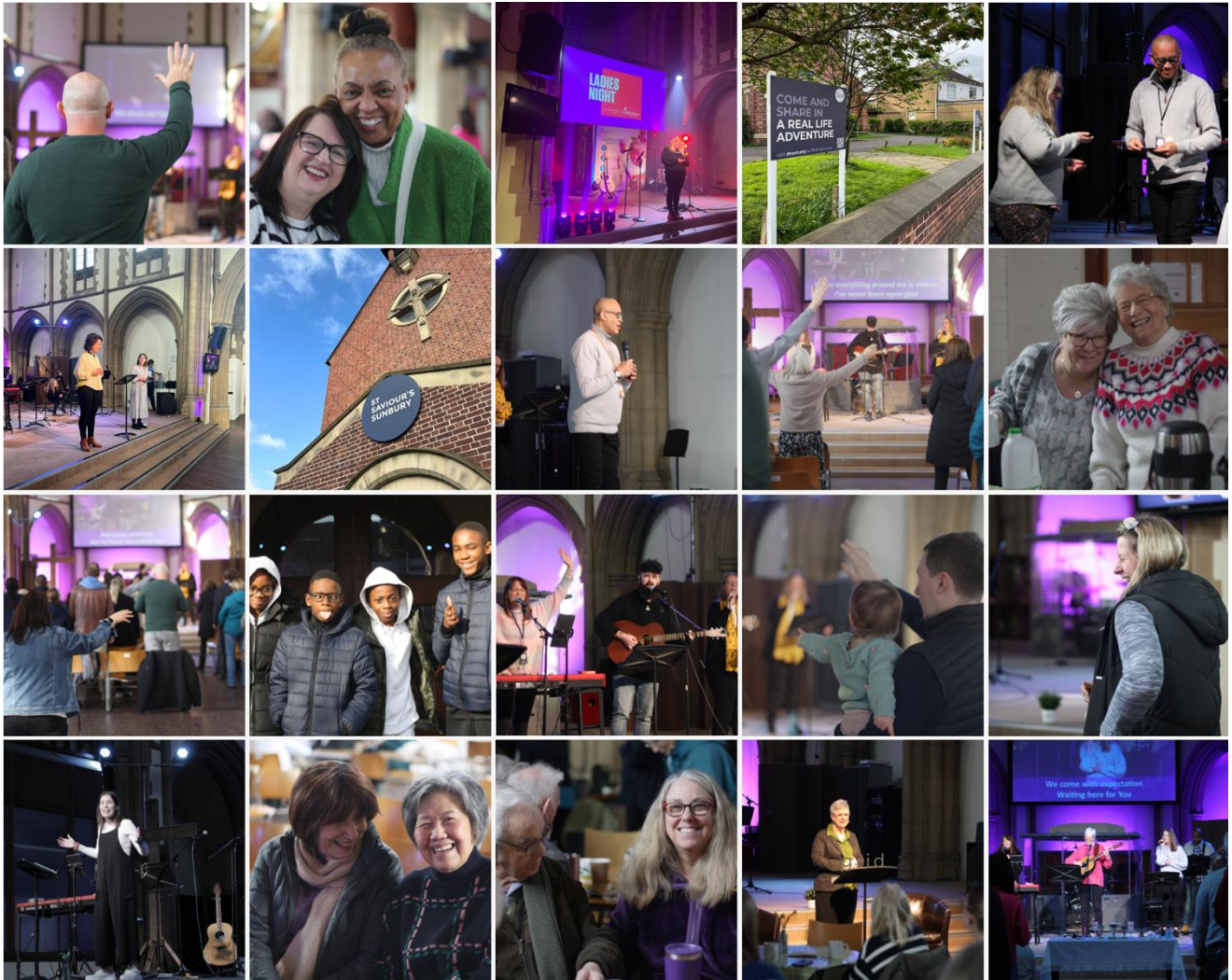




ST SAVIOUR'S SUNBURY

Annual Report 2024



The Parish of St Saviour's, Upper Sunbury Diocese of London, Kensington Area

Annual Parochial Church Meeting
Sunday 12 May 2024

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ST SAVIOUR'S SUNBURY

**Diocese of London, Kensington Area
The Parish of St Saviour's, Upper Sunbury**

Annual Meeting of Parishioners

The Annual Meeting of Parishioners will take place at St Saviour's Sunbury at 11.30am on Sunday 12th May 2024.

Agenda

1. Prayer and Minutes of last meeting
2. Appointment of **two** Church Wardens
3. Date of next meeting: 30 March 2025

Those entitled to attend, and vote are all adults resident in the parish **and** all members of the electoral roll.



Annual Meeting Parishioners (AMP) Minutes 2023

Minutes of the Annual Parochial Church Meeting held at St Saviour's Sunbury Sunday 14 May 2023

Around 40 people were in attendance.
Apologies were received from Norman Head

The meeting was chaired by Rev Allen Bower.

1. Election of Churchwardens

Geraint Owen and Guy Trevithick had stood for the roles of churchwardens. As there were no other nominations all were in favour that they should be appointed.

Anyone not on the Electoral Roll was then asked to leave as only people on the Electoral Roll can vote at the Annual Meeting.

The date for the next meeting was set as 12 May 2024.



**Diocese of London, Kensington Area
The Parish of St Saviour's, Upper Sunbury**

Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM)

The Annual Parochial Church Meeting will take place at St Saviour's Sunbury directly following the AMP on Sunday 12 May 2024.

Agenda

1. Minutes of the previous meeting (The Revd Allen Bower)
2. Changes in the Electoral Roll (Gillian Harrap)
3. Annual Financial Report (Agnel Rajiv)
 - Independent Examiner's report for the year ending Dec 2023.
 - Appointment of Independent Examiner for period to 31 December 2024.
4. Safeguarding Review (Lisa Cook & Jess Bray)
5. Election of lay representatives to the PCC and Deanery Synod (The Revd Allen Bower)
6. Wardens' report (Geraint Owen & Guy Trevithick)
7. Vicar's Report (The Revd Allen Bower)
8. Date of Next APCM – 30 March 2025
9. Closing Prayer

Date of next business PCC meeting: 13 May 2024 7.25pm.

Those entitled to attend and vote: Members of the electoral roll.



Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM) Minutes 2023

Minutes of the Annual Parochial Church Meeting held at St Saviour's Sunbury Sunday 14 May 2023

1. Minutes of Meeting held on 8 May 2022

These were agreed to be an accurate reflection of the meeting. It was proposed by John Welch, seconded by Jess Bray that the minutes be adopted – all in favour.

2. Electoral Roll

Gillian Harrap (Electoral Roll Officer) reported the following:

- Five people were removed from the roll as they had moved out of the area.
- Two people had asked to be removed.
- Three new names had been added.
- There are currently 224 names on the Electoral Roll
- Two names are waiting to be added.

3. Financial Report

Rev Bower thanked Barbie Ryder-Matthews and Guy Trevithick for all their hard work and said that the church's finances are in a good place.

Gillian Harrap proposed that the Financial Report be approved; seconded by Val Mitchell, all in favour.

Barbie Ryder-Matthews had proposed that the current independent examiner, Figtree Accountancy be re-appointed; seconded by Jess Bray, all in favour.

4. Election of PCC Members

Rev Bower thanked Simon Greatwood, Vin Bamford, Keith Wilsher and Brad Loader for all their hard work on the PCC as they have now stepped down.

Norman Head, Stephen Pal-George and Christine Rogers were re-standing for the Deanery Synod Daniel Kemp, Agnel Rajiv and Barbie Ryder-Matthews had indicated their willingness to stand for PCC.

Proposed by Sarah Higgs, seconded by Colin Agar – all in favour of these appointments.

The following people's term on PCC continued:

Rani Banga, Jess Bray, Lisa Cook, Gillian Harrap, Lynnette Peckett, Doug Potkin, Hannah Welch

5. Wardens' Report

Guy Trevithick said there were so much to be thankful for even though there continue to be challenges and uncertainties as the church moves forward. The numbers do not always add up, yet things are happening, lives are being changed and there is growth. Jesus needs to continue to be kept at the front and centre of all that is done at St Saviour's; then there will be more testimonies of what God is doing in the life of St Saviour's.

6. Vicar's Report

Rev Allen thanked everyone who had stepped up and taken on doing various jobs within the church, especially whilst he was on compassionate leave. It is good to know that the church can continue to run without all the reliance being on the vicar. However, there are gaps in church life where it is difficult to find people to resource certain areas.

We need to constantly be listening to God to see where He wants the church to move forward and somethings that are tried will work, others may not but God does not stand still, so nor should we.

Everyone in the church has a part to play, being part of a team where there is good governance and accountability.

7. Any Other Business/Questions

Do we want to continue pre-recording Sunday services?

The computer is left on to download as a connection is needed and this takes several hours.

Could we start having the Bible readings in person during a service rather than pre-recorded?

People can be asked if they would like to pre-record their reading or read live during the service.

Is there going to be a prayer team at the end of services?

Looking into restarting a prayer team for next term

It is sad not seeing the children in church before they go out to their groups on a Sunday morning.

This is a difficult balancing act. The children are in church during half-term and the holidays seasons and there could be safeguarding issues. All Age services are being built into the life of St Saviour's.

Could we start celebrating birthdays in church again?

Could we have photographs of staff/PCC/ministry leads as the board is still on the wall.

Is there anyone who could be at the front of services doing sign language?

Lynnette Peckett, Disability Champion, will look into this.

8. 2024 APCM

This will be held on 12 May 2024

9. Closing of Meeting

Rev Allen closed the meeting in prayer.

Report of the Parochial Church Council to the APCM 2024

1. PCC REPORT

Since the APCM last year the PCC has met 6 times, all meetings were quorate, and minutes taken.

2. PCC ADMINISTRATION

Members of the Parochial Church Council from May 2023 - May 2024

VICAR	The Revd Allen Bower (Ex-officio)
WARDENS	Mr. Guy Trevithick Mr Geraint Owen
DEPUTY WARDENS	Mrs Jessica Bray Mrs Barbie Ryder-Matthews
DEANERY SYNOD REPS	Mr Norman Head (Ex-officio) Mr Stephen Pal-George Ms. Christine Rogers
ELECTED MEMBERS OF THE PCC	Mrs Barbie Ryder-Matthews (Deputy Warden) Mrs Jessica Bray (Deputy Warden) Miss Hannah Welch Mrs Rani Banga Mrs Lynnette Peckett Ms. Gillian Harrap Mrs Lisa Cook Mr. Doug Potkin Mr. Daniel Kemp
PCC SECRETARY	Mrs Jenny Welch (Non-Voting)
TREASURER	Mr. Agnel Rajiv
ELECTORAL ROLL OFFICER	Ms. Gillian Harrap
SAFEGUARDING OFFICER	Mrs Lisa Cook

3. STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS

Once again, I am indebted to the work of our Finance team Barbie Ryder-Matthews and Agnel Rajiv, for their faithful and wise guidance throughout the year. Thank you to all who partner with us in seeing lives transformed through your giving. Everything we do is due to your incredible generosity. One way you can make a real difference is to give regularly by standing order and help us to claim gift aid. You will find the full financial report on a separate document, and if you have any questions, please feel free to contact the Treasurer.

Yours sincerely, Revd Allen Bower.

The Parochial Church Council of the Ecclesiastical Parish of St Saviour's Church, Upper Sunbury, TW16 7TP Report and Financial Statements 2023

Financial Review

The PCC's main source of funding is the "free will" offerings of church members.

Financial Position

Unrestricted funds

The financial position for the year has been challenging with donations being reduced due to members of the congregation struggling financially.

In overall terms at 31 Dec 2023 unrestricted funds stand at:	•	£117,887	2022	£114,731
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Historically unrestricted funds of £244,635 was designated by the PCC to enable the purchase of the property at Wolsey Road for curate use. The property was sold in 2017 for £419,736 and after costs, £400k was designated towards the building fund project.

Restricted funds

The details of all the restricted funds received are set out in detail in note 10 to the accounts. A separate restricted fund manages the financial aspects of the Building Community project and this is reported in a separate column headed "BCF" and forms part of these financial statements.

At 31 December 2023 Building project restricted funds:	10a	£98,670
At 31 December 2023 Asset Sales:	10b	£0
At 31 December 2023 General restricted funds:	10c	£65,512
At 31 December 2023 Fuel Fund project restricted funds:	10d	£1,676
At 31 December 2022 Building project restricted funds:	10a	£149,982
At 31 December 2022 Asset Sales were:	10b	£0
At 31 December 2022 General restricted funds:	10c	£55,873
At 31 December 2022 Fuel Fund project restricted funds:	10d	£19,652

Reserves Policy

The PCC's aim is to have an unrestricted reserve level that is neither deficient or excessive, and seeks to strike a balance between two competing needs: on the one hand to have sufficient funds available to meet unexpected costs and/or loss of income, and on the other hand, to optimise its use of available funds to make the church's vision a reality in the local community. The Reserves Policy set in 2006 was revisited in 2013 and agreed that unrestricted funds should be available to meet any contingencies that may arise up to an amount of £25,000. The current unrestricted funds are in line with this level and are considered appropriate.

The PCC regularly review the position in light of their existing and anticipated commitments.

Risk Management 2023

All Health and Safety requirements have been up-dated including any necessary Risk Assessments.

Quinquennial

Our quinquennial inspection took place in May 2023. The porta cabin, which has reached its life expectancy, will be dealt with as part of the build project. The asbestos roof requiring replacing will be removed as part of the build project.

Auditors/Independent Examiner

The accounts for the year ended 31 December 2023 fall beneath the audit threshold and are therefore subject to review by an independent examiner.

Approval

The report of the PCC for 2023 accounts was approved by the PCC on the Date to be entered after PCC approval

The Parochial Church Council of the Ecclesiastical Parish of St Saviour's Church, Upper Sunbury, TW16 7TP
Report and Financial Statements 2023

Independent Examiner's Report to the PCC of St Saviour's Church, Sunbury Upon Thames

I report on the accounts of the Ecclesiastical Parish of St Saviour's for the year ended 31 December 2023, which are set out on pages 11 to 16.

Respective responsibilities for the PCC and the examiner

The PCC is responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The PCC considers that an audit is not required for this year under section 144(2) of the Charities Act 2011 (the 2011 Act) but that an independent examination is needed. The charity's gross income exceeds £250,000 and I am qualified to undertake the examination by being a qualified member of the Chartered Institute of Management Accountants and Chartered Global Management Accountant. It is my responsibility to:

- 1 examine the accounts under section 145 of the 2012 act;
- 2 to follow the procedures laid down in the general Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act; and
- 3 to state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of independent examiner's report

My examination was carried out in accordance with the general directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from you as trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a "true and fair view" and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently I do not express an audit opinion on the view given by the accounts.

Independent examiner's statement

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

- (1) Which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements

to keep accounting records in accordance with section 41 of the Act; and

to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the requirements of the Act and the Regulations have not been met; or

- (2) To which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Signed: _____



Date: 24/04/2024 _____

Costas Loizou ACMA CGMA
Figtree Accountancy Limited
25 Claremont Avenue
Sunbury-On-Thames
Middlesex
TW16 5LX

4. CHURCH WARDENS' REPORT

In 2023 we continued to work to ensure all the activities undertaken by all those at St Saviour's were characterised by good practice & good governance.

As always for the purpose of this report there are too many people to acknowledge and thank by name. The selfless, hard work of all the staff & volunteers remains the bedrock of the church. To each and every person who have given their prayers, time, expertise, energy & who contribute financially to the church we extend our profound thanks.

In no particular order as wardens, we note the particular importance of certain practices to the health of St Saviour's. Our safeguarding dashboard measures are all UpToDate & green. This means for example that all safeguarding training for every person requiring it is UpToDate. Safeguarding was also discussed & reviewed at every PCC & Standing Committee meeting in 2023. It informs how we approach all our activities including recruitment. Likewise, the diligence & transparency with which all the financial transactions & accounts of St Saviour's are recorded & reported every month continues to ensure that the financial position of the church is fully understood & reviewed.

A critical part of ensuring that key processes & decisions are implemented and reviewed, transparently is that we have a fully functioning Staff team, PCC & Standing Committee. Each of these groups were at full complement & met regularly as planned throughout 2023.

The work of other teams such as the Building Committee has also ensured that the ongoing work of maintaining the existing buildings & providing for future needs has been diligently done. i.e. the refurbished kitchen and the completion of The Light House in 2023 & the work underway to provide adequate toilet facilities & an additional meeting space.

The "Matthew 18" prayer groups have also been a significant initiative. Open to anyone from the church with each member of the PCC participating, these are weekly prayer meetings that are an important contribution to the spiritual health of the church.

We would also like to welcome Sophie back from her maternity leave.

Many uncertainties remain of course, and we can improve in many areas. Equally we enter 2024 with the foundations in place to see the work of St Saviour's continuing to thrive.

Geraint Owen
Guy Trevithick

5. OASIS REPORT

Our Oasis community continues to meet every Wednesday for a more formal service with Holy Communion followed by a time of fellowship. The congregation has seen a number of new people join them plus the return of some familiar faces.

We have been blessed to have a few local clergy join us to preside over communion when our clergy were unavailable. During August we had a more informal time of meeting with a Thought for the Day and a time of prayer and fellowship. The year ended with a Carol concert.

6. KIDS' MINISTRY

Our Sunday groups continue to grow in strength and numbers Sparks (3 years to Year 2) average regular number 8 per week and Blaze (Year 3 – Year 6) average regulars' number 15.

On Thursday's in term time we run a Stay and Play together with the Haven. This is a very successful group for our local community, and we have seen many weeks with up to 20 little ones plus parents/carers.

Our Junior kick group has been put on pause for the moment as we were not able to get the numbers needed. However, this year we will be doing termly socials to allow our kids to still meet on days other than Sundays.

Easter Holidays 2023 and February 2024 Half term, we hosted Kick camp for our kids. This was again another successful venture with 18 kids attending for the day. We look forward to hosting more holiday camps in the future.

In October our Light Party saw both a large group of church and nonchurch families attend. We look forward to continuing the success of evenings like this in the future.

Christmas Eve the youth and kids did a Nativity service for the church. It was great to have so many of the church family involved in this event. With this in mind, we will be allowing more opportunities for the children to be involved in the main church services.

At the end of last term, we ran transition sessions for the kids moving up to youth and on the last day we had a celebration service, where we were able to pray and present the Year 6 kids to Youth. Also, the Year 2 kids in Sparks who have moved up to Blaze.

Our team has grown with some new members, as well as others moving onto other things. More team is always a vital to allow us to continue to grow the kid's ministry and allow more age-appropriate groupings for the kids.

7. YOUTH MINISTRY

During 2023/24, we have continued to bring sessions to young people both at St Saviour's and at Bishop Wand School, with regular contact with St Paul's School. Weekly Younger Youth sessions on Sunday mornings and Friday Youth Kick Academy runs with games and activities, both in term time. Older Youth has started back with the Youth Alpha series including food and great discussions.

At The 4 service we have continued to see young people involved in these services by preaching, hosting, leading the game, doing the reading, lead worship and being involved in the band, visuals and welcome.

It has been a busy year in our youth work. We had pizza and pancake socials and a trip to White Spider climbing wall.

Sonia is part of the Kensington Growing younger team where they ran a training morning in October 2023 for children's and youth workers, Sonia ran a seminar and was on the panel. In November as part of the Bishop's schools mission week, we provided a prayer space at Bishop Wand School and hosted the Kensington Area Youth Event, where a number of local churches attended for games and worship. Sonia gave a talk on 'Who you're made to be' from Psalm 139:14.

In December there was a youth Christmas party and young people were involved in narrating our nativity service. During February half term, we were able to partner with Kick again to provide one multi sports day camp for kids and another for youth, which was great fun for all involved. This is the second time we have provided these days, and they were a great success. In March we had another worship night where we partnered with Kick again and Samuel (Kick coach) brought a message on intimacy with God from 2 Corinthians 3:18.

We have a wonderful youth team and the numbers of young people attending our youth activities are growing. It is great to see young people share their gifts and grow in confidence. It is so good that we can provide different sessions to facilitate the young people's different needs. To provide a safe, supportive space and sharing Jesus' love and light is such a privilege.

8. PRAYER

Prayer continues to underpin everything that we do at St Saviour's. We have a number of prayer meetings throughout the week including Tuesday morning Dynamic prayer, Tuesday morning staff prayer and Wednesday Men's breakfast/prayer. This year we introduced our Matthew 18 prayer groups which meet throughout the week, via zoom, to pray for the church. Our monthly prayer meeting is now meeting in church in person.

We had two Saturday Mornings of Prayer in church at the start of each new term to pray for the term ahead.

We are thankful to Guy Trevithick, John Welch, Julia Jaeger and Christine Rogers for leading these prayer meetings.

9. WORSHIP

This year has been a year of challenge but also a product of wonderful Spiritual growth witnessed in the team. Yvette Kemp joined us bringing her beautiful harmonies, but we are still praying for God to increase our numbers of skilled people.

We continue to support The 10, The 4 and The 6 services on a Sunday, as well as our Oasis service on a Wednesday and The Haven on a Thursday. We have also begun to support the monthly prayer meetings, as well as the staff team meetings on a Tuesday morning.

Christmas and Easter were successfully delivered again, and we hosted the Compassion Ladies event, supporting them with production for Phillipa Hanna. We also put on our own fundraising musical event featuring Spelthorne Orchestra, raising over £500.

We have been extremely active with the youth worship team, playing host to a Kensington Area worship evening and a Deanery worship evening. We have grown in numbers of youth being involved in worship and continue to mentor their development.

We upgraded our stage lighting system by installing LED spots to reduce running costs of bulbs and purchased a new Djembe drum from money donated to the ministry. We have a great team of volunteers on production and although face challenges at times, I organised some advanced sound training with Olie to help assist them in upskilling.

10. COMMUNITY MINISTRY

Over the last 12 months, we have seen the number of new clients increasing both on a Monday and Thursday, particularly for The Haven lunches on a Thursday.

The Haven was nominated for a number of awards including The Rotary Club and Voluntary in Action.

We were privileged to be able to support and organise a wedding blessing for one of our clients, who had been diagnosed with a terminal illness.

During the summer holidays we organised and funded 4 coaches to take local families to the beach for a fun day out.

We were blessed to receive an amazing amount of Harvest Festival food from local businesses, schools and local residents.

It was a real pleasure to be part of the Kenyngton Manor Lantern Parade, where we provided hotdogs and drinks for the event free of charge. The event was a huge success and as well as building relationships with other charities and organisations, the foodbank received some financial donations.

Christmas

We were able to host a Christmas Community Party when 100 children and their families attended. Kempton Jockey Club provided a party lunch free of charge, and we were able to fund a children's entertainer as well as a puppet show from Peckett's Puppets. We had our Christmas gifting day, when 200 children were catered for. Our volunteers did the Rotary walk with Santa around our local neighbourhood and raised money for The Haven.

Easter Celebrations

On Maundy Thursday we organised crafts for under 5s and were able to bless them with free Easter Eggs. Kempton Jockey Club provided a delicious lunch.

Partners

We have been able to partner with the following organisations to offer support to our local families, including:

- Beauty Bank
- Spelthorne Hygiene Bank
- MIND – who provide sessions hosted in the church.
- Foodbank Network with other local foodbanks. The partnership was created to stop duplicated foodbank support and to enable additional funding.

11. WOMEN'S MINISTRY

During 2023 we held 5 varied events including 3 evenings and 2 Saturday breakfasts. During our March breakfast event we heard from Yvette Kemp, who shared a testimony around rest, and in October Elspeth Saville, from All Saints Church in Laleham, spoke on 'the antidote to anxiety'. Both were well attended, and we enjoyed a continental breakfast together.

Our evenings included a 'great re-gifting,' and a talk on the impact of plastic rubbish in low-income countries by Joanne Green from Tearfund; hearing from Frances Novillo the Lead Police Chaplain for Surrey and Sussex; and a summer picnic at the church. Due to very low numbers at evening events throughout the year, going forward we'll be focusing on 3 breakfast events a year. We hope to see you there!

12. OPERATIONS

We have continued to have 4-5 services a week at The O, The Haven, The 10, The 4 and The 6. It has been a real joy to welcome many new people to these services. We have been blessed to have a wide range of preachers and service leaders each week and are very grateful for their hard work and to that of the worship, production and welcome teams who make our services run so smoothly.

We have carried out 1 baby dedication, 5 baptisms, 1 wedding blessing and taken 2 funerals during the year. Plus, we held special two baptism services during December and on Easter Sunday 2024 when a further 16 people were baptised!

All of the Health & Safety checks/inspections and Risk Assessments are all up to date and were carried out on time.

The new community kitchen was opened in September 2023, and this is a huge asset to both The Haven Ministry and the church. New processes and procedures were written, and we carried out kitchen training for our volunteers. We are so thankful to have Charlotte Willoughby join the staff team as Kitchen Lead. Charlotte will be responsible for overseeing the operations of the kitchen during The Haven on Mondays and Thursdays.

The Light House building has now been fully clad, and the side area of the garden cleared of the brambles.

The ceiling lights in the church have been replaced with new LED light fitments.

We organized a number of events during the year including a summer picnic, the annual church holiday to HTB Focus and a Compassion Ladies Night. Jess Bray and Yvette Kemp started a Ladies Bible study which meets monthly, and this group has grown and flourished.

We continue to use the Diocese Safeguarding Dashboard and have achieved a 100% progress rate. All of our teams are now DBS checked and have carried out their safeguarding training.

13. PAID STAFF CHANGE

Revd Sophie Raeside returned from her maternity leave in January 2024. Charlotte Willoughby was employed as Kitchen Lead in March 2024.

14. DEANERY SYNOD REPORT

Spelthorne Deanery Synod met three times to consider current matters within the Anglican Church; meetings also provide opportunities for sharing news and enjoying fellowship with clergy and lay representatives from the eleven churches in the Spelthorne Deanery. The current three-year term began on 1st July 2023.

Clergy moves within the Deanery –Rev Carole George, rector of St Nicholas Shepperton, was appointed as Area Dean in succession to Fr Joseph Fernandes who was appointed a Prebendary of St Paul's and took up a new appointment as vicar of St Mary's Acton after serving as Area Dean of Spelthorne and incumbent of St Hilda's Ashford.

Rt Rev Dr Emma Ineson who had just taken up the appointment of Bishop of Kensington joined the February meeting. During a Q&A session she introduced herself, described some of her past experience, particularly her recent role as assistant to Archbishop Justin Welby during 2022/23 when King Charles' coronation and the late Queen's funeral took place. She spoke on the content of her book "Failure" what Jesus said about sin, mistakes and messing stuff up". She also said that Spelthorne was a valued and important area in the diocese and challenged us to examine how we can contribute to Christian mission in the Diocese of London.

Rev John Beauchamp, London Diocese Disability Ministry Enabler spoke at the June meeting and stimulated all PCCs to consider how inclusive their churches are so that all people can feel welcome and able to participate in activities bearing in mind that disabilities include not just physical and sensory disabilities but mental health issues and learning disabilities, as well as "hidden" disabilities such as epilepsy, diabetes, arthritis, autism, and various conditions which may cause chronic pain. He drew attention to the wide range of material and support available from the Diocese. The October meeting was addressed by Emma Thompson of the St Alban's Diocese who spoke passionately about the mission of "Save the Parish", which was founded in 2021 and is run by volunteers, to give a voice to parishes who felt the strategy of the leadership of the Church of England to amalgamate parishes and reduce the number of clergy in those parishes, was wrong and counterproductive. She mentioned that the parish church forms an important part of many communities even if attendance at services is low. Although the Diocese of London has priests in most parishes and finances are better than other parts of the country, there are no grounds for complacency.

Annual Finance meetings were hosted by Archdeacon Richard Frank & Rev Mary Spredbury (Diocesan Finance Officer). During the year reports were given by Nick Wood-Dow on issues discussed at the London Diocesan Synod.

15. VICARS REPORT 2023

“Forget the former things; do not dwell on the past. See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it? I am making a way in the wilderness and streams in the wasteland... to give drink to my people, my chosen, the people I formed for myself that they may proclaim my praise.”
Isaiah, Chapter 43, verses 18-21.

A few years ago, I shared the above passage for our annual review, and as I reflect on 2023, I am again reminded of these words.

It seems to me that ‘remembering’ God’s faithfulness is important to God. That being so, why does God declare “forget the former things?” Israel’s focus on the past may have brought some comfort, however, it was hindering momentum into their future. The path ahead was teeming with challenges and appeared far from exhilarating. Nonetheless, God declares to Israel, “I am doing something new - are you excited?”

It’s easy to get distracted with the numerous challenges: An aging building, shortage of team in many areas, financial restrictions - just to name a few.

And God says,

“See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it?”

As we have sought to discern where God is leading in 2023, I am filled with wonder and gratitude at His faithfulness. The video our curate Sophie has created gives just a glimpse of what God is doing at St Saviour’s. With limited resources we have encapsulated something of the Diocesan vision for the church in London: ‘Confident Disciples, Creative Growth, Compassionate Communities,’ and the values of ‘Growing Younger, Safer, and Racially Diverse.’

Confident Disciples

A competent training parish for future leaders: A Curate returning for their second year of training, An ordinand beginning training, A person discerning their call to Ordained ministry through the Caleb Stream.

Attending Focus summer festival where we saw many grow in their faith, especially young people. An emphasis on prayer through online meetings, teaching, and in-person meetings.

Creative Growth

Seeing growth in the Haven Stay & Play, Haven Knit & Natter, The Art club and other fellowship groups.

Compassionate Communities

The flourishing of the Haven as a transformation hub for fellowship, faith, wellbeing & mental health, free lunches, surplus food, foodbank, debt advice, housing advice and other local agencies. A place where the broken are welcomed, can feel safe and be restored.

Growing Younger

Seeing our youth and children thrive on Sundays, during the week, and at events such as Light Parties and Youth Worship Nights. Engaging with local schools through hosting courses, visits and

services.

Growing Safer

Building a safe culture for all, across our ministries and activities, evidenced via the diocesan dashboard.

Racially Diverse

A diverse church family, racially, in gender, background, disability and education, represented in every area of church life.

Our social media tagline speaks of ‘a real-life adventure.’ Through the above, and many more activities, St Saviour’s Sunbury has invited those in our local community, both young and old, to a real-life adventure. An adventure where they can find faith, freedom, and new life in Jesus. Are you excited?

Lots of love, Allen