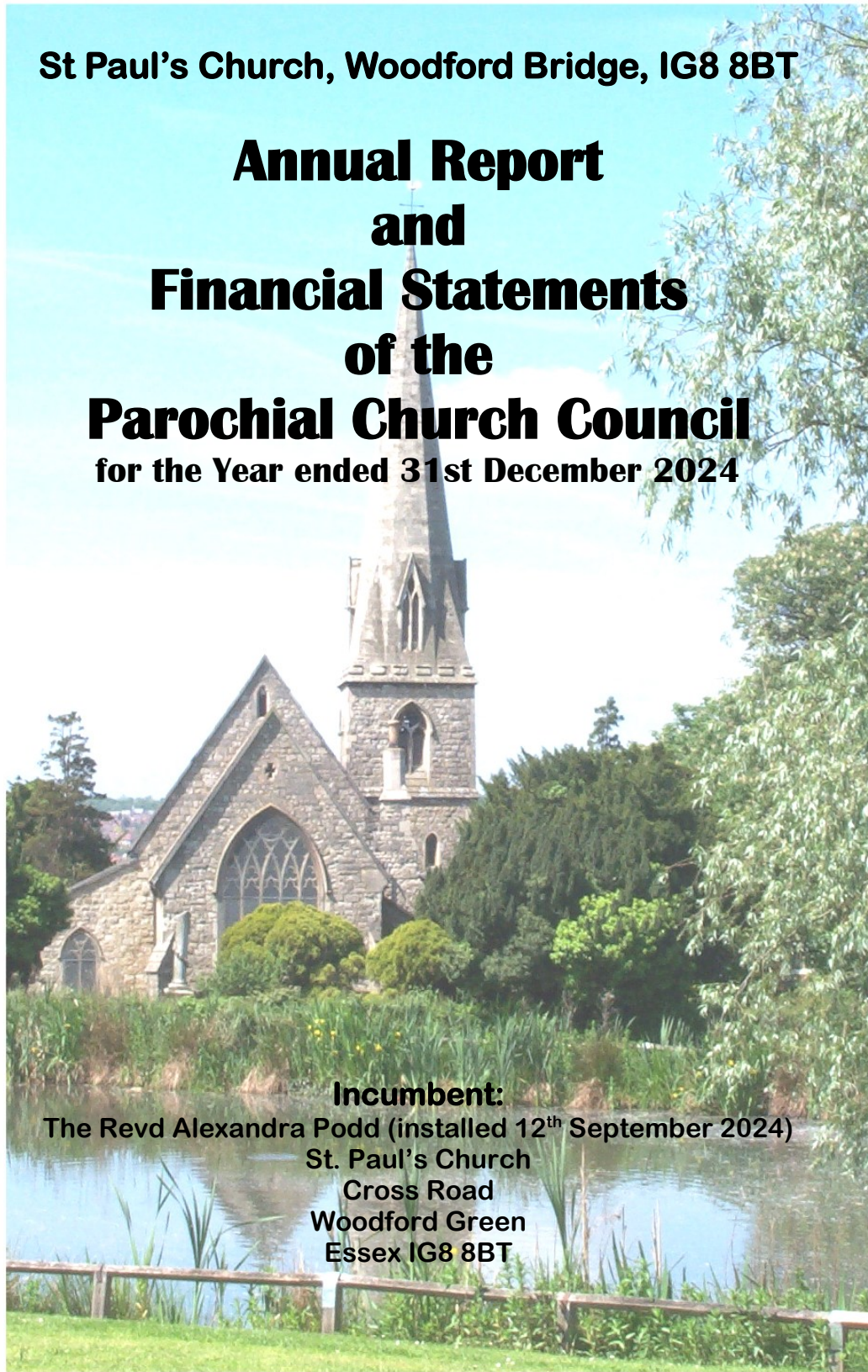


St Paul's Church, Woodford Bridge, IG8 8BT

**Annual Report
and
Financial Statements
of the
Parochial Church Council
for the Year ended 31st December 2024**



Incumbent:

**The Revd Alexandra Podd (installed 12th September 2024)
St. Paul's Church
Cross Road
Woodford Green
Essex IG8 8BT**

Bank:

Barclays Bank plc
Barclays,
Leicester,
LE87 2BB

**Charity reference
number 1128474**

Independent Examiner:

Mr Michael Green
41 Buckwoods Road
Braintree
Essex CM7 1DY

Your notes

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ST PAUL'S CHURCH, WOODFORD BRIDGE

Annual Meeting of Parishioners and Annual Parochial Church Meeting 2025

Sunday 27th April in Church after Parish Communion Service

AGENDA

1. Opening prayers

MEETING OF PARISHIONERS

2. To elect two Churchwardens

3. Apologies for absence

ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING

4. Draft Minutes of APCM held on 28 April 2024 [attached]

To note

5 (a) Presentation of the Electoral Roll

(b) To appoint 3 PCC members for 3 years, resulting from the retirement after 3 years service of Aimée Ayres, Nathaniel Ayres and Sue Malam.

6. Finance:

(a) Treasurer's Report

(b) To receive the audited Accounts

(c) To agree that the PCC will decide who to appoint to audit the 2025 Accounts

7. To receive:

(a) Ministers' Report

(b) Churchwardens' Report [attached]

(c) Deanery Synod Report [attached]

8. Any other business

9. Date of next APCM- TBC

10. Closing prayers

St Paul's Church, Woodford Bridge

Draft Minutes of APCM held on 28 April 2024

Present:

Cliffe and Sheena Adams, Nathan, Aimee, Sophia and Oliver Ayres, The Rev Alan Bolding, Pauline Bolding, Yvonne Cartwright, W Choi, Alan Clark, Martin Cook, Hazel Dawson, Christine Franklin, Shaun Frost, Dallas Fulcher, Douglas Fulcher, Allan Graveson. Renata Groves, Peter Hodges, Valerie Hodges Maria Lascelles, Mac Leonard (Chair), The Revd. Esther McCafferty, Paul Malam, Sue Malam, Hermina Monk, The Revd. Ian Monks, Rosemary Monks, Sara Rivas, Antonia Salido, Eve Sarginson, Len Stevens, Amanda Taylor, Joanna Urbanek, George Varughese, Pam Varughese, John Wooden (Minutes), Mary Wooden.

Apologies – Sue Clark , Janice Croke, Vera Hunt, Jill Leonard, Peter McCafferty,

VESTRY MEETING

1. Election of Two Churchwardens

Two nomination papers had been received for churchwarden. One for Paul Malam (proposed by Allan Graveson and seconded by Pauline Bolding) and one for Len Stevens (proposed by Allan Graveson and seconded by Sue Malam). There being no other nominations, the Chair declared that all the nominees were elected.

APCM

2. Draft Minutes of previous APCM held on 23 April 2023

The draft minutes of the previous APCM held on 23 April 2023 were duly noted.

3. (a) Electoral Roll

There are currently 93 people on the electoral roll. The Chair thanked Sue Malam for her work in maintaining the Electoral Roll.

(b) PCC - appointment of new members

(i) To appoint 3 PCC members for 3 years:

Maria Lascelles – proposed by Yvonne Cartwright and seconded by Len Stevens

Antonia Salido – proposed by Peter McCafferty and seconded by Monique Kamperdijh

Shaun Frost- proposed by Monique Kamperdijh and seconded by Peter McCafferty

(ii) To appoint 2 PCC members for 2 years

Joanna Urbanek – proposed by Christine Franklin and seconded by Hazel Dawson

Douglas Fulcher – proposed by Alan Bolding and seconded by Sheena Adams

There being no other nominations, the Chair declared that all the nominees were elected.

The Chair thanked the retiring PCC members for their service - Allan Graveson,

Pam Varughese and Sara Rivas

4. Finance

(a) Treasurer's Report

Len Stevens presented the accounts for 2023. He highlighted that the toilet in church had now been in operation for almost a year and the cost was reflected in the 2023 accounts. He thanked church members for their generosity which allowed St. Paul's to give 20% of its income to charitable causes including for Kenyan Street Children and the Redbridge food bank. He noted that our three year energy contract had come to an end and this had resulted in a substantial increase in our current energy bill. Although the accounts showed £48,000 on hand in the Bank account, we needed to keep three months expenses (£10,000 per month) in reserve in case we suddenly lost all our income and we are also despite chasing still awaited an electrician's bill which actually reduced our cash in hand. The APCM thanked Len Stevens for all his faithful service as Treasurer.

(b) To receive the audited Accounts

The audited accounts were received.

(c) **To agree that the PCC will decide who to appoint to audit the 2024 Accounts**

It was agreed that the PCC would decide who to appoint to audit the accounts.

5. **Other Reports**

To receive

(a) Churchwarden's Reports

The report of Paul Malam and Len Stevens had been circulated prior to the meeting and was taken as read. The Chair thanked the Churchwardens for all their hard work particularly during a period of interregnum.

(b) Deanery Synod Report

The report by Mac Leonard had been circulated prior to the meeting and was taken as read.

6. **Any Other Business**

The APCM thanked Pam Varughese for all her work in providing the slides during the service.

7. **Date of next APCM**

To be decided.

8. **Closing Prayers**

The meeting closed with the Grace.

TREASURER'S REPORT 2024

As can be seen from our financial statement, 2024 showed a return to more typical income and expenditure than had been the case in 2023 when the toilet project was active. Our income was hugely dependent, as always, on the School House and hall rents, totalling £51, 815 and representing some 40% of our income. Heartfelt thanks to Pauline for continuing to manage these lettings so efficiently.

We benefitted from a reduction in Parish Share from £68,000 to £55,000 for the year due to Alexandra being appointed to a 0.5 Full Time Equivalent post and similar reduction applies for 2025.

Immediately prior to and during the interregnum we experienced a decline in weddings booked with a resultant drop in income from occasional offices – weddings and funerals. 2024 saw income of £4279 from these and related expenses of £2407.

We continue to receive regular giving from the church family and where this is offered as tax-efficient we were able to reclaim £9889 from the Inland Revenue. With donations and other items included our income for the year was £124,077.

In respect to expenditure our Share paid was £55,000, some £13,000 less than was originally set, as explained above. A relatively straightforward maintenance year cost £7,322 but energy and utility costs were £13,350 and are likely to be more during 2025.

We were able to donate £9795 to charities, and thanks are due to Vera Hunt for leading in support of Redbridge Food Bank, a regular beneficiary. Due to change in the banking process and procedure we were unable to send our November contribution to Utugi for the Kenyan Feeding Project before the end of the calendar year, leaving £4,000 on account to forward as soon as banking checks are completed. Utugi did, however, receive £4,000 during the year. Our two annual fayres are dedicated to this project.

Total expenditure was £116,221 with £4,000 of the balance held against the Feeding Project.

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF ST PAUL'S, WOODFORD BRIDGE, IG8 8BT
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024

	Notes	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Endowment Funds £	TOTAL FUNDS 2023
Incoming resources					
<i>Voluntary income</i>	2a	58,202			125,632
<i>Activities for generating funds</i>	2b	9,730			12,738
<i>Income from investments</i>	2c	50			87
<i>Church activities</i>	2d	36,895			36,122
<i>Other incoming resources</i>	2e	19,200			27,843
Playgroup	10				
		<u>124,077</u>			<u>202,422</u>
Total incoming resources					
Resources expended					
<i>Costs of generating voluntary income</i>	3a	0			0
<i>Fund-raising trading costs</i>	3b	0			0
<i>Church activities</i>	3c	17,108			20,689
<i>Ministry Costs</i>	3d	99,113			215,951
		<u>116,221</u>			<u>236,640</u>
Total resources expended					
Net incoming/(outgoing) resources					
gains/losses, inc. Playgroup					
<i>Gains/(losses) on revaluation of fixed assets</i>					
<i>Gains/(losses) on investment assets</i>	5				410,000
Net movement in funds	6				
Total funds brought forward at 1 January 2025		55,362			82,458
Total funds carried forward at 31 December 2022		<u>55,362</u>			<u>48,803</u>

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF ST PAUL'S, WOODFORD BRIDGE, IG8 8BT
CHARITY COMMISSION REGISTRATION NUMBER: 1128474
BALANCE SHEET AT 31 DECEMBER 2024

	Notes	2024	2023
		£	£
Fixed assets			
Tangible fixed assets	5	1,540,000	1,154,000
Investments	6	0	
Total fixed assets		<u>1,540,000</u>	<u>1,154,000</u>
Current assets			
Stock			
Debtors	8	0	0
Cash at bank and in hand			
		Covenant account - .	
		1824	1993
Total assets less current liabilities			
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	9	0	0
Creditors: amounts falling due after one year	9		
		<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
Net current fluid assets		55,362	48,993
NET ASSETS			
Unrestricted Funds, including cash in safe	7	55,692	49,703
Endowment funds	10	0	
Restricted funds	10	10	667
Covenant account - as above.		1993	186
<u>TOTAL HELD AT BANK:</u>		55,362	82,458

Approved by the Parochial Church Council on and signed on its behalf
 Revd Alexandra Podd, Chair.

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF ST PAUL'S, WOODFORD BRIDGE, IG8 8BT

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (continued) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024

2 Incoming resources	TOTAL		FUNDS	2023
	2024	Restricted	Endowment	
	Unrestricted	Funds	Funds	
	Funds	Funds	Funds	
	£	£	£	£
a				
<i>Voluntary income</i>				
Planned giving	32,680			32,069
Collections at all services	5,096			6,344
Donations and appeals, incl. charities	10,537			13,038
Income tax recoverable	9,889			11,499
Grants	0			48,196
Legacies	0			14,486
	<u>58,202</u>			<u>125,632</u>
b				
<i>Activities for generating funds</i>				
Fetes, bazaars and other fund-raising events	9,730			12,738
Bookstall sales and magazine adverts	0			0
	<u>9,730</u>			<u>12,738</u>
c				
<i>Investment income</i>				
Dividends and interest	<u>50</u>			87
	50			<u>87</u>
d				
<i>Income from Church Activities</i>				
Church hall lettings etc	32,615			30,105
Occasional Offices-weddings, funerals,etc	4,280			6,017
Textile group / Seniors club	0			0
	<u>36,895</u>			<u>36,122</u>
e				
<i>Other incoming resources</i>				
Party deposits received	0			0
Insurance claims	0			9,843
Rent - School House	19,200			18,000
	<u>19,200</u>			<u>27,843</u>
Total incoming resources	<u>124,077</u>			<u>202,422</u>

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF ST PAUL'S, WOODFORD BRIDGE, IG8 8BT
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (continued) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024

3 Resources expended	2024	TOTAL	FUNDS	2023
	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Endowment Funds £	£
a <i>Costs of generating voluntary income</i>				
Stewardship costs				
Covenant account				
b <i>Fund-raising trading costs</i>				
Fete costs				
Bookstall	nil			<u>0</u>
c <i>Church Activities</i>				
Missionary and charitable giving:				
Overseas:				
Kenyan Street Children, Utugi Centre	4,000			8,000
Home: including 13 PCC nominated charities	9,795			9,271
Senior's Social Club	0			0
Other:	0			0
Trussell Trust - Redbridge Food Bank	3,313			3,418
	<u>17,108</u>			<u>20,689</u>
Ministry costs:				
Diocesan Parish Contribution	55,214			68,000
other clergy costs	365			0
Church running expenses	11,948			16,566
Hall and house maintenance / utilities	12,269			4,478
Upkeep of services	0			0
Upkeep of churchyard	0			0
Parish magazine	0			0
Sunday Club / youth work costs	0			0
Church hall running costs	13,019			15,929
Bank charges / depreciation	440			421
Vicarage - utilities and decoration	217			111
	0			0
Toilet Costs	4,769			109,856
IT microphones, etc	872			590
Total resources expended	<u>116,221</u>			<u>236,640</u>
Other- Fees to Chelmsford Diocesan				
Board of Finance - wedding/funeral fees	<u>(1028)</u>			<u>1028</u>

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF ST PAUL'S, WOODFORD BRIDGE, IG8 8BT
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (continued) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024

4 Staff costs	2024	2023
	£	£
a Wages and salaries	8,548	7,530
	<u>8,548</u>	<u>7,530</u>

During the year the PCC employed a hall cleaner, part time.

b

5 Tangible fixed assets	Freehold land and buildings	Church equipment	TOTAL 2024
	£	£	£
Cost or valuation			
At 1 November 2023	1,540,000		1,540,000
Additions			
Disposals			
Revaluation			
At 31 December 2023	1,540,000		1,540,000
Depreciation			
At 1 January 2014			
Provided in the year			
Disposals			
At 31 December 2014			
Net book amounts			
At 31 December 2019	<u>1,540,000</u>		<u>1,540,000</u>

The freehold land and buildings comprise the Church Halls and the School House. For accounting purposes these were revalued in 2023.

6 Investments

£

Market value 31 December 2024	<u>nil</u>	<u>NIL</u>
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PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF ST PAUL'S, WOODFORD BRIDGE, IG8 8BT
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (continued) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024

7 Analysis of Net assets by fund

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Endowment Funds £	Total Funds	Comparison 2023
Church assets : insurance valuation hall- 1,320,000;house- 220,000	1,540,000			1,540,000	1,540,000
Investment fixed assets					
Current assets	55,362	9		55,362	48,803
Current liabilities					
Long term liabilities					
	<u>1,595,362</u>	<u>9</u>		<u>1,595,362</u>	<u>1,588,803</u>

8 Debtors

Income tax recoverable (blue envelopes)		2332			1963
Prepayments and accrued income					
Other debtors (water rate)		0			0
		<u>2332</u>			<u>1963</u>

9 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

Deferred income - 2025 wedding fees				0	100
Accruals for utilities/ other costs - UWDC Dec energy used				0	0
Other creditors					
				<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>

Creditors: amounts falling due after more than one year

Wedding deposits for 2025		nil			0
					0

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF ST PAUL'S, WOODFORD BRIDGE, IG8 8BT
 NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (continued) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024

10 Statement of funds

	Bal b/fwd 1 Jan 2024	Income	Expenditure	Transfers, other gains and losses	Bal c/fwd 31 Dec 2024
	£	£	£	£	
Unrestricted Fund					
Covenant account	1993	21824	0	21993	1824
General accounts	46800	102253	116221	21993	53527
	<u>48793</u>	<u>124077</u>	<u>116221</u>	1297	<u>55351</u>
Restricted Fund					
Organ/piano	10	1	659	0	11
Total funds	<u>48803</u>			21993	<u>55362</u>

Fees to Diocesan Board Finance shown in accounts

The restricted funds comprise the organ / piano fund which is monies dedicated to the maintenance of these assets and other musical provision.

Independent examiner's report to the PCC of St Paul's, Woodford Bridge

I report on the accounts of the PCC for the year ended 31 December 2024 which are included in this report.

Respective responsibilities of the PCC and the examiner

The charity's trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 144(2) of the Charities Act 2011 (the 2011 Act) and that an Independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to

- Examine the accounts under section 145 of the 2011 Act;
- Follow procedures laid down in the general directions given by the Charity Commissioners section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act; and
- State whether particular matters have come to my attention.
- The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the Statement of Recommended Accounting Practice: Accounting and Reporting by Charities (SORP 2005), issued in March 2005, UK Accounting Standards and the Charities Act 2011'.

Basis of Independent Examiners Statement.

My examination was carried out in accordance with the General Directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from the management committee concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in a full audit, and consequently I do not express an opinion on the accounts.

Independent examiner's statement

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

- (1) which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements
 - to keep accounting records in accordance with s.130 of the 2011 Act; or
 - to prepare accounts, which accord with these accounting records have not been met;or
- (2) to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.



27.2.2025

M Green.

H1 BUCKWOODS ROAD
BLAINTREE
CM7 1DY

VICAR'S REPORT

What a year 2024 was! I first opened the job description for the half time vicar of St Paul's in January, but it felt too early, so despite the stirring within me, I put it down. I re-opened it in the middle of February, on the second time of advertising, and just knew I had to give it a go. I expected to submit an application and get a very nice 'thank you for applying but no' message back, but followed God's call to interview, and then followed God's call to say yes, and become your vicar. Of course, there was quite a gap between interview, and announcing, and then announcing and starting, and through that time I was praying for you – praying for Len, Paul, Nathan and Joanna as they held a higher level of responsibility in vacancy, praying for Ian, Alan, Mac, Jill and Esther as they served you on a Wednesday and Sunday (I didn't at the time know Margaret was part of the team!). And I was praying for each of the members of the congregation, that you would be built up in your love for God and your love for one another. Since arriving in September, it has been wonderful to get to know each of you, not as a faceless congregation but as individuals, people who I now have the privilege to serve. Thank you for the welcome you have given me – I have felt incredibly blessed, and am delighted to be your vicar. Of course, things have changed for you, for us since I interviewed – in August we lost Alan and he has been deeply missed. I am so pleased that I got to meet him at my interview, and he helped me in July and August with new carpets for my house. Through him I got a sense of the joy and generosity that run through St Paul's like words through a stick of rock. Things too have changed with the vicar's role – you had a vicar that was full time, and now you have a vicar that is half-time. However, I don't believe that it will be a hindrance to the worship and mission of St Paul's. Credit needs to be given where it is due, I have arrived to serve a Church that already serves one another: through coffee mornings, quiz nights, financial giving, Sunday Club, Holiday Club, cleaning church, polishing of brass, changing the hangings, doing and clicking the slides, ordering candles and wafers, cleaning the linen, ringing the bell, welcoming on a Sunday, Mothers' Union, a full and enthusiastic PCC, a vibrant ministry team, managing the hall, Just for Girls, prayer ministry, prayer requests, and so much more! Thank you for all you do – each of you are using your gifts to serve God and one another. And can I encourage you, if you notice that something is done by only one person, ask them if they'd like to share the responsibility. If you notice that you have a stirring inside you, or a voice (internal or external) that is inviting you to give something a go, would you? We have so many gifts and skills across St Paul's and I know that God is calling us to invest our talents in God's kingdom. I thought that given that I'd only been with you for three months, this would be quite a short report, but there is such richness in our life and worship together that brevity just doesn't work! Praise to God for the three months that have been, and I look forward to many more together! God bless you all,

Reverend Alexandra Podd

CHURCHWARDENS' FABRIC REPORT

Following the completion of our toilet project in 2023 we experienced a quieter year in maintenance matters during 2024. We have arrangements in hand with Punch Construction, our toilet installers, to have stonework and mortar repaired and restored around the church in response to recommendations in our recent quinquennial inspection report. We are in process of connecting WIFI cabling to the church and are maintaining basic upkeep of the buildings.

A new carpet was fitted to the vestry and we thank Pauine and her family for all of their support in maintaining our church.

We have lost a hugely energetic and dedicated worker in church building maintenance in the very sad and untimely death of Rev. Alan Bolding, one of our curates, who worked in tireless response to resolve the many ongoing matters that arise in respect of managing three buildings – and heartfelt thanks to Pauline, his wife, for her work in organising lettings for the hall and liaison with the schoolhouse tenant.

Nathaniel Ayres is supporting the church in maintenance tasks now and we thank him for his time and commitment to completing any requests made of him.

Many thanks to Donnie, our hall cleaner, for the superb way the halls are kept; to the church cleaning team for their unseen but much appreciated dedication and those who are able to help us keep the churchyard trimmed and tidy.

Paul Malam and Len Stevens, Churchwardens

REDBRIDGE DEANERY SYNOD REPORT

The Redbridge Deanery Synod met three times in 2024.

The first meeting was held at St. Luke's Church, Ilford on Tuesday 5th March. The keynote address was on **Stewardship and Giving**, a presentation by **Beccy Hills, Diocesan Parish Giving Advisor**. The Diocesan Giving advisors work to help parishes grow their giving; they offer support with using the Parish Giving Scheme; the switch to contactless / digital giving; and with grants and funding. They advocate a MINT approach to creating a Generous Church, looking at: **m**echanisms; **i**mpact; **n**eed; and **t**rust. Beccy then focused on explaining about the Parish Giving Scheme (PGS), and its benefits, and how to get started on digital/online using different devices. At the time of the presentation, Chelmsford was assisting parishes to acquire devices through a national scheme, but this was shortly due to close.

The **Deanery Treasurer** reported regarding parish share contributions. Full year figures showed that Redbridge Deanery is in the top 3 across the diocese, with an improved performance compared to 2022. He expressed thanks to all Deanery parishes.

There was a report on **Deanery strategy and MOF and LOB Funding**. Chelmsford has successfully bid for SMMIB (Strategic Mission and Ministry Innovation Board) funding from the national church. Inter alia, this will help pay for assistance to Redbridge in developing its Deanery Strategy. MOF is the Diocesan mission opportunities fund, to support missional projects that can benefit multiple parishes within the Deanery. In 2024 there is a total of £29k available for each deanery. The first 2024 application was described, as an example for members: utilising Kintsugi Hope to promote mental well-being across the Deanery. Members were reminded that London over the Border and City Churches funds are available to support parish-specific projects to promote Anglican Mission. The definition of this is wide, and can include fabric and security improvement. Preference is given to parishes in areas of deprivation but this is not rigid. It is expected that application parishes have a good track record in paying their parish share. Grants are typically £5-£15k and can be for 1–3 years. Around £170k is available in 2024. Examples of recent successful bids were given.

The second meeting was held at St. Laurence Church, Barkingside on Thursday 6th. June. The keynote address was given by **Bishop Lynne**. After a brief account of her background before becoming Bishop of Barking and her sense of calling to help reorientate a Church that had lost its way she explained how she was initiating a new approach to strategic development in mission, thanks to funding that would last for nine years from SMMIB (the Strategic Mission and Ministry Innovation Board) accessed from national church funds. In the Barking Episcopal Area, a pilot project for Deanery planning was undertaken in 2023 involving the deaneries of Epping and Ongar, Barking and Dagenham and Waltham Forest. Although disparate socially and environmentally they had been able to identify three common themes for discipleship: Children, Youth and Families, Community Outreach, and Social Justice. Initial planning began not with individual project suggestions but with fundamental questions such as What will Christian Witness look like in 2030? What resources would be needed for this? How would they carry out mission together and network with other partners outside their parish area and outside the Church? - How would they discern the movement of the Spirit? She said that admittedly this was “Blue Sky Thinking” but she felt that a “percolating” stage was needed. She went on to say that many of those involved in the early discussions had pointed to how clergy and congregations were weighed down by buildings and administration sapping their missional energy. Many small churches were preoccupied by raising money to keep their buildings sound. There were too many church buildings, and not all had been well-built in the first place. People should come before buildings. Many of those involved so far felt they had the opportunity to do something exciting. The Diocese will be bidding for a major grant to implement strategy from the national church's SMMIB fund later this year incorporating the findings from the pilot projects into its bid. In deciding strategy Redbridge Deanery could benefit from discussions with Christians Against Poverty who had offered to facilitate a planning workshop. She raised the need for simplification and reform of building regulations and administration, as well as an awareness of which church buildings were or were not positioned where there were people flows. She then answered questions from Synod members.

The **Area Dean** gave a 'Deanery Strategy Update' We in Redbridge Deanery have already begun our discussions on our Deanery strategy: at the November 2023 Deanery Synod in groups, at Chapter, and at a meeting focusing on the theme of Children, Youth and Families planned for Thursday June 13th at 1pm at Holy Trinity Church South Woodford. Combining concrete and blue sky thinking, he wanted to invite those attending the meeting to pitch specific ideas on Children, Youth and Families for refining and reflecting.

There may be other ideas for other areas of mission and ministry and although Buildings are not a suggested topic, Redbridge Deanery does recognize that they are important. A mission enabler may be available in the near future to help with this process. Should we consider proposals from Christians Against Poverty, or adopt a broader approach? Do we need an Envisioning Day or not? Meanwhile we should be creative in our PCC meetings and dream dreams in vibrant networks. Ideas should be fed back to the Secretary for discussion at the next Deanery Standing Committee.

The third meeting was held at All Saints Woodford Wells on Thursday 7th November 2024.

The first keynote address was given by **Helen Mullis Kund** on **The Christian Education Project**. The Christian Education Project works across Redbridge schools, free of charge, supporting the RE curriculum and holding assemblies and workshops. Helen described a successful project with Davenant's Year 11 students where The Project goes in fortnightly for a one-hour session. They have guest speakers including Teen Challenge, Street Pastors and a Refugee support group. Helen invited us to come and speak; to raise the profile of what we do. Helen shared examples of successful links which have been created between Woodbridge School and Holy Trinity South Woodford, and John Bramston School and St. Paul's Hainault – these have also received the support of the Mustard Seed project. Recently, The Project supported Harvest Assemblies in 17 schools and reached 8,500 pupils and their associated adults – many of whom know very little about Christianity. We heard of the breadth of work being done through zoom and in person, reaching several schools where Christian children are very much in the minority. Helen thanked the meeting for their support – the Project had a deficit at the start of the academic year and is now viable. They receive funding through LOB, member churches and individual churches. They have also received some one-off grants. Please email Helen at office@christianeducationproject.org.uk if you'd like to be involved in schools within your parish.

The second keynote address was given by the **Revd. Becca Rogers**, an Associate Priest in Newham who also works in **Chaplaincy with the Margaret Clitherow Trust serving marginalized communities**; specifically Gypsy Romany, Irish Traveller and Eastern European Roma peoples, many of whom live on Council dedicated sites. Traditional life and culture has been hard to maintain for many due to changes in the law allowing councils to reduce the number of sites available, while also making it illegal for travellers to stop elsewhere. Becca described her work visiting communities, being welcomed to share the Eucharist and building trust. Marginalised travelling communities have a very low life expectancy – 12% lower for women and 10% lower for men – compared to settled communities; and have six times the likelihood of suicide in young men. They need our welcome and support. Becca shared a new initiative between the Diocese of London, the Diocese of Chelmsford and the Margaret Clitherow Trust to build ties with these nomadic groups through training chaplains who will work in pairs, or individually with the communities, and asks us to make contact if interested in this important work. Many of the Roma church groups are also looking for spaces in which to worship. Becca told us of a successful visit to Redbridge's traveller site in Hainault with the Revd. Sarah Clarke-Moisey and of the many insightful and hopeful conversations that they had.

The Deanery Treasurer confirmed that 63% of the parish share had been received by end September (slightly behind expectation), with the hope that 100% would be received by end December. He also shared that a further zoom call is diarised for 30th November for all incumbents and treasurers to finalise our submission for 2025.

The Area Dean gave a brief recap of SMMIB and its progress. The Bishop of Barking's team are identifying three Genesis churches in Redbridge Deanery who have the potential to resource other churches in a particular charism or mission. Wanstead Parish who are focusing on a Music project will be the first to be assessed and considered; All Saints Woodford Wells are also preparing a bid. Barkingside are meeting in early December to review projects and finalise presentations. They recognise the tight timetable, and we are able to adjust plans and resubmit, and also submit new plans in January and Spring. In addition to the Genesis (and partner) churches, Barkingside are looking to set up two Social Justice hubs – one in West Ham arch deanery and one in Barking arch deanery. This is an iterative and evolving process. Since SMMIB will cover a maximum of twelve churches (three Genesis churches with three partner churches each), the Deanery Strategy will continue to consider the stipendiary and mission needs of all 22 churches in the Deanery. More information is available at [Believing in Barking | The Diocese of Chelmsford](#)

Mac Leonard, Deanery Synod Representative

PCC SECRETARY'S REPORT TO THE APCM

MEMBERSHIP

The membership included Revd. Alexandra Podd, Vicar, Chair From September 2024 *(Ex-officio); Revd Ian Monks, Curate; (Ex-officio) Mac Leonard, Licenced Lay Minister/Deanery Synod/Master of the Music/Lay Vice Chair (Ex-officio); Jill Leonard, Authorised Local Preacher and Pastoral Assistant/Health & Safety Officer; Paul Malam, Churchward/Deputy Lay Vice Chair; Len Stevens, Churchwarden/Treasurer: Nathan Ayres, Deputy Churchwarden; Joanne Urbanek, Deputy Churchwarden: Alan Clark, PCC Secretary/Parish Safeguarding Officer/Deanery Synod (Ex-officio); Aimee Ayers: Shaun Frost; Maria Lascelles: Sue Malam; Antonia Armero Salido;

*Ex-officio membership relates to Clergy and Deanery Synod Members elected for the three-year life of the Synod.

It was with great sadness that we learned of the untimely sudden calling to higher service of our Curate Reverend Alan Bolding during the year. Alan had been a stalwart of the parish along with Pauline, in leading of the maintenance of the church, church hall and church yard in which he is now laid. Our prayers continue to be with Pauline and the family.

MEETINGS

The PCC met six times during the year. January, March, May, July, September and November.

MEETING BASIS

The PCC meets in church and has a set agenda, which includes, Ministry Team comments, Finance, Safeguarding, Health and Safety, Church Fabric and planned events. There are also other agenda items as required as an example the Appointment Process for the new Vicar.

PCC OFFICERS

At the first meeting after the APCM Mac Leonard was elected Lay Vice Chair; Nathan Ayres was re-elected as Deputy Churchwarden; Joanne Urbanek was elected as Deputy Churchwarden; Len Stevens was re-elected Treasurer and Alan Clark was re-elected PCC Secretary and Parish Safeguarding Officer: Jill Leonard was re-elected Health and Safety Officer.

WORKING IN 2024

In addition to the everyday management of the church and parish. A major part of the year involved to preparation for, and the appointment process for our new Vicar Reverend Alexandra Podd, who was warmly welcomed and installed and licensed in September by Bishop Guli in the presence of the Archdeacon, the Deputy Lord Lieutenant of Greater London the congregation, family and guests.

CONGREGATION

The PCC wishes to express its grateful thanks to the congregation for the continuing steadfast support given by you as a member of the parish family before, during and after the interregnum, and throughout the year with the various voluntary roles you undertake, without which the church, churchyard and Sunday Club would not be the successes they are.

Alan Clark, Secretary

PARISH SAFEGUARDING OFFICER'S REPORT

The Parochial Church Council (PCC) takes very seriously the requirement to safeguarding children, young people and the potentially vulnerable adults who attend any activity organised by the Parish and wider church. To that end throughout 2024 we have to the best of our knowledge and endeavours complied with the duty placed under Section 5 of the Safeguarding and Clergy Discipline Measure 2016 to have due regard to the Hours of Bishops guidance on safeguarding children and vulnerable adults.

The PCC has adopted the House of Bishop's Safeguarding Policies and Procedures, copies of which can be viewed by request to the Parish Safeguarding Officer. These policies and procedures form the basis for the Parish Safeguarding Policy which is displayed on the church and church hall notice boards and are reviewed regularly and re-adopted by the PCC at least annually or as and when major changes occur during the year.

Accordingly, it continues to actively monitor the application of the Church of England and Diocese Safe Churches policies and procedures and Governmental Legislation. Part of the monitoring process includes and annual Diocesan Self-audit. Each year Parishes are required to complete a self-audit and submit the results to the Diocesan Safeguarding Team. The audit covers all sectors of parish life, ensuring that safeguarding principles are applied, and current best practice is used. The Results are Colour Coded: RED (not compliant, will need actioning as soon as possible); Amber (partially compliant, need further work to get to green) and GREEN (Fully compliant). Here at St Paul's, we are currently in a mixture of Amber and Green areas, working towards a complete Green. We do promote good practice and also ensures that we are doing all that we can to protect our vulnerable members of the church and wider community. All members of the PCC as trustees and others who lead or have contact with groups who may be identified as being Vulnerable or potentially vulnerable, are required to obtain a clear Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Scheme (DBS) report paid for by the Diocese. These Checks are now renewed every three (3) years. This has changed from five (5) years following a review by the Nation Church Safeguarding Body. Detailed records are kept and confidential documentation if kept in a locked filing system accessed only by the Vicar and Safeguarding Officer. Risk Assessments are carried out when hosting all activities and events considering safeguarding as an element. Our parish officers and volunteers are offered free Basic and Foundation Training either via the on-line C of E Training Portal or face to face basis.

5. Most of the time in church we are one big happy family. However, even if the happiest of family's people can have a bad day, even people we know and trust. We want to help everyone to have good days as much as possible. We try to make sure that people who have a responsibility in the parish are always as helpful as possible. We never want anyone visiting us to feel frightened, confused or worried about something happening or something someone is doing. The vicar and the Safeguarding Officer (PSO) are specially trained and are good at safeguarding who you can talk to, and you can ask for advice of help. This means they look after everyone's safety. Caring for people is a very important part of our Christian life. Our Lord Jesus said, "Love one another as I have loved you".

We have a confidential dedicated Safeguarding telephone number available twenty-four (24) hours every day. 07903 733497. If you are concerned, however small, about anything in or outside church please do not be concerned about waking the Safeguarding Officer. However, if you are concerned that a child or adult might be in immediate danger, or requires urgent medical attention, call the emergency services on 999. Do not delay.

If you wish to talk to someone outside our church, you can contact the Diocesan Safeguarding team at safeguarding@chelmsford.anglican.org.

Alan Clark, Safeguarding Officer

JUST FOR GIRLS

After Alan died last August I found it difficult to focus on anything. We stopped meeting for J.F.G. but I was still supported by the group. After Christmas I suggested that we meet just once a month instead of fortnightly and that has worked for the past few months. We currently meet on the fourth Tuesday starting at 10.30am for coffee and chat. We then have a time of prayer and meditation finishing with some music to listen to. Any female member of St. Paul's church would be welcome at the group.

Pauline Bolding

REDBRIDGE FOODBANK

Since last year's APCM I have taken food, drinks(non-alcoholic), toiletries, and sanitary products to the Foodbank, together with cheques totalling £4255 to help them feed those in our Borough who are finding life hard to manage in our current climate. I would like to thank all those of you who have supported me in this effort as well as those of you who have given in the stores whilst out shopping. I know that those folk who have had to resort to using the Foodbank are most grateful to those of us who can afford to do this, so once again my grateful thanks to you all!

Vera Hunt

MOTHERS' UNION

We continue to meet regularly, on a monthly basis, but have moved our meetings to the second Tuesday of each month as a current convenience. Our meetings are on second Tuesday

afternoons; our themes are both spiritual and social. We are a group of some 23 church members who enjoy one another's fellowship and company, and we are always keen to welcome new members and enquirers. Mothers' Union has a wider remit than just St. Paul's, and to this end we try to remain aware of Diocesan and national M U initiatives such as English for Women and responses to issues of domestic abuse. Other meetings included themes of worship and reflection at New Year and Easter, hearing of Sue Clack's latest adventures abroad, and social opportunities which always seem to include food! Alexandra, installed as our vicar in September, led our meeting in November, giving a personal testimony and telling us of her background in ministry. We wholeheartedly joined others in our church community to raise funds for the Kenyan Street Children feeding stations, and sent £4,000 last year, making a total of over £168,000 sent since 1998. Allowing for the cost of providing a meal in Kenya we have now provided over a quarter of a million meals to vulnerable children. The food is purchased and the meals prepared by Kenyan Mothers' Union members, and 200 children currently receive one meal each week.

Len Stevens, Branch Leader

KENYAN FEEDING PROJECT

We continue to support the Kenyan Feeding Project organised by the UTUGI children's home and school in Kutus, Kenya. Our Summer and Christmas Fayres are dedicated to the Project, usually raising £4,500 per annum, and with other generous donations we were able to send £4,000 to UTUGI during the year thanks to the generosity of so many of the St Paul's family. We are holding £4,000 to be forwarded when we have effected a change in payment process. We learned that we are currently feeding 200 children with one nourishing meal each week. The Kenyan initiative and the Redbridge Food Bank are now further supported by a fortnightly quiz evening on alternate Fridays in the church hall, with proceeds shared between the two feeding projects. We raise between £50 and £80 per evening.

Len Stevens

SUNDAY CHURCH CLUB

We currently have 24 children on our register, with some comings and goings, and some of whom we see infrequently but are delighted when they are able to be with us. We follow scriptural and Christian themes and usually work as two groups – older (KS2) and younger (KS1). We are a team of six, with many thanks to the parents who stay in the hall to help us each week since with up to 12 -15 children we need lots of adults present.

The weekly meetings involve Bible teaching, games and fun, with a Kit-Kat to enjoy as we move to church to tell of our doings. We decorate biscuits in Lent to sell afterwards in church for Christian Aid and we plant bulbs in the autumn time to give to mums on Mothering Sunday. We contribute to all-age family services and respect Remembrance Sunday. We teach via video and games, wordsearches and craft. We learn by having fun. We have enjoyed Alexandra's contribution to, and interest in, Sunday Club during the time she has been with us.

Len Stevens

TEXTILE GROUP

The Textile Group is a group of friendly sewers and knitters who meet fortnightly on Wednesday afternoons in the Derbyshire Room.

We have a stall at the Summer and Christmas Fairs where we sell quality items and these have become very popular, raising funds for the Kenyan Street Children Feeding Programme, a charity close to our hearts. Eve has made beautiful quilts to be raffled at each fair, raising more funds for the charity.

It has become a tradition for us to have an Easter table at the back of the church, selling knitted chicks and other items containing chocolate goodies

Our competent knitters make teddies which are given to children who are baptised in our church. They also make hats and scarves for the Samaritans Purse shoeboxes and scarves for the homeless.

We are very pleased to welcome our lovely vicar Alexandra into our fold and we are grateful for all of those who support our work.

Mary Wooden

These Papers are published by Mac Leonard on behalf of St Paul's Church, Woodford Bridge.

Digital copies are available at macleonard@virginmedia.com and <http://www.stpaulswb.com>