



The Parish of Boxmoor

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

Annual Parochial Church Meeting

in St John's Church, Boxmoor

Sunday 10 May 2026 at 11am

following the Parish Eucharist

Book 3 - Contents

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

REPORTS FROM PCC COMMITTEES

COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE

Chair : Anne Lyne (Facebook and media). Members : The Vicar (Newsletter), Revd Emma Williams (Curate), Sally-Anne Bates (Secretary, Magazine and Web team), Peter Garner, Graham Gibbs, Annie Mitchell, Job Rombout, Rosie Shaw (Web team).

The Communications Committee is responsible for all aspects of communication and media, internal and external, on behalf of the parish. In my time as Chair, the work of the committee has changed to adapt to the modern world of communications and is now vastly different from what it would have been 10 or 15 years ago. Our remit includes the monthly parish magazine, the weekly newsletter, our website, our representation on social media (Facebook), 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 for example).

Comms is a large committee, with 8 members currently. If members of the parish would like to contact us, or feel they have expertise they could share with us, we are as listed above.

However, the communications effort in the parish involves substantial input from other people who are not actually committee members. We are very grateful for all the hours put in by Alan Munford and Paul Davies, and not forgetting Deniece Colley.

Since the APCM 2025 we have met 5 times, via Zoom.

Magazine. Sally-Anne Bates has devotedly and expertly edited the parish magazine for all of her adult life, and now manages the advertising portfolio as well, battling to get all the information in in time for the publication to go to print each month, often against the deadline. Our profound thanks go to Sally for this demanding task. Parish Administrator Deniece Colley prints the magazines, then Alan Munford bundles them up ready for distribution. If anyone would like to contribute material for the magazine, then please send it to Sally at magazine@stjohnsboxmoor.org.uk.

Weekly Newsletter. The weekly newsletter is created and updated in the Parish Office by the Vicar and Parish Administrator (thank you Mike and 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 by the Tuesday of the week concerned.

Social Media. We have a presence on Facebook. The St John's page has 678 followers (up from 604 last year) with the vast majority of the audience being female, aged from early 20s upwards. I share on our 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 and other material of interest as it occurs. It is necessary to post on the page regularly to keep our information appearing in the Facebook "feeds" of our followers. On our page, we promote our own parish services, seasons of worship, events, fundraisers and concerts. Where such information is relevant to the wider community, I share our Facebook posts on to other local groups and pages. If the information is available, I share the posters for concerts performed in the church by other local choirs and orchestras. Each time we publicise an event, we gain a few more "followers". We seek to portray ourselves as an active and welcoming parish.

In the light of current concerns within the church about safeguarding, we now have a social media safeguarding policy, drawn up by Rosie Akeroyd and adopted by the PCC.

Website. We have an excellent website <https://stjohnsboxmoor.org.uk/> designed and set up by Stacey Barton to whom we are immensely grateful. Stacey maintains overall control and advises and trains the team as necessary but has stepped down from the committee due to family and work commitments.

As a Comms team, we know we still have work to do on the website to use its full potential and we hope to embark on this shortly. We are grateful to Sally-Anne for taking on day to day responsibility for updating the posters on the website and to the Vicar, for whom any lack of live-streaming capacity creates hours of extra work. As well as information on parish activities, the website provides the link to the (free) ticketing for the busy Christmas services and also has a donations button among its facilities.

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@stjohnsboxmoor.org.uk.

Parish Christmas and Easter cards. The parish Christmas and Easter cards are an important part of our outreach. They 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 designs are chosen by the Communications Committee, and the cards themselves are drawn up by the Vicar, in conjunction with the seasonal service posters. They are all printed by Kallkwik (who can do it cheaper than we can in-house now). We print over 8,000 Christmas cards, about half of which are delivered by volunteers within the parish, but the other half, which go to the outlying areas we find difficult to cover, are outsourced to Dor2Dor. The Easter card only goes to the inner areas of the parish (4,000 cards), and we are grateful for volunteers from the congregation who deliver them. Without their help our work would be in vain. I liaise with Kallkwik and Dor2Dor for the printing and delivery, and am very grateful to Alan Munford who, though no longer a member of the Committee, so expertly bundles the cards and organises them for distribution into numbered "walks".

General event publicity. 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, only 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 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 reserves the prime location on the Moor opposite the station for the Christmas Tree Festival banner a whole year in advance.

Media. From time to time I write articles about events for the parish magazine, also articles on behalf of the parish for Boxmoor Direct to promote our major fundraisers. In the past I have also submitted pieces to the Gazette/Hemel Online, but this no longer seems to be worth the effort. I would like to express my personal thanks for all Sally-Anne Bates does to keep the committee on track, to record our activities, and for sharing with me as appropriate posters and images in the correct format for me to use on social media. I am grateful for the support from the committee and their participation in getting the job done and to the Vicar for the large part he plays in our parish life and communications.

FINANCE AND GIVING COMMITTEE

Chair : Chris Angell. Members : Jo Fisher, Mark Harbour, Revd Mike Macey and Job Rombout, latterly joined by our new Curate, Revd Emma Williams.

The Committee met regularly during 2025, both on-line and face to face, to review financial progress, agree reports and propose budgets for the PCC's consideration. Support continued to be 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 were largely concluded, but provision has been made in the 2025 Accounts for possible further electricity charges.

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 special collections.

Significant planning was also undertaken in preparation for a Financial Giving Campaign in early 2026; a substantial increase in the Parish's Planned Giving income being essential to achieving break-even or better budgets going forward.

FUNDRAISING COMMITTEE

Chair : Cathy Shaw. Members : The Vicar, Chris Angell, Jean Garner, Anne Lyne, Di Tovey.

I am delighted to share an overview of St Johns fundraising activity throughout 2025, which so many of our church community have supported and participated in. This year has been a busy and successful one, with our collective efforts making a good contribution to our church financially, and drawing our community closer together through several memorable events.

Among the highlights was the summer fete, held outdoors in St John's church grounds in July. Blessed with fine weather (-ish! Just a few drops of rain the whole day!), the event attracted a vibrant crowd and featured a lively mix of stalls, games, and entertainment—from barbeque snacks to bouncy castles, home produce and crafts to engaging live performances. Attendees praised the welcoming atmosphere and the strong spirit of togetherness.

In the Autumn, we launched our first dedicated event for external stall holders, the Harvest-time Local Crafters event. This initiative showcased talented artisans from the wider region, providing a platform for creativity and local enterprise, while further diversifying our fundraising activities.

Our annual 'Countdown to Christmas' Fayre in late November brought families and friends together in anticipation of the Advent and Christmas season, and offered a chance to get some early gifts. We saw strong attendance throughout the day. It also saw the winning tickets being drawn for the Grand Draw which had been open since Spring.

In the lead-up to Christmas, we also hosted the enchanting Christmas Tree Festival, featuring both indoor and outdoor trees once more, each beautifully decorated and turning our church and grounds into a festive wonderland. This event continues to grow from strength to strength and added a magical touch to our celebrations, with much creativity and festive spirit on display.

Throughout the year, our three quiz evenings proved immensely popular, offering lively competition and camaraderie. These events attracted participants from across the community and contributed significantly to our fundraising efforts. And a particular highlight for many was the silent film

evening, which featured jaunty organ music performed by Rev. Ben Weitzman to accompany Laurel and Hardy classics.

Collectively, these events not only generated vital funds but also fostered a genuine sense of community and celebration. While not quite meeting our very stretch ideal target for the year, the events collectively raised a significantly higher contribution to church funds than average for past years. I would like to thank everyone involved, and in particular the committee members for their dedication in planning and enabling these events to happen. We are a small committee, and will warmly welcome others who would like to join us and add their ideas and energy into the mix!

HALL COMMITTEE

Chair : Bob Hammond. Members : The Vicar, Peter Garner, Mark Harbour, Lorraine Ioannou, Graham Liddle (Bookings Secretary), Di Tovey.

The Hall Committee for St John's Hall, under the leadership of Bob Hammond, Hall Co-ordinator, met four times in 2025. The Hall remains a vital stream of funding for the Parish whilst also being an asset to our wider community with various groups using the Hall throughout the week. There is barely a day when the Hall is not let. Our thanks for Graham Liddle for managing the Hall diary and to Di Tovey (and family) for ensuring smooth and effective opening and closing of the Hall.

During the year Mark Harbour installed new notice boards in the hall(s) for both church and community use. A contract was entered with AM Walls to have the dividing doors serviced and maintained – which has already proved highly insightful and cost effective. Our hirers continue to be happy with the facilities we offer and the rates charged. Our Safeguarding procedures have been updated and now every group has their own policy and have shared it with us. Our cleaner, Alexandra, has done a fabulous job throughout the year and we remain very happy to work with her. The Kitchen underwent its annual inspection which we passed with flying colours – gaining the top grade for how we use the kitchen. And the Hall Floor was given a thorough deep clean.

The Hall Committee agreed not to increase our hirer charges for 2026 but would keep this reviewed throughout the year. It is hoped that the AV system in the Hall will be improved during 2026 to make our facilities even more appealing.

The Vicar *on behalf of* Bob Hammond

PASTORAL COMMITTEE

Chair : The Vicar. Members : Revd Emma Williams, Carole Lewis.

This Committee meets on a confidential basis; for obvious reasons its proceedings are neither minuted nor reported publicly.

SAFEGUARDING COMMITTEE

Chair : Rosie Akeroyd. Members : The Vicar, Revd Emma Williams, Marian Davies, Rosie Shaw.

This Committee meets on a confidential basis; for obvious reasons its proceedings are neither minuted nor reported publicly. But see item 4 of Book 1.

SOCIAL COMMITTEE

Chair : Lorraine Ioannou. Members : Marian Davis, Di Tovey.

We have held our usual round of events that we organise. The pancake party held for the children did not have as many taking part as we usually did, due we think to Shrove Tuesday falling during half-term; people may have been away or just forgotten. The Vicar commented that the smaller number made the organising of the races much more manageable. The cheese and wine party for the adults in the evening was a nice, relaxed social evening.

42 people came to the Parish Christmas lunch which was a traditional Christmas dinner. We also lay on a Sunday lunch, dates of which work around whatever else is happening in the Parish.

In conjunction with the fund-raising committee we have also laid on refreshments for the Christmas Fair, Christmas Tree Festival, Summer Fair, Craft Fair, and the film night. We also catered for a lunch to welcome Emma and family to the Parish and on being made a Deacon.

We can always use an extra pair of hands for most of the events, especially providing a Sunday lunch.

YOUTH COMMITTEE

Chair : Jo Fisher. Members : The Vicar, Revd Emma Williams, Rosie Akeroyd, Marian Davies, Nicole Lockwood, Annie Mitchell, Rosie Shaw.

No separate report. Please see Junior Church report later in this book.

REPORTS FROM DAUGHTER CHURCHES

ST FRANCIS, HAMMERFIELD

Contact : Trevor Standen.

1. The church continues to grow.
2. It has raised significant sums for St. Francis Hospice in the last year and in particular at The Christmas Carol Service.
3. Its Beetle Drives have been and continue to be a great source of fund raising.
4. The Hall is virtually at capacity in terms of hires.
5. Last summer saw a visit from The Bishop of Richborough, preaching and presiding, and he will be coming again on St Francis Day on 4 October.
6. A full rota of priests has been assembled by the Vicar, to whom we are very grateful.
7. We continue to have the Guild of the Servers of the Sanctuary have services at the church.

ST STEPHEN, CHAULDEN

Contact : Jean Garner.

During the first half of 2025 numbers and morale at St Stephen's faltered. Upon descending to 6 people in church for 3 weeks running the Vicar had a conversation with the Lay Leadership of the Church to discern their will for the future. The collective mind was that maintaining the status quo was no-longer an option. With an aging population of leaders and congregation, and declining numbers questions it was thought best to stop meeting together as a Worshipping Community on Sunday mornings. Discussions were then held with members of the Church about how to end well, and it was agreed that St Stephen's would host the Parish Eucharist on the Sunday after Christmas 2025, and this would be their final service as a Worshipping Community.

During this joyful, yet poignant service of thanksgiving for all that St Stephen's has meant to her faithful worshippers and leaders, testimony was given from various people whose faith has been formed and nurtured at St Stephen's over many decades. The congregation was supported by a good number from both St John's and St Francis'. And at the end of the service the regular congregation of St Stephen's was commissioned to go in the light of Christ who had sustained them thus far in their pilgrimage of faith, and to take that light to wherever they chose to worship next.

This was a painful process as a church building is more than just a building. It is a spiritual home: a place where the walls remember the prayers we have offered in good times and in bad; a place where you are known by name and loved and cherished – warts and all; a place that connects us to family and friends whom we see no longer and who have gone before us in faith. I am very grateful for the grace shared by the congregation at St Stephen's and the understanding that things could not continue as they were.

The Church will remain in use throughout 2026, although not gathering as a Worshipping Community. We will seek to discern God's plan for St Stephen's throughout 2026 and how we can best use the site to live God's love in this Community.

In other news at St Stephen's:

- the building was let to a group of Home Schoolers for most of the year which brought in vital financial assistance to the parish
- the grounds were cleared behind the church and are now being maintained
- the flat roof above the porch was repaired along with the leak into the men's toilet. Remedial decoration work was made.

The Vicar *on behalf of* Jean Garner

REPORTS FROM OTHER CHURCH ORGANISATIONS

BEREAVEMENT GROUP

Contact : Val Darville.

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

During the latter part of the year we have been joined by our new Curate Emma whose presence has been most welcome.

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 25 funerals. Each family has been contacted by the Team to offer support at this very difficult time. We sometimes need to contact several members of the family to ensure that they all feel supported.

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.

BIBLE READING NOTES

Contact : Jane Prew-Bridgwood.

There are several publications available on this subject, however, the most popular with St John's readers is New Daylight. For each day there is passage from the bible followed by a simple and interesting interpretation. It is published three times a year and costs £5.99 per issue. A larger print version can also be obtained. If you are interested and would like to see a copy, please call Jane Prew-Bridgwood on 01442 214441.

CHRISTMAS TREE FESTIVAL GROUP

Contacts : Jean Hammond, Anne Lyne.

Covered under Fundraising Committee; no separate report possible because of health issues.

CHURCH FLOWERS

Contact : Julie Boyce.

We are very fortunate at St John's to regularly have fresh flowers on display most weeks of the year. These include an arrangement at the Altar and a ring of flowers around the Paschal candle. There is generally no cost to the church finances as we have amazing support from many members of the congregation who sponsor flower arrangements, usually for a special occasion. A very small team of dedicated flower arrangers, most of whom are congregation members, purchase and arrange the flowers for the sponsor. An optional message from the sponsor is included in the weekly Newsletter.

During the past year our team assembled over 160 daffodil posies for distribution during the Mothering Sunday service. On Maundy Thursday Catherine Holness created an arrangement of beautifully scented white flowers on the Altar of Repose to evoke a sense of calm reflection. The Easter Garden in the porch heralded the start of Easter when the church was decorated with lilies at the Altar and flowers around the Font and on the window sills. At Harvest Festival, again the church was adorned with flowers, fruit and vegetables celebrating the harvest. At the start of Advent, the Advent ring was decorated and candles were placed in it to be lit during the weeks up to Christmas. We had a full floral display during the year with short breaks during Lent and Advent.

Anyone interested in joining our flower arranging team is very welcome. We also welcome those who wish to sponsor arrangements. I would like to thank all our sponsors and flower arrangers, especially Jean Frith, for their continued support.

DIRECTOR OF MUSIC

Contact : Keith Beniston.

I am pleased to report that the choir has continued along its established pattern of singing at monthly choral evensong services, and at a range of special services within the church's year. These include the Annual Memorial Service, Advent, Christmas and Holy Week.

Additionally, in June 2025, joined by a large brass and percussion ensemble, a fine performance was mounted of Rutter's "Gloria" which certainly blew away a few cobwebs! The Festival of Lessons and Carols drew in a record congregation and many kind words of praise flowed back afterwards. The use of an ensemble has become a firm fixture. On Palm Sunday this year, we performed a large part of Haydn's "Passion" with four soloists (three, regular choir members) and a string quartet.

For Choral Evensong the choir is often supported by additional voices from several different sources but during both the traditional Holy Week and Christmas services, the "core" group of loyal singers provided an effective array of rich, suitable, seasonal music. Perhaps most notable was the famous opening duet from Pergolesi's "Stabat Mater" sung on Good Friday by Katherine Boyce and Helen Isaac. Nicholas King continues to make an invaluable contribution through his effective and often colourful use of the organ.

Continuing financial support is most gratefully received from the PCC, MASJ and the Worth Trust, facilitating a bolder programme of music than might otherwise be possible, most especially where instrumental ensembles are involved.

Choir rehearsals are great fun, and we always welcome new members, of which there have been several during the past year. If you wish to "try out" the choir simply attend a rehearsal on Fridays at

7pm. There is no strict formal audition. Reading music is undeniably desirable, but as several current members demonstrate regularly, not absolutely essential. The repertoire is always closely linked to the services, and aligns with the style and character of St John's Boxmoor.

Attendance at Choral Evensong is, in general, modest, but consistent. All our services are available to view and listen to through the church's website.

ECO CHURCH

Contact : Dee Fisher. Members : Lyne Eden, Mark Harbour, Rosie Shaw, Revd Emma Williams.

Over the past year, our Eco Team has continued to build momentum. After proudly achieving the **Bronze Eco Church Award**, now displayed near our Eco notice board, we've set our sights on the **Silver Award**. This next step challenges us to grow across all five key areas: *Worship & Teaching, Buildings, Land, Community & Global Engagement, and Lifestyle*. It's a big goal — but one we're excited to pursue together.

In September, we hosted a lively **Big Brew** event celebrating Fairtrade tea and coffee, raising **£60** to support Fairtrade farmers. As Christmas approached, our magazine featured Olivia Warburton's inspiring *Dreaming of a Green Christmas*, encouraging thoughtful, sustainable choices. More recently, our **Fairtrade Chocolate Easter Egg** display on Mothering Sunday helped spark conversations about ethical buying.

We're currently gathering the results of the Eco Church survey that we circulated to the congregation to gather feedback on their views about reducing carbon footprint and their lifestyle, which we hope to share in the May magazine. These insights will help shape our next steps.

To learn from others on the journey, we've reached out to several churches — including Tring Baptist Church, who have achieved Gold, and Carey Road Baptist Church and St Luke's in St Albans, who are also working toward Silver. We've also spoken with Tom Abrahams, the diocesan Net Zero Carbon Officer, who connected us with Rachel Johnston for further guidance.

Our latest Community & Global initiative is close to home: supporting **Heath Barn's campaign** to raise £250,000 by June. Many will remember Heath Barn as the former Sunday School venue before our church hall existed — and the place where Den Hudson, our much-loved Lay Reader, helped secure the road crossing so children could reach the church safely. Protecting this space from redevelopment matters deeply to our community. If you're able to sign up or donate, your support would mean a great deal.

We continue to keep abreast of developments through the Dacorum CAN (Climate Action Network) to monitor their initiatives and see what other local organisations are doing about the environment.

None of this work happens overnight. It takes time, energy, and a shared commitment to caring for creation. We're grateful to have welcomed **Reverend Emma Williams** and **Lyne Eden** to the team this year, and we're thankful for the encouragement and support from the whole church family.

FRIENDSHIP TEAS

Contact : Wilf Stepto.

Friendship Teas keep going strong. Typical attendance is between 20-25, and we gained a few new regulars over the last few years. Most of our regulars attend 3 teas out of every 4.

Attendance is split close to 50/50 between those who attend St Johns every Sunday, and those who do not.

Donations for the church are usually in the £40-60 range.

The Uke-a-Daisies ukelele band has serenaded us twice since the last APCM, and will be back in June.

Keith Beniston played the piano for us at Christmas.

Simon, Melissa and I do the setting up together, and are now very efficient at it. We changed the table layout to try and encourage people to mingle outside of their previous friend groups - with some success. You can still tell the St John's and non-St John's halves with a single glance.

In November we cancelled it at the last minute due to a snow flurry which threatened to become a storm but ultimately did not. (To our chagrin, the day turned out very pleasantly.) This was our first last-minute cancellation. A few people did not get the message in time, and we've collected a few more contact details. We will be more thorough in future.

People who go above and beyond:

Linda Stepto-Mason, Rae Warby (providing food), Marion Horton, Carole Crowhurst, June Forrest (washing up).

JUNIOR CHOIR

Contact : Helen Isaac.

The Junior Choir at St John's Church continues to thrive, offering a welcoming and engaging environment for young singers. With approximately 15 regular attendees aged between 5 and 12, the choir provides an opportunity for children to develop their musical skills while actively participating in worship.

Rehearsals and Leadership Rehearsals take place twice a month on a Friday evening from 5:30 pm to 6:15 pm. These sessions are led by Helen Isaac, with assistance from Marian Davies. The structured yet enjoyable rehearsals include warm-ups, learning or practising the chosen song, and time for snacks and team games to foster friendship and collaboration among the children.

Performances and Participation Each month, the Junior Choir performs a Christian song during the all-age Eucharist, typically on the first Sunday of the month. The songs are carefully selected to align with the themes of the service, enhancing the worship experience for the congregation. While the choir sings together as a group, there are often opportunities for soloists and small ensembles to contribute to the performance.

Growth and Development Over the past year, the choir has experienced repeated growth in membership, reflecting the enthusiasm and dedication of both the children and their leaders. Despite a few members leaving us due to increasing in age and moving on to other things, we are still organically attracting new, younger members from the wider congregation to replace them. The

choir's ability to sing in harmony has greatly improved, demonstrating their commitment and progress in choral singing.

Welcoming New Members The Junior Choir warmly welcomes new members aged 5 to 12 who are interested in singing. If you would like to attend a rehearsal or learn more, please contact Helen Isaac via email at happyhellysinging@gmail.com.

We are excited for the future of the Junior Choir and look forward to sharing more wonderful musical moments with the St John's Church community.

JUNIOR CHURCH

Contact : Jo Fisher.

Over the last year junior church has been a consistent offering for the young people on Sunday mornings. Alongside this we offer Tiny Tots on a Tuesday morning and are doing Messy Church every couple of months.

During junior church the focus is usually on the Gospel reading for the day, though we do cover other subjects like prayer. We have a steady number of young people who attend, of from age 3 upwards, and they are always excited to share what they have been learning.

Themes we have covered at Messy Church are Kings and Queens of the Bible, Candlemas, the Holy Cross and many more.

We couldn't do Tiny Tots, Junior Church and Messy Church without the help of the following people:

Rosie Shaw, Rosie Akeroyd, Mary McCluskey, Marian Davies, Annie Mitchell, June Young, Jackie May and Di Tovey.

Thank you to all our other helpers who contribute in many other ways, including serving tea & coffee, playing the organ and leading worship.

KNITTING AND CRAFT GROUP

Contacts : Jean Hammond, Sue Horsnell.

No report possible because of health issues.

MUSIC AT ST JOHNS

Chair : Mark Harbour. Board members : The Vicar, Keith Beniston, Paul Davies, Risper Kangai (Treasurer), Nyree O'Brien (Herts Music Service) and Job Rombout.

Our charity 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 at the end of 2025 providing a contribution of £6,000 to the PCC that went towards the new music system in St John's.

Lunchtime concerts: Two series of Friday lunchtime concerts took place in 2025, the first in the Spring which commencing on 9th May with Emilija Karaliute playing the Kankles which is the national instrument of Lithuania, we also had a performance by Alex Wyatt (on his grand piano) and

his trio and a concert by the Hertfordshire Music Service (Dacorum) Staff. The second in the series was the Autumn concerts starting with Christine Bennett a local soprano. We continue to get good audience numbers for these popular performances. Our thanks to Paul Davies for all his effort in managing these events.

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

Educational events: UniSound and Unisong did not take place in 2025 due to lack of availability of key organisers, but we are looking at how this can be resolved for future events.

The WOOFYT days were held on 10/11 March 2026, at St Francis Church over two days due to the popularity of previous events. We had a full complement of schools and groups. The feedback from the pupils and teachers was very positive. The event was again largely funded by IOP with MASJ paying the difference. Jeremy Sampson continues to provide an interesting presentation on how a musical organ works and includes interactive tasks. The pupils clearly enjoy the event and the interaction with Jeremy and with the basic organ structure to create basic sounds and see the physics of the process.

The educational events involve many local schools such as St Cuthbert Mayne, Oakleaf, Boxmoor, Pixies Hill and Micklem.

MASJ is partnered with Dacorum Music School (DMS) who continue to work closely with us for all of these events.

Bursary Scheme: During 2025 we tried to develop the Bursary in terms of engagement with Herts Music Services and with local schools through direct contact and publicity but the response from schools was very disappointing and we had no applications. We are now looking at alternative approaches to promote the scheme and support young musicians in their development. We are still determined to identify young musicians that would benefit from the financial support being offered.

We again held our annual 'New Year's 10k Run and 4k Walk' on 31st December 2025, this time the organising was solely down to MASJ as John Garner has stepped down from helping. We wish John good luck in any future ventures as he has been a great contributor to previous events over the last 12 years. We had a good turnout of around 25 walkers, some with children and dogs and we had around 65 runners. The weather was reasonable and sunny but quite cold. We had three marshals to help, two placed at key intersections and one providing a water stop at the top of Pouchen End Lane. Many participants stayed for a while afterwards to socialise and the event raised £797 towards future MASJ events which was a bit lower than previous years.

We held our most recent Annual General Meeting on Friday 1 November. This took place after the lunchtime concert that day and was attended by a small audience of around 12 people. We presented the Annual Report and answered some questions about the year ahead.

Our new Treasurer is Risper Kangai and we are grateful to her for taking over from Katherine. Risper is now comfortably managing the MASJ finances and associated reporting.

The governance of MaSJ is by the Board who meet every two months. Anyone on the church Electoral Roll is welcome to join the MaSJ Board and to help us achieve MASJ objectives and have input to our future plans.

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

PARISH MAGAZINE

Contact and Editor : Sally-Anne Bates.

Approximately 175 copies of the Parish Magazine are printed in-house each month by Deniece Colley, Parish Administrator. I would like to extend my sincere thanks to Deniece for her continued dedication to this task. I am also very grateful to Alan Munford for his hard work in bundling up the magazines for distribution, managing collecting in monies, and organising postal copies.

I would also like to thank Anne Lyne for her valued editorial support, and Janet Packe along with other members of the congregation who contribute photographs from parish events. My sincere appreciation also goes to Reverend Michael Macey, Reverend Emma Williams, Carole Lewis (for reinstating the Parish Profiles), Alan Munford, Jean Garner, Graham Gibbs, Chris Angell, Mark Harbour, Paul Davies, Dee Fisher, Nicholas King, and the many groups and organisations who regularly contribute content.

Special thanks are due to Chris Lyne for uploading the magazine, along with the Clergy Letter and Parish Diary, to St John's website each month. I am also extremely grateful to our dedicated team of distributors who ensure the magazine reaches our community. We would warmly welcome new volunteers - please speak to me or Alan Munford if you are interested in joining the team.

Advertising and Contributions

In my role as Advertising Manager, I am pleased to report that we continue to receive strong support from our regular advertisers, alongside new advertisers and occasional one-off adverts, such as for concerts held in the church. If you or someone you know would like to advertise, please contact me at: magazine@stjohnsboxmoor.org.uk.

Editorial contributions are very welcome and can be emailed directly to the same address, which greatly assists the editorial process. Alternatively, items may still be left in my pigeonhole or delivered to 27 Beechfield Road.

I always welcome feedback, including suggestions, comments, and constructive criticism, as well as "Letters to the Editor." If you know of anyone who would like to receive the magazine regularly, please contact Alan Munford (01442 242543) or myself (01442 266912) or ask them to complete the subscription slip included in the magazine.

Distribution and Pricing

Our distribution numbers remain lower than we would like, and we would welcome ideas on how to expand our readership within the local community. The price of the magazine remains at 60p per issue or £6 annually.

Conclusion

The Parish Magazine continues to be an important means of communication within the Boxmoor Parish, helping to share news, promote events, and support fundraising efforts for the upkeep of our three churches. It also plays a key role in strengthening our sense of community.

Thank you for your continued support, and please do keep reading the magazine. I look forward to receiving your ideas and contributions for future editions.

POETRY GROUP

Contacts : Ken Farmborough, Carole Crowhurst.

The Poetry Group now meets at the home of Ken Farmborough and is still going strong, be it few in numbers. Five of us meet monthly taking with us poems on a theme, decided by all at the previous meeting. We enjoy tea and biscuits (or a cake) and a natter, which makes for a very nice afternoon.

THE WIDER CHURCH

Contact : Carole Lewis.

Boxmoor parish is a member of Churches Together in Hemel Hempstead usually known as CTHH. There are many churches of various traditions in our town and we are all brothers and sisters in Christ.

CTHH organises several events each year including the annual walk of witness in the town centre on good Friday and the World Day of prayer service on the first Friday of March. You can find an article about this year's World Day of Prayer in our April magazine by Dee Fisher. We have our own walk of witness together with our Catholic brothers and sisters on Good Friday morning each year when we have a combined walk following the stations of the cross along the moor from St Mary and St Joseph's church to St John's which attracts a very good number of people of all ages from both churches.

Other CTHH events are advertised on posters on our church notice boards and in our weekly newsletter.

CTHH also oversees the monthly prayer for our town known as Pray Hemel in different churches from 8am to 9-30 am on the first Saturday of each month starting with a simple fellowship breakfast followed by worship and prayer, organised by the host church. This may also occasionally take place elsewhere in the town including Wetherspoons this April as the first Saturday was Holy Saturday when all churches would have been busy getting the buildings ready for the festival to follow. The venue is usually advertised in our Sunday newsletter for the following Saturday. There are usually four members of our congregation present but it would be lovely to see more. We are hoping to host one of these prayer breakfasts at St John's later in the year.

Each week in our newsletter there is a request for prayer for one of the churches in our town. It would be good to keep that in our minds during the week following.

TINY TOTS

Contacts : Annie Mitchell, Jackie May.

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. At the end of 2025 we had 69 names on our Register, including some new-born babies. We have been welcoming more than 20 Tots to each session, starting off with toys and activities in the hall, followed by refreshments before processing into church for our service of action songs and prayers led by Father Mike or Rev Emma. We are so grateful to 'Auntie' Mary Bennett who was playing the piano for us up until Christmas, but sadly has not been able to join us since her

accident. Fortunately for us, 'Auntie Carole' Lewis has been learning our songs and we are really grateful to her for helping out by accompanying us until Mary is well enough to return. 'Auntie June' Young was helping to run the group earlier in the year, but has recently had to take a back seat due to family commitments, but thankfully continues to support us in lots of other ways. We are so grateful to 'Auntie Jean' Frith who provides the welcome refreshments every week, and she has been joined in the kitchen by two more 'Aunties', Carole Crowhurst and Hilary Robins – many thanks to them all. There is always great excitement when the hatch goes up!

We were blessed with a beautiful sunny day for our picnic in the church grounds during the summer holidays which attracted a good number of families – it was lovely to have some older brothers and sisters joining us too.

We managed to run a toy stall at both the Summer and Christmas Fayres, thanks again to June and Jackie, and made a good contribution to church funds from both events. Our little ones did a grand job of decorating our Christmas Tree at the Festival with their candles, on the theme of 'The Gift of Light'.

It has been a really good year for Tiny Tots, but once or twice we were worried we might have to turn people away as the numbers were so high (one week we had nearly 40 little ones!!). Although this would not be a problem for our services in church, we do have to be mindful of overcrowding in the hall. However as families come and go, we have not had to restrict our numbers yet, and are always delighted to welcome new members.

TOGETHER ON MONDAY

Contact : Di Tovey. Secretary : Graham Gibbs. Treasurer : Ian Packe. Committee : Pat Moran, Beryl Taylor.

Our membership is holding steady at 32 and attendance at meetings is usually in the low 20's. We had our New Year lunch at Little Hay Golf Club and we also had a summer lunch at Hunters Lodge, both very enjoyable. We had a variety of speakers during the year including news about the Apsley Paper Trail which was our charity for 2025, we took a trip down memory lane with Ethel Pack, caught up on life in Kagera with Ruth Goatley, we had more ramblings from Mike Macey and Alan Munford got us all thinking with his fun quiz. Katherine Cox and her friends entertained us during our July meeting with a medley of songs before our buffet supper. This year our outing took us to Hughenden Manor where there was a very interesting V E Day exhibition. At our Christmas meeting we were entertained by the U3A Ukelele band with a selection of festive songs followed by a buffet. Our group generally meets on the first and third Monday of the month in the St John's church hall. The membership fee is £15 and we are always happy to welcome new members.