



The Parish of Boxmoor

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

Meeting of Parishioners and Annual Parochial Church Meeting

in St John's Church, Boxmoor

Sunday 10 May 2026 at 11am
following the Parish Eucharist

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ANNUAL CHURCH MEETINGS

Sunday 10 May 2026

at 11am following the Parish Eucharist in St John's Church

The Goals in our 2025-2027 Mission Action Plan are :

- To identify and engage a partner organisation in assisting us to deliver an appropriately resourced Youth Group by the end of June 2025; to create a church-based Youth Club, meeting regularly, with a dependable attendance of more than ten, to be operating by the end of 2025.
- To arrange and conduct a Discipleship course for existing members of the Church and an Enquirers course for new people before June 2025; to set up a time-line of study and nurture courses for the next two years with a variety of offerings with the hope that better awareness/publicity will enable people to commit/plan to attend sessions.
- To obtain Silver Eco-Church status by the end of 2026 and Gold award by the end of 2030; to determine, by the end of 2025, the feasibility of installing solar panels on the roof of St John's in a move to a greener, more sustainable source of energy. This will necessarily involve discussions with the DAC, solar power engineers, and with our own Finance Committee regarding budget implications; and to have built new relationships with local organisations engaged with sustainability work and to instil in the church and congregation the 'Reduce, Reuse, Recycle' practice.

Parochial Church Council members 2025/6

(* : members of Standing Committee)

Ex officio

Revd Mike Macey *Vicar**
Revd Emma Williams *Curate (from July 2025)*
Marian Davies *Churchwarden**
Job Rombout *Churchwarden**
Carole Lewis *Reader*

Three Deanery Synod representatives (until 2026)

Graham Gibbs
Lorraine Ioannou
Wilf Stepto

Twelve lay members (terms of office as shown)

Chris Angell *(until 2027) Hon Treasurer**
Jo Fisher *(until 2026) Deputy Churchwarden**
Jean Garner *(until 2026)*
Bob Hammond *(until 2026)*
Nicholas King *(until 2027) Hon Secretary**
Anne Lyne *(until 2027)*
Jason Plessas *(until 2027)**
James Proehl *(until 2027)*
Cathy Shaw *(until 2026)*
Rosie Shaw *(until 2028) Deputy Churchwarden**
Trevor Standen *(until 2027)*
Di Tovey *(until 2028)*

Co-opted lay members (until 2026)

Rosie Akeroyd *Parish Safeguarding Officer*
Mark Harbour *Electoral Roll Officer**

AGENDA

Meeting of Parishioners

1. Opening prayer and apologies for absence.
2. Election of Churchwardens.
To be entitled to vote one must either be on the current Electoral Roll or live in the parish and appear on the register of local government electors.
 - a) The statutory notice of nomination for two Churchwardens to be elected has been displayed on the church notice boards until immediately before this meeting.
 - b) Church Representation Rules prescribe that no individual should serve for more than six consecutive years unless by special resolution of an Annual Meeting of Parishioners. This resolution was passed by the 2025 Meeting and remains in force until rescinded by a subsequent Annual Meeting of Parishioners.
 - c) Nominations received will be announced at the meeting.

Annual Parochial Church Meeting

1. Minutes of the Annual Parochial Church Meeting held on 4 May 2025 with the Vicar's report for 2024.
To accept these minutes and the Vicar's report as a true record of the last APCM.
2. Electoral Roll.
To receive a report on the updated electoral roll, which has been displayed in our three churches for two weeks prior to this meeting.
3. Proceedings of the Parochial Church Council (PCC).
To receive a report on the proceedings of the PCC for 2025/6.
4. Safeguarding.
To receive a report confirming that the PCC has complied with its duty to have due regard to House of Bishops' guidance on *Safeguarding children and vulnerable adults*.
5. Financial Affairs of the Parish.
To receive a report on the financial affairs of the Parish (see Book 2).
6. Presentation of the Annual Accounts for 2025 and Budgets for 2026.
To receive the accounts for 2025 and budgets for 2026 (see Book 2).
7. Independent Examiner.
To appoint an independent examiner for the PCC accounts for the coming year.
8. Fabric, Goods and Ornaments.
To receive a report on the Fabric, Goods and Ornaments for 2025 from the Churchwardens.
9. Election of lay representatives to the Deanery Synod.
To be entitled to vote one must be on the current electoral roll.
There are three vacant places to be filled for three years. Nominations received will be announced at the meeting.

10. Election of Lay Representatives to the PCC.
To be entitled to vote one must be on the current electoral roll.
 - a) To approve a proposal from the PCC that the Parish Safeguarding Officer (currently Rosie Akeroyd) be an *ex officio* member.
 - b) There are four vacant places to be filled for three years. Nominations received will be announced at the meeting.
 - c) The conduct of any necessary election will be explained at the meeting.
 - d) The drawing of lots is necessary at any APCM when more than one-third of the lay representative places are available, to determine the period (one, two or three years) for which each candidate is elected, so as to even out the periodicity of renewals. That does not apply this year, but will apply in 2027.

11. Deanery Synod.
To receive a report on the proceedings of the Deanery Synod.

12. Vicar's Report.
To receive a report from the Vicar on the calendar year 2025.

13. To receive reports from PCC committees and other church groups (see Book 3).

14. Any Other Business.
Any other legitimate APCM business.

15. Date of next APCM.
To set a provisional date for the next APCM: Sunday 9 May 2027.

APCM Item 1 : 2025 minutes and Vicar's Report for 2024



The Parish of Boxmoor

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

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- To obtain Silver Eco-Church status by the end of 2026 and Gold award by the end of 2030; to determine, by the end of 2025, the feasibility of installing solar panels on the roof of St John's in a move to a greener, more sustainable source of energy. This will necessarily involve discussions with the DAC, solar power engineers, and with our own Finance Committee regarding budget implications; and to have built new relationships with local organisations engaged with sustainability work and to instil in the church and congregation the 'Reduce, Reuse, Recycle' practice.

MEETING OF PARISHIONERS AND ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING HELD IN ST JOHN'S CHURCH, BOXMOOR ON SUNDAY 4 MAY 2025

Chair : The Reverend Michael Macey, Vicar of Boxmoor

Present : Clergy 1, Parishioners 51 (full list on file)

TOPIC	DISCUSSION	ACTION/ FOLLOW-UP
1. Apologies for Absence	The meeting opened at 11.32am. Apologies for absence had been received from nine parishioners (full list on file).	
Meeting of Parishioners 2. Election of Churchwardens	Two nominations had been received to fill the two Churchwarden posts for the coming year. These were for Marian Davies (nominated by Di Tovey and seconded by Lorraine Ioannou) and Job Rombout (nominated by Yvonne Laidlaw and seconded by Philip Barton). Both having already served for six years, it was necessary to resolve that Section 3 of the Churchwardens Measure 2001 (disqualification after six periods of office) shall not apply in relation to this parish. Both were declared duly elected. The Vicar thanked them for all their work and support to himself and the parish.	

<p>Annual Parochial Church Meeting</p> <p>3. Previous minutes and Vicar's report</p>	<p>The minutes of the APCM held on 21 April 2024 and the Vicar's report for 2023 were agreed to be a true record.</p>	
<p>4. Electoral Roll</p>	<p>It had been necessary to completely revise the Electoral Roll this year. The report from Mark Harbour (Electoral Roll Officer) was taken as read. The total number on the Electoral Rolls for our Parish of three churches is now 170 compared with 181 last year, comprising 17 for St Francis' and 153 for St John's and St Stephen's. Whilst this is a slight reduction, the Vicar felt that this would be a national trend, and that we are holding up well. There were no questions or comments, and the report was accepted.</p>	
<p>5. Proceedings of the PCC</p>	<p>The report from Nicholas King (Honorary Secretary) was taken as read. There were no questions or comments, and the report was accepted.</p>	
<p>6. Safeguarding</p>	<p>The report from Rosie Akeroyd (Safeguarding Officer) was taken as read. We are tasked to comply with the Church of England's "Promoting a Safer Church" action plan. The PCC has thus met its obligation to have due regard to the House of Bishops' guidance on safeguarding children and vulnerable adults. There were no questions or comments, and the report was accepted. The Vicar thanked Rosie for her sterling work.</p>	
<p>7. Financial Affairs of the Parish</p>	<p>Chris Angell (Honorary Treasurer) spoke to his report, which had been circulated with papers for the meeting, and thanked all who had helped to maintain the parish in a viable financial position. Roger Taylor commended Chris on his work, remarking that it was a pleasure to act as Independent Examiner for such a capable pair of hands. There were no questions or comments, and the report was accepted.</p> <p>Chris added that the accounts will be submitted to the diocese by their deadline of 30 June and to the Charity Commission by their deadline of 31 October.</p>	
<p>8. Presentation of the Annual Accounts for 2024 and Budgets for 2025</p>	<p>Chris Angell formally drew attention to the 2024 accounts which had been confirmed as complete and correct by Roger Taylor, the Independent Examiner. There will be significant challenges during the coming year, necessitating an increased level of fund-raising, including a Grand Draw, tickets for which were now released, and for which prizes will be drawn at the Countdown to Christmas fair on 22 November.</p> <p>Alan Darville observed that tickets for the Grand Draw could only be sold at their fixed price. There could be no question of discounts for quantity purchases.</p> <p>There were no other questions or comments, and the accounts were accepted. The Vicar warmly thanked Chris and Jo Fisher for their continued assiduous work in maintaining the accounts.</p>	
<p>9. Independent Examiner</p>	<p>Roger Taylor had confirmed that he was willing to undertake the examination of the 2025 accounts in due course. He was thanked for his work and re-appointed as Independent Examiner.</p>	
<p>10. Fabric, Goods and Ornaments</p>	<p>The meeting received the churchwardens' report on the fabric, goods, and ornaments. There were no questions or comments, and the report was accepted.</p>	

11. Election of Lay Representatives to the Deanery Synod	No elections were necessary this year, the present representatives remaining in place until 30 June 2026.	
12. Election of Lay Representatives to the PCC	<p>There were two vacant places for lay members of the PCC until the close of the 2028 APCM, for which four nominations had been received. The Vicar explained that we are obliged to reduce the number of lay members of the PCC from fifteen to twelve because our Electoral Roll was now below 200. The nominations of Rosie Akeroyd (proposed by Lucy Grayson and seconded by Richard Grayson) and Mark Harbour (proposed by Andy Fisher and seconded by Ian Packe) would, with the agreement of those candidates, be carried over for co-option by the PCC at its ensuing procedural meeting, under the provisions of paragraph M15(k) of the Church Representation Rules.</p> <p>The other two nominees, Rosie Shaw (proposed by Mark Harbour and seconded by Dee Fisher) and Di Tovey (proposed by Lorraine Ioannou and seconded by Marian Davies) were therefore declared as elected.</p>	
13. Deanery Synod	A report on the proceedings of the Deanery Synod, provided by the Deanery Secretary, was taken as read.	
14. Vicar's Report	The Vicar's report for 2024 was taken as read.	
15. To receive reports from PCC Committees and other church groups	Reports from PCC Committees and other church groups were taken as read. The Vicar expressed particular pleasure that a 100% response rate had been achieved this year, reflecting the wish expressed in the recent Safeguarding survey from several members of the congregation for fuller information about activities within the parish.	
16. Any other business	<p>A gift was presented to Emma Macey for her support of Mike in his duties over the past year. The Vicar expressed thanks for this on her behalf. This was met with applause.</p> <p>Carole Lewis expressed gratitude to the Vicar for his continued leadership of the parish during the past year. This was carried with hearty acclamation.</p> <p>Jean Garner asked whether there should be discussion about the revised Mission Action Plan. The Vicar replied that the function of this meeting is to review the past year, rather than the year ahead.</p> <p>The Vicar spoke briefly to the upcoming arrival of Emma Williams in the parish as a training curate, stressing that this imposes a corporate responsibility on the parish to help her in developing her ministry; by no means will she simply be an extra pair of hands, at least not until well-established.</p>	
17. Date of next APCM	The next APCM has been provisionally set to follow the 10.00am Parish Eucharist on Sunday 3 May 2026 in St John's Church.	
	The meeting closed at 11.56am.	

VICAR'S REPORT ON 2024

(given at the 2025 APCM)

2024 – our Year of Jubilee – celebrating 150 years of St John's Church. If the walls of St John's could talk I wonder what stories they would tell. Hopefully, our celebrations would be among them. We started our celebrations at our Patronal Eucharist on Sunday 5 May at which the Bishop of St Albans presided and preached. Former vicars, curates, directors of music, and others associated with the church were invited and returned to attend this joy-filled Eucharist which was followed by a Festival lunch for invited guests. The next day – despite the soggy conditions – a significant band of walkers Beat the Parish Bounds... 13 miles of undulating terrain, some urban some rural, with regular pit-stops in local public houses and concluding with a BBQ at St John's on our return. The conditions were tough but the company was excellent.

Celebrations continued at the end June with our Exhibition charting the story of St John's. Terrific floral and visual displays combined with archive material and Registers to tell the human story of St John's and our Parish. On large screens we displayed photos of couples who had wed at St John's over the years and those who had been baptised. We showed the devastating effects of fire and charted the build of our "new" hall complex. It was a joy to see the way our wider community engaged with this Exhibition and the welcome which was offered. My sincere thanks to all who helped to organise this event, especially those who provided material for display, made stunning flower arrangements, stewarded and welcomed, and fed those who came.

Our Jubilee celebrations concluded in October when our fabulous choir led us in worship with a stunning rendition of Sir John Rutter's *Feel the Spirit*. This uplifting and moving service was accompanied by the St John's Ensemble under the direction of our extremely talented Director of Music, Keith Beniston, to whom I owe a huge debt of gratitude for all his support and musical flexibility and flair over the last year – we are very lucky to have Keith on the organ bench. Our choir continued to go from strength to strength throughout the year. Their ability, as a Parish choir, to sing and perform some very challenging music to cathedralesque standard is testament to both Keith's leadership and the quality and dedication of our singers. In December the choir, accompanied by the St John's Ensemble again, led us in a stunning Festival of 9 Lessons and Carols – a service that is once again growing in popularity year on year. My sincere thanks to our musicians.

Throughout 2024, in addition to celebrating our Jubilee, we sought to overcome one the lasting and damaging effects of the Covid pandemic – loneliness and isolation. In addition to our monthly *Friendship Teas* and a new fortnightly venture of *Sew, Knit, Natter* we held regular events (both fundraising and social) with the intention of bringing people together. From our Shrove Tuesday parties to the annual cricket match we came together to enjoy each other's company. The cricket match was a particular triumph – not just because of scale of our victory levelling the series 2-2, but because of the number of people who came and watched on the boundary. If we can take this form into 2025 we might just be able to lead the series 3-2! My thanks, as ever, to our fabulous team on the Social Committee and Fundraising Committee for organising some fabulous events. And of course, our year would not be complete without our Summer Fayre, Countdown to Christmas Fayre, and Christmas Tree Festival - all of which were very successful both financially and in fostering community engagement.

2024 also marked my 10 year anniversary as your Vicar. Time has absolutely flown during these 10 years and I remain thankful to God for calling me to Boxmoor and for the privilege of leading you – his people – in prayer and praise and engaging in his work of transformation, revelation, and proclamation. I was deeply touched by your gifts to me in February and for the cake decorated with

many facets of my ministry among you. We have been on quite a journey together and I am looking forward to seeing where the journey will lead us together to next.

One of the tools we use as a Parish to help us navigate into the future is Mission Action Planning (MAP). This helps us set clear missional goals where we plan to grow and direct our energies and resources. Over recent years we have made significant progress in these goals from re-starting our Junior Choir, holding Lent Study Courses and annual Sermon Series, to gaining a Bronze Award for our work in becoming an Eco-Church. My sincere thanks to the various teams and champions who have led the way in these areas. In 2024, however, the PCC determined that a new MAP was needed for 2025 onwards. After much prayerful work and collaboration a new MAP was approved by the PCC ready to be enacted in 2025 which focuses on the characteristics of our 3 patronal Saints (enlightenment, service, care for children and nature) and the diocesan vision of *Living God's Love* in giving us our missional objectives to *Go deeper into God, Make new disciples, and Transforming Communities*.

In addition to celebrating our corporate Year of Jubilee, many within our worshipping community (I won't name them) also celebrated their own private jubilees with significant birthdays and anniversaries sprinkled throughout the year – another excuse for cake and prosecco! Sadly, we also said farewell to members of our community whom God has called to his eternal keeping. Among them were Margaret Gunning, Sheila Watts, John Birnie, Jill Moore, Marion Penfold, and Fr Rex Merry. Their contribution to the life of this Parish over the years cannot be underestimated. May the glory and the promise of the Risen Christ be theirs for all eternity.

Despite saying farewell to a significant number of our worshipping community, 2024 was a surprisingly quiet year with regards Pastoral Services. We went months without taking a funeral, wedding, or baptism. I would be lying if I said this didn't concern me or baffle me. I am increasingly concerned about the rise in *Direct Cremations* and the effect this will have on our society as we store-up unresolved grief for the future by not giving ourselves the opportunities and space to grieve and give thanks for those whom we love but see no longer. I hope my concerns are unfounded but it is something worth considering.

One of the big media stories concerning the Church of England in 2024 concerned the horrendous child abuse scandal (perpetrated by John Smyth over many decades) which led to the resignation of the Archbishop of Canterbury. The extent of his abuse is truly horrifying. As a Parish we take the care of children, young people, and vulnerable adults extremely seriously. During the year we established a new Safeguarding Steering Group to assist and hold to account both myself and our Parish Safeguarding Officer, Rosie Akeroyd. Under her direction, we have updated our Safeguarding Policy, overseen a complete revision of our training and vetting for volunteers, helpers, and PCC members, and begun a conversation about how we change and instil a corporate culture where everyone is known, loved, respected, and honoured. This will take years to embed but it is incredibly important that we start the process now, building on the work that has already taken place over many years. My sincere thanks to Rosie and those in the Steering Group for all their wisdom, guidance, and dedication to this important aspect of our common life.

Throughout this report I have spoken about our common or corporate life. I do this with St Paul's writings in mind that we are many members but one body. (1 Cor 12) An African saying states "It takes a village to raise a child." To this I want to add it takes a community to make a Church. I should therefore like to thank everyone for all your hard work and endeavours over the past year, for your prayers, and for your commitment. Thank you to our readers, intercessors, and welcomers. Thank you to our coffee makers, flower arrangers, and cleaners. Thank you to our Junior Church leaders, Magazine editor and contributors, and caterers. Thank you to our Rota organisers, organists, quiz

writers. Thank you to our works party, committee members, and secretaries. Thank you to Carole, our Lay Leaders of Worship, and our regular priestly visitors who enable worship and enrich us through their preaching. Thank you to our treasurers Chris and Jo who keep us on a financial even keel. Thank you to Deniece our Administrator who does her best to makes sure I'm in the right place, at the right time, doing the right thing. Thank you to our churchwardens Job and Marian for their ongoing support of my ministry, their care for each of our precious buildings and holy spaces, their leadership and humility. Thank you to my family for putting up with me, the demands ministry places on our family life, and for their love and support. Thank you.

In summation, I would commend 2024 to you without hesitation as a good year within the life of the Parish. It was a joyful Year of Jubilee. And it was only so because underneath our celebrations we had a firm foundation of purpose. We know that our task is to give glory and worship to God for the gift of his Son, Jesus Christ, in whom we have life and through whom we are forgiven. We know that worship, prayer, and receiving the Sacrament regularly are central to our being able to go out and share the Gospel of Christ with our friends and families and drawing people into the community of faith. And it's clear that we know this by the way new people are joining us for worship each week. But it is also clear to me, that despite being a significantly large worshipping community, our ability to share in the tasks of ministry is noticeably lacking. We are reliant on an increasingly small number of people to serve at the Altar, welcome people to church, provide refreshments, clean the church, organise, publicise, and facilitate events, visit the sick, decorate the church, lead Junior Church sessions, etc etc. We are a busy and active Church – for which I am most thankful – but to remain so we need to respond and offer ourselves in service to one another. It is often talked of as volunteering, but might we look at it in a new way? A generous response to God's gracious call on our lives to minister in whatever way we can to those around us!

2025 looks full of promise, challenge, opportunity, and blessing as we build on our Year of Jubilee and continue to grow together in God's love. May our Risen Lord continue to bless all that we try to do here in his name, for...

Alleluia! Christ is Risen. He is risen indeed. Alleluia!

In Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mike". The signature is written in a cursive style. Below the name, there is a long, horizontal, slightly curved flourish that extends to the right.

APCM Item 2 : Electoral Roll report

As stated in previous years, for reasons lost in history we have two rolls, one for St Francis church and one for the combined St John's and St Stephen's churches.

This year was an update of the Electoral Roll meaning only new applications or changes were required.

Taking St Francis first, prior to this update there were 17 members, based on the responses 1 has been removed and no new ones have been added to the list. There are now 16 members on the St Francis Electoral Roll.

At the combined St John's and St Stephen's churches, prior to this update there were 153 members, based on the responses 1 has been removed and 3 have been added to the list. St Stephen's had no change to its list. There are now 155 members on the combined St John's and St Stephen's Electoral Roll.

Welcome to all of our new Electoral Roll members.

The total roll for our parish following this years update of all three churches is 171.

My thanks also to Nicholas King for his assistance.

Please help me to keep accurate Electoral Roll information by advising me of any changes of address, other contact details or a change in circumstances as they happen.

Thank you.

Mark Harbour, Electoral Roll Officer

APCM Item 3 : Proceedings of the Parochial Church Council (PCC) 2025/6

The Parochial Church Council (PCC), as elected at the 2025 APCM, has met in alternate months. Written minutes are kept of all PCC meetings, distributed to all PCC members and to any parishioner on the church electoral roll upon request. A summary of PCC discussions is also published in the church magazine after each meeting.

Because our Electoral Roll had dropped below 200, it was necessary to reduce lay membership of the PCC to twelve at last year's APCM. We were however able to appoint two others who would otherwise have become disenfranchised as co-opted members, thus membership was unchanged. In July we welcomed Revd Emma Williams to our number. Six ordinary meetings and one procedural meeting to appoint officers were held during 2025/6, with an average attendance of 81%, ranging from full attendance (by eight members) down to four meetings; the attendance of two others was restricted on medical grounds. Most PCC members also sat on at least one of its Committees. Jean Garner and Lorraine Ioannou are standing down from the PCC at this year's APCM, after more years of service than any of us care to remember; we thank them for all that they have contributed during their tenure.

There were seven meetings of the PCC Standing Committee in intermediate months to progress interim matters, with an average attendance of 63% by its nine members (two at all meetings, others ranging from five to one).

The PCC routinely monitors progress on action points, receives reports from its committees, and ratifies recommendations from the Standing Committee. Statutory reports have been received from the Vicar, Churchwardens and Treasurer at each meeting, as well as reports from our daughter churches of St Francis and St Stephen, the Deanery Synod, the associated Music at St John's organisation, and (on a more intermittent basis) other groups such as Pray Hemel and Churches Together.

Major issues considered during the year have included the development of our Mission Action Plan, discussions related to Safeguarding, and progressing our eco-church profile. A regular topic has been the replacement of the sound system, and much time has also been spent on investigating the possibilities of solar panels on the roof of the Hall to reduce our energy costs. An open meeting was held in February, attended by 13 members of the PCC and two members of the congregation, to receive a powerful presentation by Bishop Rob Wickham on the Church Urban Fund and its work to address poverty and deprivation. This will be taken forward in due course.

Parish finances have been scrutinised closely during the year. Legacy income has enabled significant infrastructure works to be progressed, and with support from a private donation has made it possible to re-float most of the Centenary Fund, depleted in 2011 to fund the new organ; this will generate useful annual interest to support the Fabric Fund. The PCC approved the annual accounts for 2025 and the budgets for 2026 for presentation to the APCM.

Nicholas King, PCC Secretary

APCM Item 4 : Safeguarding Report to APCM 2026

The Parish is committed to the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults and to supporting those who have been victims of abuse, as well as those who may present a risk to others. We believe that safeguarding is the responsibility of the whole Church and that everyone who participates in the life of our three Churches has a role to play in promoting a safer Church for all.

Our parish is committed to the National Safeguarding Standards of the Church of England. The PCC has complied with the duty to have "due regard" to the House of Bishops' Safeguarding Policy and Practice Guidance. Safeguarding is a standing agenda item at every PCC meeting. The PCC last reviewed the parish safeguarding policy on 20 January 2026.

We are recruiting those who work with children and/or vulnerable groups in accordance with the Church of England's Safer Recruitment policy.

PCC members and volunteers have completed the appropriate safeguarding training and DBS checks over the course of the past year. Safeguarding information is displayed in all three churches and on the church website, with information including contact details for the Vicar, Parish Safeguarding Officer and the Diocesan Safeguarding Team.

Rosie Akeroyd, Parish Safeguarding Officer

APCM Item 5 : Financial Affairs of the Parish 2025

Please see Book 2.

APCM Item 6 : Annual Accounts for 2025 and Budgets for 2026

Please see Book 2.

APCM Item 8 : Churchwardens' report 2025

Annual Inspections

PAT and fire appliance checks have been carried out in all three churches.

St John's lightning conductor has passed inspection.

St John's hall kitchen has been inspected by the council and has been rated 4 for hygiene.

Our insurers have passed our 'slip and trip' policy.

Maintenance and improvements

In June the boiler system in the hall kitchen was removed and replaced.

A gas leak was discovered under the kitchen floor and the gas pipes were replaced.

The boiler in the 'glory hole' at the west end of the church was removed. A water heater was installed, which provides hot water for the kitchenette (where a new tap was installed) and the hand basins in the toilets.

We employ a very efficient cleaner for the hall but the church itself is kept clean by teams of hard-working parishioners. The flower beds are cared for by Pat Moran and Tony Beasley. Ivor Simmonds cuts the grass. Julie Boyce, Jean Frith, Catherine Holness and numerous other volunteers arrange the flowers. Three external benches have been stripped and restained. Other volunteers serve us with coffee after church and we are very grateful for all this help.

The new sound system was installed in the Church. It took some time but it is now working fairly efficiently, as is the recording system.

The grounds to the side and rear of St Stephens have been cleared.

Problems

Job has spent what amounts to months, trying to sort mistakes in our gas billing which we believe have now been resolved.

Job also researched putting solar panels on the hall roof but this was turned down by the council.

Marian Davies and Job Rombout, Churchwardens

APCM Item 11 : Deanery Synod proceedings (2025/6)

This report covers the proceedings of the Hemel Hempstead Deanery Synod for the period from January 2025 to March 2026.

During the year there were three Deanery Synod meetings, covering a variety of different topics. The key areas of discussion are reported below:

Tuesday 11th February 2025 at St John's, Boxmoor.

The Synod met at St John's where we welcomed the Director of Finance, Glyn Barker who gave a presentation on the finance in the diocese. Glyn started his presentation with a 'thank you' to our congregations and PCC members for their constant support and generous donations. This was a lengthy and insightful presentation where Glyn explained where our parish share goes, and the income and expenditure of the diocese. It was expressed that clergy members felt that they were having to budget for their parish share rather than paying towards repairs etc. There were concerns that as the cost of living is going up, this evidenced in a drop of weekly donations. Glyn explained that 2/3 of parishes in the diocese pay their share in full whereas 1/3 need financial help (roughly 92% of total requested share was received in 2024). Overall, the Synod members found it insightful to see facts & figures and were grateful for Glyn's time and knowledge.

Tuesday 8th July 2025 at St Peter's Church, Berkhamsted.

The Synod met at St Peter's Church, Berkhamsted where we had a joint meeting with the Berkhamsted Synod members. We welcomed Bishop Rob Wickham who gave a fantastic presentation on the charity 'Church Urban Fund'. Bishop Rob stepped away from stipendiary ministry a couple of years ago and is now a Chief Executive of the charity. The charity works with people, churches and communities across the country to tackle urgent issues and provide life changing support. They have set up a brilliant, free service called the Look Up Tool. This tool helps churches and individuals gain insights into their communities and identify social challenges such as poverty, housing and education. Go to their website (www.cuf.org.uk), select Look up tool at the top of the page, add in your details and then you can look up your parish. As this was a joint meeting, the only bit of usual business we did was saying thank you to our current treasurer Peter Bladon for his many years of service, and we welcomed our new treasurer, Colin Gage. We are very grateful for all of the work Peter has done for the deanery.

Tuesday 10th February 2026 at St John's, Boxmoor.

The Synod met at St John's where we were joined by Mark Rodel who led a corporate spiritual discernment session. Mark is the Deputy Director of Mission & Ministry for the diocese. He started the session by explaining more about the role he takes within the diocese. He plays a vital part in ensuring local mission and ministry flourishes, and in the development of training missional leadership. He has been leading listening exercises with different deaneries across the diocese to figure out how to support and sustain ministry & how we can grow. Mark will then feedback our thoughts which will be used to create a ministry strategy. This strategy sets out broad intentions for how the diocese can nurture, equip, deploy and care for those who serve in our churches and communities. Overall, everyone seemed really pleased with the evening. Carolyn Andrews is stepping down from the Synod so Mike thanked her for her many years of input and recent years of being Lay Chair.

Sam Stanbridge, Deanery Secretary

APCM Item 12 : Vicar's report on 2025

Together, in the love and joy of the Lord whom we serve, we have walked with Christ another year. A year that seems to have gone by in the blink of an eye and yet it has been a year that has transformed and shaped us for the future. In comparison to last year's Jubilee Celebrations, 2025 could appear a little anti-climactic, and yet within its 'ordinariness' there were moments of joy and sadness as well as lots of fruitful work and witness, building on the successes, opportunities, challenges and blessings presented to us over recent years.

The primary purpose of our Parish is to give glory to our heavenly Father for the gift of his Son, Jesus Christ, through whom we have been forgiven and made heirs of God's eternal Kingdom through Christ's death on the cross, mighty resurrection, and glorious ascension. We are to proclaim the Good News of new life in Christ Jesus – life in all its fullness – to this and every generation, and the depth of God's love for all people. And we are to support one another in our witness through prayer, acts of kindness and service, reading and meditating on God's Word, and regularly receiving of the Sacraments. And, of course, we are to pray for God's world and people.

My overall impression is that we fulfil our primary purpose well. Over the last year we have continued to welcome and enable people to encounter the Living God week after week with sincerity and joy – both those who are new to us and those who have been part of our Church family for years. Once again, we have seen a continuous and steady stream of new people worship with us throughout the year resulting in our Worshipping Community growing at St John's and St Francis' as new people respond to God's invitation to draw near to him, receive his love, and accept his forgiveness. This was most clearly seen when 19 people were either Baptised and/or Confirmed during a Deanery Confirmation Service we hosted in November. We have seen it in the rise of children being presented for baptism throughout the year. We have seen it in the number of infants attending Tiny Tots with either a parent or grandparent increasing from the mid-teens to mid-to-high-twenties each week. Our growth is both multi-generational and multi-ethnic and is a clear sign that God's Spirit is active in his Church.

We are very fortunate that the Worship we offer to almighty God is supported and enhanced by our wonderful musicians: Keith, our Director of Music; our Adult and Junior Choirs; guest musicians and regular organists including Nicholas King, Paul Davies, and Gruff Edwards, and pianists Mary Bennett (Tiny Tots) and Peter Garner (St Stephen's). Musical highlights within the year included Handel's *Lenten Cantata* on Palm Sunday, Rutter's *Gloria* as a special service in June, and the annual, spectacular, Festival of Carols enhanced by the St John's Ensemble. This should by no means diminish the high quality of worship offered during Choral Evensong each month or when the Junior Choir (led by Helen Isaac) sings at our monthly All Age Eucharist, nor from the Parish Eucharist and other services when our choirs are not present but are none the less conducted to a high liturgical standard. But music is an integral part of the way we worship and I should like to put on record my continued thanks and admiration for our musicians, and to the PCC, MASJ, and the Jennifer Worth Trust for financing our musical endeavours.

At the beginning of 2025 the PCC adopted a new Mission Action Plan (MAP) setting out our priorities for the next few years. This took for granted our core purpose and sought to build on aspects within it. Our goals are to care for God's creation and, in the pursuit of this, become an eco-church; to develop a church-based youth group; and to go deeper into God through study and nurture groups. At every PCC Meeting throughout the year one of these goals was 'championed' and work was done to see how we could achieve our goals. Working groups were established – and thank you to those on these groups – and significant progress has been made. We are now a *Bronze Eco-Church* working towards our silver award, and we are actively pursuing having solar panels on the roof of the church

hall. We now have a clearer mind as to what style of Youth project we wish to offer and have several ideas about how to achieve this. And there have been several study courses and more planned to start in 2026.

The PCC also established, as one of its committees, the Safeguarding Steering Group which had been created to give our excellent PSO (Parish Safeguarding Officer) some support and accountability whilst the parish worked to become compliant with the raft of new and existing Safeguarding guidance/policies expected of us by the House of Bishops and the Diocesan Safeguarding Team. Our Safeguarding practices and policies have been transformed during 2025 and I should like to thank Rosie Akeroyd, PSO, and all on the Steering Group for their hard work and commitment to this vital area of governance and cultural change. I should also like to thank you, our parishioners, for the way you have responded to our efforts to protect and safeguard the most vulnerable in our community through enhanced training and more stringent recruitment processes for many of our volunteer positions. This is a cultural change and will take time to fully imbed, but significant progress has been made throughout the year.

One of the biggest events/stories of 2025 for our church community was the arrival of The Reverend Emma Williams as our new curate. At the start of the year we were not expecting to receive and train a curate in the summer, but by the end of the year it felt a bit like we had always had a curate. It was a joy to witness Emma being ordained Deacon in the Cathedral – and thank you to all who travelled to support and pray for Emma, witness, and join this celebration. Emma has brought with her many gifts and insights from which we are only just beginning to fully explore and benefit. Her pastoral heart and excellent preaching have enabled us to deepen our faith and be supported on our pilgrimage with Christ and one another. Training a curate is a big responsibility for both the Parish, and also myself as Training Incumbent. I take this responsibility very seriously and I'm very much looking forward to seeing Emma ordained Priest in July 2026 and continuing to support and encourage her into being the priest God is calling her to be.

As a community it is always a joy to celebrate some of the more joyful transitions in life. In 2025 we celebrated with many people (too many to list) who passed significant birthdays at both ends of the scale! We also shared in the love and joy of Nicholas and Joy King (nee Skingle) and Lesley Porter and Sam Greenfield, when both couples wed over the same weekend. Sadly, we also said farewell to some much loved and respected, longstanding members of the community, and grieved with our friends upon the deaths of their family members. Funerals or Memorial Services for Church family members were held for: Arthur Brown, Margaret Gunning, Gladys Mimer, Dennis Price, David Knight, Josie Gower, Marion Roff, Andreas Ioannou, George Reed, Peter Mullard. 2025 saw a sharp rise in the number of funerals taken by the ministry team, including the funerals of two infants, although we are not yet back to pre-pandemic levels. Saying farewell to such a significant number of people throughout the year will leave a lasting legacy upon our fellowship but so will the contributions they made to our common life. As Easter People our hope and joy is that we will see them again in the resurrection.

You might be interested to note that the following number of Pastoral Offices were conducted:

	2025	2024	2019
Baptisms:	27 (3 adults)	10 (1 adult)	27 (3 adults)
Weddings:	4 (1 Blessing)	1 (2 Blessings)	9 (0 Blessings)
Funerals:	31 (12 at Crem)	21 (5 at Crem)	42 (18 at Crem)
Interment of Ashes:	19	18	19

This might go some way to explaining why 2025 felt such a busy year. But these statistics do not record the number of people our ministry team and visitors made pastoral visits to at home or in

hospital, the twice-monthly Communion Services held in 2 Nursing Homes, the myriad of meetings needed to keep this Parish connected and moving forward, the training courses attended, nor the extra responsibilities I hold within the Diocese as Rural Dean of Hemel Hempstead, Vice-Chair of the Bedford Review, and Board member of the Growing Younger and More Diverse capital project. My Deanery commitments - including the pastoral care of our clergy - took more of my energy last year with 2 clergy off work for long periods of time and needing support, a colleague caring for a poorly relative, one colleague leaving the Diocese and the successful recruitment of 2 excellent new parish priests, and the ongoing pastoral reorganisation scheme within the Hemel Team. Our Deanery is small - which is definitely one of its benefits, but it can mean we can become quite stretched when unforeseen circumstances occur. However, we have been blessed to welcome into the Deanery the Rev Ian Pankhurst and Bishop Rob Wickham and to receive their ministry.

In December, the difficult but right decision to stop regular worship at St Stephen's Church, came into effect following a joyful and celebratory service, on St Stephen's Day, of the worshipping community at St Stephen's over the last 60 years. This decision was not taken lightly, and I must stress the Church is not closed but rather regular worship has ceased for a period. 2026 will be a year for prayerfully discerning God's plans for St Stephen's for the years ahead. I should like to thank the congregation and Lay leadership of St Stephen's for the way they have responded to this change and for their faithful witness for many years.

Balancing the Books is never an easy task in this parish, but year on year we somehow manage it, even if it is to the deficit budget we created. I remain greatly appreciative of our Treasurers Chris Angell and Jo Fisher for their financial prudence and wisdom. But to get us anywhere near our hoped-for Budget we rely heavily on letting our Halls and on the efforts of our Fundraising Committee. My sincere thanks to our Hall and Fundraising Committees for the work they do. Fundraising events included the usual Quizzes, Fayres & Fetes, Christmas Tree Festival, and Bike n Hike, which all surpassed our expectations. We also welcomed Fr Ben back to Boxmoor for another Silent Film evening, and the folk at St Francis' held 2 very successful Beetle Drives. Obviously, the intention of Fundraising events is to raise money for the parish, but a happy by-product is that they often become Social events and ways to reach out to the community. Thank you to all who support and enable these events. Notable Social events included the Pancake Party for children and the adult Chocolate Feast (tying in with our Lenten Course: Chocolat) and the annual Cricket Match where we once again emerged victorious and now hold a 3-2 lead in winning.

Over the past year I have come to realisation again that it is the small things that makes this parish work; makes it the joy it is to minister and worship within. The small things matter. And so many of you, my brothers and sisters in Christ, contribute in so many and varied ways to our common life that it would be impossible to list you all by name. That's not to say there isn't room for more helpers, but that your contribution is gratefully received, and to you all I would like to thank you most sincerely for all that you do and give to the life of this parish. This is your Parish... and by your efforts you are making this a welcoming, well kept, active, caring, dignified, and spiritually refreshed parish. Whether you help with our Comms Team and our regular Magazine, or you visit/call/give Communion to the sick or housebound; or are a flower arranger, sidesperson, reader, server, intercessor, choir member, Baptism helper, cleaner, gardener, card deliverer, caterer, chauffeur, Eucharistic minister, fundraiser, treasurer, secretary, etc; I am most grateful for all that you do and for the way that you do it. Thank you.

I should also like to thank Reverend Emma and Carole, and our wonderful team of retired priests who assist us so ably and ensure that worship is offered each week and sermons are given that point us to God and enrich our thinking as disciples of Christ in this generation. My thanks also go to my family for their continued support and love as they enable me to be the priest God has called me to

be among you, and to Deniece for all the work she does behind the scenes as our Parish Administrator.

2026 will, I'm sure bring more unexpected moments, more highs and lows, more ordinary times, new challenges and fresh opportunities. In the light of the Risen Christ I pray that we will meet these together, head-on, and continue to grow and encourage one another in the love of the God whom we serve. I pray that we will continue to live God's love in our community and with the Spirit's help and guidance breathe new life, joy, and enthusiasm into all that we try to do here in God's name. For...

Alleluia! Christ is Risen. He is risen indeed. Alleluia!

In Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mike". The signature is written in a cursive style and is underlined with a single horizontal stroke.

APCM Item 13 : Reports from PCC committees and other church groups

Please see Book 3.