



The Parish of Boxmoor

St John's Boxmoor,
St Stephen's Chaulden & St Francis' Hammerfield

The Parish of Boxmoor Annual Parochial Church Meeting

In St John`s Church, Boxmoor
Sunday 21 April 2024 at 11.00am

Contents

Reports from our daughter churches, PCC
committees and other church organisations.

Please see the main booklet for the agenda, minutes of the last annual meeting, Treasurer's report & audited accounts for 2023, reports on fabric goods & ornaments, Safeguarding, the Deanery Synod and PCC proceedings.

The contents of this booklet are available to be read on the parish website at www.stjohnsboxmoor.org.uk

Bereavement Group

The Bereavement Group is a Team led by the Vicar, assisted by our Lay Reader Carole Lewis, together with four members of the congregation.

Following a funeral taken by our Clergy we contact the bereaved families and offer our help which usually consists of providing a good listening ear. This past year the Clergy have taken 20 funerals which is rather less than usual. We think that the recent pandemic may have had an effect on numbers. Each family have been contacted by the Team to offer support at this very difficult time.

We hold regular meetings in strict confidence to discuss between ourselves the best way we can offer help and to ensure the appropriate person makes contact.

After we have made contact we send a copy of our monthly magazine to the bereaved family together with the dates of the forthcoming Friendship Teas.

The Friendship Teas provide an opportunity for the bereaved to meet new people and make new friends at a very difficult time. We try to encourage those now left on their own to come along.

Invitations to the Remembrance Service in November are sent to the families of the bereaved where our Clergy have officiated at the funerals during the past year. We have found that this Service provides a focus for the bereaved and provides comfort to the families.

Valerie Darvill *Coordinator*

Communications Committee

The Communications Committee has overall responsibility for all aspects of communication within the parish and for media representation of the parish. The work of the committee has changed and broadened over the years with the development of the internet and social media. The Committee is quite a large one. We meet roughly every two months and have held 6 meetings since the last APCM, but only one "live" meeting, the rest being via Zoom, but we hope to be able to meet in person again over the summer months.

Our remit includes the monthly parish magazine, the weekly newsletter, the design and distribution of the Christmas and Easter cards delivered to every home in the parish, the issue of press releases and articles about special services and events (for the parish magazine and to Boxmoor Direct and the Gazette/Hemel Online for example), our website and our representation on social media (Facebook).

Sally-Anne Bates has ably edited the magazine for many years now (and typed it up for many years before that), and the parish owes her our gratitude for her dedication and expertise. Some months she is inundated with information to publish and at other times she has to find material from different sources. If there are budding scribes in the congregation, Sally would be grateful for your contributions. She has also taken on the responsibility for liaising with advertisers. Sally is also the super-efficient secretary of the Communications Committee, without whose efforts we would not be nearly so organised.

The magazine is produced eleven months of the year, with the editor taking a well-earned break in December rather than producing a January magazine! The magazine is printed each month in the Parish Office and Sally is grateful for the help of the Parish Administrator. Thanks are due also to Alan Munford, who organises the distribution of the hard copies of the magazine and to Chris Lyne who uploads it to the parish website. Articles for the magazine should be sent to Sally at magazine@stjohnsboxmoor.org.uk.

The weekly newsletter is created in the Parish Office by the Vicar and Parish Administrator (thank you Mike, Hilary and now Deniece.) We are very grateful to Paul Davies for printing the newsletter and service sheets every week and to Alan Munford for sending it all out by email. Anyone who wishes to submit a short news item for the newsletter should send it by email to newsletter@stjohnsboxmoor.org.uk or to the Parish Office.

The parish Christmas and Easter cards are delivered to every home in the parish, to send seasonal greetings and to inform residents of the times of services and of parish activities. The 2023 Christmas card was designed by the Vicar, from a photograph taken by the late David Mitchell, and printed by Kalkwik (who can do it cheaper than we can in-house now). The local cards were delivered by volunteers within the parish, but the outlying areas which we find difficult to cover were outsourced to Dor2Dor. The parish Easter card is also being printed by Kalkwik, and we are grateful for volunteers from the congregation who deliver them. Without their help our work would be in vain. We are very grateful to Alan Munford who, though no longer a member of the Committee, bundles the cards and organises them for distribution into numbered “walks”.

The functions of Comms have now evolved to include the parish website <https://stjohnsboxmoor.org.uk/> and social media (our Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/StJohnsChurchBoxmoor>).

Our website was designed by Stacey Barton, in conjunction with the Vicar, to suit parish needs. We are grateful to our web team of Stacey, Sally-Anne and Rosie Shaw, also to the Vicar, for their input to the website. The advent of our live-streaming capability means that we can share live or recorded services via the website. Our thanks go to the Vicar and Director of Music Keith Beniston for this facility. Sally has also taken on day to day responsibility for updating the posters on the website. If parishioners would like to add material, including photos, or make a comment regarding the website, the Web Team have a dedicated email address webteam@stjohnsboxmor.org.uk

I operate the Facebook page on a daily basis, mostly using .jpeg or .png versions of the posters we produce for the various special services and events. These are then shared to other local Facebook pages, as appropriate. For those who don't know, “sharing” and “liking” are how Facebook works. I also share to our Facebook page every day the Church of England Prayer of the Day, to facilitate our prayer life, and any other CofE or Diocesan material which seems appropriate. It is necessary to post on the page regularly to keep our information appearing in the Facebook “feeds” of our followers. Where possible, we also share the posters for concerts performed in the church by local choirs and orchestras. We have now built up a substantial following on Facebook (currently 552 people). Each time we publicise an event, we gain a few more followers. We seek to portray ourselves as an active and welcoming parish.

The Comms Committee always needs to be aware of parish events and decide what level of publicity is required. We do make use of posters and publicity material supplied to us from other committees and branches of parish life, but it is not our function to create posters for other parish groups, but to share appropriately information made available to us. Where necessary, we can generate press releases.

For event publicity, we are indebted to Alan Munford, who still occasionally undertakes the task of designing posters and is entirely responsible for designing and procuring banners, sometimes liaising with the likes of David Doyle to gain sponsorship. Alan has to reserve the prime location on the Moor opposite the station for the Christmas Tree Festival banner a whole year in advance. We also thank those such as Peter Garner who ensure the A3 posters are printed and laminated and displayed on the trees and elsewhere. If anyone else feels they would like to help in any way with event publicity, then please let us know.

Anne Lyne is responsible for event coverage in the local press, Boxmoor Direct, the Gazette, and recently the Hemel Hempstead magazine, and to a large extent event coverage in the parish magazine. This involves writing articles, selecting pictures, sending posters and persuading the media concerned to feature us or not. Unfortunately, some media will not feature overtly “church” activities.

In short, we are an active committee, involved in many areas of church life!

Anne Lyne *Chair*

Director of Music

On (usually) the first Sunday morning of each month our prospering Junior Choir under the ever-enthusiastic leadership of Helen Isaac, produces an animated performance, adorned in matching blue, of a lively anthem at the end of communion, which is always a joy to watch and hear. Some loyal members have now been in the Junior Choir for several years, whilst others continue to join. It has been a pleasure to see this new venture maintained and developed. Friday rehearsals are a whirlwind of activity, and clearly enjoyed by the children. There's always room for more so please spread news around amongst families about this joyful company of singers. +

If you only ever attend St John's on Sunday mornings you might be forgiven for asking, "Choir? What choir?" – in terms of the adult choir, which only makes rare appearances at Morning Services. However, at evening services – usually Choral Evensong, our current group has been on stunning form throughout the year. If you haven't been, a musical feast is available on one Sunday evening a month in most months, with a number of outstanding additional services including Advent Carols, The Annual Memorial Service and with an ever-increasing reputation for excellence, the Service of Lessons and Carols with orchestral accompaniment. In 2023 this service, along with the Christingle services saw record numbers attending. Recently, at Passiontide, we performed a Cantata, "The Saviour" by William Lloyd Webber. Some members have also sung services at St Francis Hammerfield. It remains an unfulfilled challenge, however, to recruit and maintain a 10am choir.

Our splendid adult choir now comprises both longstanding members of St. John's church, and also benefits greatly from regular visiting singers who contribute greatly to the choir, but who often attend their own churches on Sunday mornings. In the last year there has been a significant upturn in able singers joining. On my arrival at St John's the last members of the then junior choir soon moved on to greater things. Most notably Vanessa Jefferson (nee Hadley Spencer), who is now Minor Canon Precentor at St Albans Cathedral. This left the choir with few treble-line singers. Fortunately, since then a considerable number of new volunteer members have joined, providing a very dependable soprano line. There have been increasing numbers in all the other parts except tenors, and we still usually need to import some voices – usually tenors, at a fee. The good news on this is that during this year the need for paid voices has been decreasing in number, and of those two or three that we use, most are now almost as regular as the regulars! Nicholas King continues to make an invaluable contribution to music making through his accompaniment of choral services, always with flair and panache.

Overall then, I can report a happy past year in the choir, celebrated as usual, just before Lent, with a fine annual dinner! If you have not recently attended a choral service, please come and hear for yourself. Alternatively come and sing with us. There is no audition as such, and while reading music is desirable, it is not essential, as several members demonstrate regularly. The vast majority of our services including choral services are readily available to revisit on the Website.

Keith Beniston *Director of Music*

Finance and Giving Committee

The Committee met regularly during 2023, both on-line and face to face, to review financial progress, agree reports and propose budgets for the PCC's consideration. Support was given to the Churchwardens in dealing with erroneous billing and charging against our direct debits by energy suppliers to all three churches. Resolution of the issues, payment of outstanding charges and refunds and establishing correct gas and electricity usage levels going forward all remain to be concluded, but considerable progress has been made.

Bucket collections were organised in support of various Disasters Emergency Committee appeals. Note 11 to the Annual Accounts sets out the outward giving recommended to the PCC by the Committee, detailing the Charities supported either directly or through these special collections.

Chris Angell *Chairman*

Music at St John's

Our charity, Music at St John's (MaSJ), has continued to promote music for all in the local community, especially the younger members.

MaSJ has also helped to enrich the music at services in the church, including providing a grant of £950 to the church for extra musicians at the Parish Carol Service in 2023.

Lunchtime concerts: Two series of Friday lunchtime concerts took place in Spring/Summer and Autumn of 2023 and these proved as popular as ever. Thanks to Paul Davies for all his effort in managing these events. The next lunchtime series will commence in May 2024.

For other concerts (normally held on Saturday evenings) we continue to use TicketSource to make ticket purchases really simple for everyone coming to our events.

Educational events: UniSound and Unisong events took place throughout the year. The Unisound Wind Day in February had gone well. The Unisong Day took place on 22/23 June.

The WOOFYT days were held on 15/16 March 2023 and again on 13/14 March 2024 based on the popularity of previous events. We were unfortunately let down by a couple of schools recently at short notice due to a shortage of teachers on the day and problems with coaches. However the schools that did attend gave very positive feedback on the benefits of the WOOFYT event. The event was again largely funded by the Institute of Physics with MASJ paying the difference. Jeremy Sampson continues to provide an interesting presentation on how a musical organ works and includes interactive tasks.

The educational events involve many local schools including South Hill, Boxmoor, George Street, Great Gaddesden and Holtsmere.

Dacorum Music School (DMS) continue to work closely with us for all of these events and early in 2023 MASJ did sign a partnership agreement with DMS within the Hertfordshire Music Services.

MASJ supported DMS with £600 towards developing opportunities for students to sing together in concerts.

Bursary Scheme: During 2023 we had no applications and we decided to look at the publicity and how we might work more closely with the schools to ensure local children benefitted from this opportunity. We do continue to promote the scheme at the Education events hosted at St John's and with help from the Dacorum Music School. The good news is that we have recently had some applications and more is planned to improve the awareness of this scheme.

In 2023 MASJ took on the housing of a Grand piano in the church. This was an agreement to run for several years whereby its owner Alex Wyatt (Carole Lewis' grandson) lent the Grand piano to MASJ, where it can be used for concerts whilst he completes his university studies. At some point after that when Alex is ready he will take back the Grand piano.

Other Events: We held our Annual Music Festival over the weekend of 13/14 May and on the Saturday lunchtime DMS held a concert involving local schools which was very popular and in the evening MASJ hosted the Castalia Concert. Then on 9 September we held another recital by Alexander Ardakov which was enjoyable but not so well attended.

We again held our annual 'New Year's 10k Run and 4k Walk' on 31st December 2023 and this attracted more participants than ever with over 140 runners, a larger number of serious runners than the previous year as well as a good crowd of 30+ walkers. Overall the event was very successful with many participants staying afterwards to socialise and the event raised a good sum towards future MaSJ events as well as a donation to a local worthy cause. Due to the larger numbers we will be reviewing the registration process and how the movement around church can be better organised.

St John's church is likely to become the base for the Hemel Symphony Orchestra and discussions are ongoing and this could lead to opportunities for MASJ and HSO to work together on projects in future.

We held our most recent Annual General Meeting on Friday 20th October 2023. This took place after the lunchtime concert that day (after lunch) and was attended by a small audience but better than previous years.

Trustees: One of our original members Peter Garner resigned from the board in 2023 and we were very grateful to Peter for his time on the board and as chair, his input to many of MASJ activities since the inception in 2005 made a huge difference to what we have been able to achieve over the years.

We have very recently brought in a new Trustee, Kris Banks who works for the Dacorum Music School and helps with the educational music activities that MASJ and DMS organise.

Please visit our website at www.masj.org.uk for details of future events and activities promoted by Music at St John's.

Mark Harbour *Chairman*

Parish Magazine

240 magazines are printed monthly in-house by Hilary Kemp, Parish Administrator and now by our new Parish Administrator, Deniece Colley. I would like to take this opportunity to personally thank Hilary/Deniece for undertaking this task and to Alan Munford for all his hard work in making up the bundles for distribution and collecting the money in, also sending out the postal copies and being my proof-reader! I would also personally like to thank Anne Lyne for the support she gives me on the editorial side and to Janet Packe and other members of the congregation who provide photos from the different events held. Also sincere thanks to the Reverend Michael Macey, Carole Lewis, Alan Munford, Jean Garner, Graham Gibbs, Chris Angell, Mark Harbour, Paul Davies, Dee Fisher, Nicholas King and the various Groups and Organisations for all their contributions on a regular basis and to Hilary Kemp/Deniece Colley, Parish Administrator for their monthly support in preparing the Parish Diary and Registers to send to me and to everyone else who supports me as Editor of the Parish Magazine. A special thanks to Chris Lyne who uploads a copy to St John's website together with Clergy Letter and Parish Diary monthly. Thanks also to all the distributors who work so hard in delivering the magazines monthly and would always welcome anyone new who wanted to join the team.

As Advertising Manager, as well as, Editor, I am pleased to report that we continue to have the support of our regular advertisers and occasional one-off adverts for Concerts being held in Church or forthcoming performances at Boxmoor Playhouse from Hemel Hempstead Theatre Company. If you would like to enquire about placing an advert or know of anyone who would like further details, please contact me by email to: magazine@stjohnsboxmoor.org.uk

Items can be e-mailed direct to me at magazine@stjohnsboxmoor.org.uk which helps to make my job as Editor much easier but, of course; items can still be left in my pigeonhole or delivered direct to 27 Beechfield Road. I would always welcome any innovative ideas, comments or even complaints regarding the Magazine (how it can be improved) or to receive "letters to the Editor." Also if you know of anyone who would like to receive this publication on a regular basis, please contact either Alan Munford (242543) or myself with their details or ask them to complete the slip which appears in the magazine, our distribution numbers are still low and we would welcome new readers or any suggestions on how to promote the magazine to reach more members of our local community. The monthly price has remained at 60p or £6 for the year.

The Magazine is a particularly important "vehicle" for communicating what is going on in our Boxmoor Parish including any fund-raising events towards the upkeep and running costs of our three Churches and promoting community spirit. Please keep reading the Magazine! and let me have your suggestions of what you would like to see appear, which I will try to accommodate, space permitting!

Sally Bates *Editor* (telephone 266912)

St Francis Hammerfield

1. The last year has seen an increase of congregants at the church
2. We had a highly successful autumn fair which raised the best part of £800 as well as hosting a musical performance
3. The Money raised for St. Francis Hospice due to the Carols by Candle light and coffee monies amounted to £700 plus gift aid on a significant portion of this.
4. We had a well-attended final mass at which the Bishop of Richborough preached and presided along with a well-attended lunch afterwards
5. Hall revenues are buoyant
6. We are very grateful to the Vicar, Fr. Dr. Digby Anderson, Fr. Martin Banister and Fr. Malcolm Grant for their steadfast ministry to us.
7. We are grateful to Paul for his fine organ playing and to Jo for overseeing our accounts.

Trevor Standen

St John's Hall Management Committee

The St John's Hall Management Committee met on five occasions during the year, these meetings were held live on site during 2023, this was the first full year without any restrictions imposed by Covid.

Hall bookings recovered to a similar level prior to pre-pandemic restrictions, and U3A remain our largest customer. We are extremely grateful to Graham Liddle for his excellent work as our Bookings Secretary, thank you Graham.

We are also extremely grateful to Di Tovey for the work she undertakes as Hall Caretaker. This task involves ensuring that the facilities are clean and in 'good order' prior to bookings, but also to open and close the facilities before and after bookings. We do employ an agency cleaner, Jean, who does a very good job for us. Thank you Di.

Our Hall Kitchen is an integral part of the facilities, and is used by most hirers if only for making tea/coffee. However, the kitchen is used by a number of 'Church' groups for providing cooked meals. This results in the need for the kitchen facility to be kept clean. During the year our electric oven was 'professionally' cleaned. We are grateful to Lorraine and Di for managing this facility on our behalf.

From time to time there is a need to undertake various decoration requirements in both halls and the kitchen. We are extremely pleased that Mark Harbour and his team undertake this task for us. During the last 12 months, Mark organised for the Hall Floor to be 'deep cleaned' which was a big task, but the benefits were immediately apparent. Thank you Mark.

The major project during the year was to replace the hall chairs. The 2023 Church Warden's Appeal raised a significant sum towards this project, and work was undertaken to purchase new chairs. Following examination of prospective styles of new chairs, it is pleasing to note that a recommendation to purchase is to be put before the P.C.C. this month.

At the end of the year Peter Garner stood down as Co-ordinator of this committee, and it is pleasing to report that Bob Hammond will now undertake this role. Peter will still remain on the committee.

Peter Garner

St Stephen's

As a congregation we try to minister particularly to the elderly which is a great joy and we continue to be a witness to the Church of England in Chaulden. We always ring the bell before services.

We are small in number but our members come every week and enjoy the worship and the fellowship. We appreciate Mike's regular visits which enables us to celebrate Holy Communion at least once a month: on the other Sundays we welcome Carole Lewis to lead worship and to preach. When they cannot come, then Richard, Anne and I have permission to lead a service and give a message.

During Lent we again welcomed a number of our friends from St. John's for a Lent group on Thursday morning, this year led by the vicar and including Holy Communion.

Expenditure on the building has been minimal. Please see the full financial report on St. Stephen's which is included in the annual account and which shows that the congregation contribute generously to parish funds.

Why not come and join us one Sunday at 11.30 a.m.

Jean Garner

Tiny Tots

We are continuing to attract new families to our term-time weekly meetings and it is good to see new mums and dads, grandmas and grandads and childminders bringing their little ones along on Tuesday mornings. We currently have about 44 names on our Register, including some new babies, and have been getting between about 18-25 Tots coming to each session, starting off with toys and activities in the hall, followed by refreshments and then our little service of action songs and prayers in church led by Father Mike – the ‘froggy prayer’ (where they get to jump off the chancel step) being as popular as ever! We are so very grateful to Auntie Mary who plays the piano for us every week - the little ones really love joining in the songs and its a real joy to see even the little babies joining in the actions!

This year we had good turnout for our Summer Picnic in August and a fun time was had by all. The New Year party was very popular again with 20+ little ones and their carers coming along to join in the buffet lunch and playing ‘Pass the Parcel’ – they all went home with a little present and a balloon, as has become our tradition!

As always we are extremely grateful to our team of regular helpers, especially Jackie May and June Young, without whom we would not be able to run, and to both Di and Yvonne who have helped out when one of us has been unable to be there. In the summer, we have sadly said goodbye to dear Auntie Christine Waters who has decided to hang up her tea towel after more than 20 years of faithful service in the kitchen. We are so grateful to her for all those welcome cuppas. Jean Frith has now kindly taken over organising and providing refreshments each week – many thanks to her for stepping into this vital role!

Once again, we organised and ran the toy stall at both the Summer and Christmas Fayres, and made a very good contribution to church funds from both events. Our little ones did a grand job of decorating our Christmas Tree at the Festival on the theme of ‘The Fruit of the Spirit’ mainly thanks to June who masterminded the decorations and organised the photos.

Annie Mitchell

Together on Monday

We now have 35 members and at least 20 members attend each meeting.

A lunch in January at Redbourn Golf Club was very successful as was our lunch in August at Little Hay Golf Club. Our local charity for 2023 was the Liberty Tea Room based on Bank Court, Kerri-Ann gave us a very informative talk about the various ways in which they support the community.

We had talks ranging from Suffragettes, Donkeys, Travels in Australia, Why I climb Sinking below the waves and the ramblings of our vicar plus an excellent piano recital on our grand piano in church.

Our outing in July was to the Milton Keynes Open Air Museum which everyone agreed was a fascinating place. At our last meeting of the year in December Ian Packe compiled a very entertaining Christmas themed slide show followed by a festive buffet Our group meets on the 1st and 3rd Mondays in the month at 7.45 in the church hall. New members are always welcome and our subscription is £12 per year

Di Tovey
