Buildings, Land, Community and Global Engagement, Lifestyle.

We shared the experiences and discussed the challenges of being Eco friendly and thought of ways of moving forward. The group has since met on Zoom to continue discussion and St James is to host the next meeting on Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> April, 10.30-13.00. Everyone is welcome to attend.

### **Green Champions Group**

The SEP Green Champions group, with representatives from St James, Bradwell Church, Willen and Christ Church, have met a few times but mainly communicate by e-mail. Our last meeting in October was to plan the SEP wide Eco Church meeting which took place in November at St James. Attendance was not huge but there were representatives from each of the churches in the parish. We gave a Power Point presentation which explained how Eco Church works then had group discussions about what our churches do already, what challenges we face and what more we could do. There was also a display of eco - friendly products that some of us use and another one about recycling.

Recently some members of the group attended the Christian Aid Lent Vigil in London. The 'No Faith in Fossil Fuels: Lent Vigil for Climate Justice' was a collaboration of Arocha UK, Cafod, Christian Climate Action, Green Christian, JPIT, Operation Noah, the Salvation Army, Student Christian Movement Tearfund and more.

In the last year we have been choosing a monthly Eco tip to put in the SEP newsletter which we hope are useful.

### **St James**

Although we achieved an Eco Church Bronze Award it is important that we continue to think of ways in which we can continue to be an eco church, and also a Fair Trade church. I know many of us are supportive and make efforts to do our bit to safeguard the environment but maybe we can all think of 'just one thing' extra we could do.

One thing that is encouraged by the Eco Church is to consider buying L.O.A.F. products (Local, organic, animal friendly, Fair Trade) whenever possible.

We aim to keep the churchyard tidy but also to leave areas so as to encourage wild life and wild flowers. Some areas are left un - mown for this reason. Thank you to the stalwart few who maintain it: I'm sure extra help would be welcome!

As I write this St James is in the process of installing a swift box in the bell tower. This is being installed by representatives from the New Bradwell Swifts group. Swifts are in serious decline and need help so if you would like a swift box on your house you can contact them. They make and provide the box and there is a fixing fee of about £25.

Thank you to Mary and Mike who deal with our recycling and to Irene who is particularly supportive of our efforts to be an Eco church.

## Report for St James AGM 17 March 2024 – Links with the Milton Keynes Methodist Circuit

St James and other churches within Stantonbury Ecumenical Partnership (SEP) continue to have strong links with the Milton Keynes Methodist Circuit. Attending Circuit meetings as the SEP's representative supports our links, keeps us informed about the work of the Circuit and provides an opportunity to share news & views from the SEP and St James.

There has been a period of change for the Circuit and the SEP. In July 2023, at a lovely service at St James, we said farewell and special thanks to Revd Nicola Martyn-Beck as she retired. Then in September we welcomed Revd Dave Haseldine to the Circuit and to Christ Church as their temporary part-time Minister. Revd Edson Dube has now taken on the Circuit Superintendent role from Nicola. There has also been a number of other changes in the Circuit Leadership Team. The Circuit Administrator Ann Harris does a great job at keeping the Circuit website up to date and the changes can be found there (<http://mkmethodist.org.uk/>).

Ann Harris has also been publishing Newsletters (available on the web-site) this year which give a good feel for the breadth of activity within the Circuit and wider District. Here's a few things that have been going on:

- Café worship, Coffee shops, Hosting of community events, Toddlers groups, Warm Spaces & lots more!
- In March 2023 the Vice President of the Methodist Church in Britain Mr Anthony Boateng visited the Milton Keynes Circuit. Anthony preached an uplifting message on a theme of 'Revival'. He commended the presence of the Methodist Church Zimbabwe and Ghanaian Fellowships in the Circuit as a positive start in reviving churches.
- During Lent 2023, Deanshanger Methodist Church invited four speakers to talk about activities they are involved in which show 'Love in Action'. The aim was to show how Christians have put their faith into action. The talks were on Fair Trade, the work of the MK Christian Foundation, the MK Money Lifeline charity & the work of a prison chaplain.
- In July 2023 Freeman Memorial Methodist Church held a well-attended Zimbabwe Day planned by the Milton Keynes Branch of the Methodist Church Zimbabwe Fellowship. This was to show case the Zimbabwe culture, food, music and to embrace diversity in its membership.
- Stuart Keen from Christ the Cornerstone has been appointed as Circuit Eco-Church Champion and will be helping the Circuit take forward recommendations from a Northamptonshire Methodist District Eco-Summit. Queensway Methodist Church achieved the Bronze Eco-Church award in 2023. They have been using their outdoor space for growing produce – for use in the community café and for local people. Children from the local school have been helping out.

Peter Galsworthy February 2024

# **Stantonbury Parish Report 2023**

**Six thriving churches, making Christ known in our area of Milton Keynes**

**St James. New Bradwell, St Mary Magdalen Willen, St Lawrences Bradwell. St Andrews Linford, Christ Church Stantonbury, Cross and Stable Downs Barn**

## **Church meetings**

- January at St James discussed Citizens MK

We tried to support Citizens MK with their Campaign to find out how hard it is to get retro fitting in private rented accommodation. It was difficult to get anyone to give a testimonial for this as none of the group that met were in this position. Mary K went to a few meetings but did not get any support from the rest of the parish and the Citizens MK lead left so this faded away.

- Eco Church November this was an informative meeting held at St James

## **Church services**

Tree Cathedral Service May cancelled due to bad weather.

## **Plans for our potential new ministers were started.**

Within the parish we have one full time Anglican minister Rev Dr Paul Smith

One full time Baptist minister-post vacant

One house for duty Anglican minister Rev Chuks Iwaugwu

One non-Stipendiary Anglican Minister Rev Dr Sam Muthuvelo

One quarter of a Methodist minister Rev Nicola Martyn Beck

We lost a part time Anglican post when Rev Neil Popham's term ended.

Our hopes were that by 2025 we would have 1 full time Anglican, 1 full time Baptist, 1 or 2 house for duty Anglican, 1 non stipendiary Anglican and point 2 of a Methodist Minister. These posts are all supported by many Lay and retired ministers throughout the Parish, who all work quietly and diligently on behalf of us all.

During the year Nicola left the Parish to retire, and she is a great loss to us, but we wish her well in the next phase of her life.

It was agreed that we would advertise for the Anglican post in 2023 as the diocese had allowed us to employ a full-time minister alongside Paul who is due to retire this year 2024. We would then advertise for the Baptist post in 2024. As you will have realised, we were not successful in attracting any applicants in 2023. We are due to advertise again for both posts and hope that both posts will be filled this year 2024.

In September We welcomed Rev Dave Haseldine as our new Methodist minister; he has agreed to support Christchurch until they get a minister and then he will be able to spend more of his time around the rest of the parish.

## SEC AGM 20/04/23

At the AGM the transition from the interim governance to the new governance and management structures were put in place. To fulfil the Operating Procedures of our new Charity we must hold the following:

- Four whole church meetings (i.e. Partnership) each year including the AGM
- Stantonbury Ecumenical Council becomes the Partnership Council with reps. from each congregation.
- Each congregation will have a congregational leadership team replacing the church council.
- Each congregation should have two church wardens or officers.
- A group of trustees will oversee the operation of the partnership and its governance. There should be six elected trustees, hopefully with representation from each church.

On this last note once Paul retires in September, St James will not have representation on the board of Trustees and there is still a vacancy now so I ask you to consider seriously whether you could offer your services for this very important role. Please let me or Paul know, and we can find out what the requirements for the role are and what the responsibilities involve.

Every year we ask for two volunteers to be our reps on the SEC, I am happy to be one of them, but I know that Helen would like someone to take on her post. Helen will still be able to attend the meetings ex-officio as a lay minister. It's a good way to find out exactly how our partnership works.

## Finance

We pay our Parish Share to the SEP as do all the other churches and Adrian Prisk the treasurer valiantly looks after our parish finances, as with each individual church raising enough money is always a struggle. We have had a bit of a buffer as we have not had to pay for a Baptist Minister since David retired. However, once we have appointed a new minister, things will get tight again. If you want to know more about the wider parish finances, then get in touch with me and I can send Adrian's report to you. Or please come along to the Parish AGM 25<sup>th</sup> April where he will explain things more clearly than I can. [www.stantonbury.net](http://www.stantonbury.net)

Mary Kennedy

St Lawrence



St Andrews



Christ Church



St James



Cross and Stable



St Mary Magdalene

