



Annual Reports & Accounts for 2023

Meeting Sunday 21st April 2024, at 12 Noon



*To be discussed at the Meeting of Parishioners
and Annual Parochial Church Meeting*

St Edyth's Church, Avonleaze, Sea Mills, Bristol BS9 2HU, 0117 968 6965

www.stedyths.org.uk - Charity No. 1141128

AGM 2023 Agenda

Annual Parishioners' Meeting

The meeting of Parishioners will be held in St Edyth's Church on Sunday 21st April 2024 at 12.00 pm. Chair: Sally Thomas.

AGENDA:

1. Opening thought and prayer – Sally Thomas
2. Appointment of a clerk for the meeting
3. Apologies for absence
4. Minutes of the meeting held on Sunday 14th May 2023
5. Election of Churchwardens (notification that David Spottiswoode is willing to continue to serve as Churchwarden)

Annual Parochial Church Meeting

The APCM will be held in St Edyth's Church on 21st April 2024 following the Annual Parishioners' Meeting. Chair: Sally Thomas.

AGENDA:

1. Apologies for absence
2. Appointment of a clerk to the meeting
3. Minutes of the meeting held on Sunday 14th May 2023
4. Elections:
 - Church Wardens
 - Deanery Synod Representatives
 - Parochial Church Council
 - Appointed LLM (TBC)
5. The Church Electoral Roll
6. PCC Report
7. Churchwardens' Report
8. Vicar's Report
9. Fabric report
10. Finance (Audited Accounts and Treasurer's report)
11. Other Ministry reports:
(See Annual Reports and Accounts document)
12. Any Other Business
13. Closing Prayer

PCC for 2023/4	PCC for 2024/5
Ex-officio members	Ex-officio members
Sally Thomas	Sally Thomas
Church Wardens	Church Wardens
Heather Daw	David Spottiswoode
David Spottiswoode	
Deanery Synod	Deanery Synod
Elizabeth Marks	Elizabeth Marks
Chris Wright	Chris Wright
Elected PCC	Elected PCC
<i>With 3 years to serve</i>	<i>With 3 years to serve</i>
Graham Baker	Teresa Goodall (2 nd Term)
Emma Speakman	
<i>With 2 years to serve</i>	<i>With 2 years to serve</i>
John Hewer	Emma Speakman
Zac Abraham (Treasurer) (2 nd term)	
Peter Marks (2 nd term)	
<i>With 1 year to serve</i>	<i>With 1 year to serve</i>
Teresa Goodall	Zac Abraham (Treasurer) (2 nd term)
Mark Temple (Secretary)	Peter Marks (2 nd term)
Co-opted Members	Co-opted Members
Elizabeth Fry	Elizabeth Fry

3. Minutes of St Edyth's Annual Meetings in 2023

Minutes of St Edyth's Annual Meetings in 2023

Annual Parishioner's Meeting (APM) Chair: Zac Abraham.

Meeting held at 11.55 am following morning worship on Sunday 14th May

Present: David Spottiswoode, Heather Daw, Mark Temple, Wiseborn Danquah, Eileen Jarrett, Pamela Dawson, Ann Green, Norma Hall, Geraldine Richardson, Anna Abraham, Pamela Jenkins, Hilarie Adams, Karlynn Evans, Christine Woodhouse, Pauline Quintanilla, Elizabeth Fry, Graham Baker, Wendy Maddocks, Margaret Scott, Korkey Davey, Chris Wright, Anni Davey, Teresa Goodall, Hartmut Kopsch, Jane Kopsch, Susan Cockram, Paul Cockram, Rebecca Cross.

1. Opening thought and prayer

Zac Abraham opened the meeting with reference to words in Ephesians Chapter 2. He referred to the generous good work done by those at St. Edyth's over the last year when we had no incumbent.

He advised that the administrator Katharine Wiltshire had emailed the APCM report with financial accounts out to those on the mailing list and that hard copies were available on request.

2. Appointment of Clerk for the Meeting

Mark Temple was appointed as clerk of the meeting – nem. con.

3. Apologies for Absence

Gish Hobbs, June Hewitt, Eileen Knight, Richard Widger, Elizabeth Marks, and Peter Marks.

4. Minutes of the meeting on Sunday 8th May 2022.

Approved as a true record and signed – nem. con.

5. Election of Church Wardens

Heather Daw and David Spottiswoode were thanked for their service and agreed to continue in 2023/4.

Heather Daw was proposed by Eileen Jarrett and seconded by Christine Woodhouse.

David Spottiswoode was proposed by Chris Wright and seconded by Di Goodison.

Both were elected unopposed.

Zac closed the meeting with a brief prayer of blessing.

The meeting closed at 12.05 pm.

Annual Parochial Church Meeting Chair Heather Daw.

Present: David Spottiswoode, Heather Daw, Mark Temple, Wiseborn Danquah, Eileen Jarrett, Pamela Dawson, Ann Green, Norma Hall, Geraldine Richardson, Anna Abraham, Pamela Jenkins, Hilarie Adams, Karlynn Evans, Christine Woodhouse, Pauline Quintanilla, Elizabeth Fry, Graham Baker, Wendy Maddocks, Margaret Scott, Korky Davey, Chris Wright, Anni Davey, Teresa Goodall, Hartmut Kopsch, Jane Kopsch, Susan Cockram, Paul Cockram, Rebecca Cross.

- 1. Apologies for Absence:** Gish Hobbs, June Hewitt, Eileen Knight, Richard Widger, Elizabeth Marks, and Peter Marks.
- 2. Appointment of a clerk to the meeting:**
Mark Temple was appointed as clerk of the meeting – nem. con.
- 3. Minutes of the meeting held on Sunday 8th May 2022**
The minutes of the meeting held on 8th May 2022 were approved – proposed by Elizabeth Fry and seconded by Ann Green. None against.

4. Elections

a) Deanery Synod

Rebecca Cross and Gloria Wright were thanked for their service over many years and for acting as a link with the wider church. Gloria stood down during the year and Elizabeth Marks was appointed by the PCC to serve until this meeting.

Elizabeth Marks was now standing for election and was proposed by Elizabeth Fry and seconded by Grace Coulter. Chris Wright was proposed by Teresa Goodall and seconded by Pam Jenkins. There being no other candidates both Elizabeth and Chris were elected unopposed.

b) Parochial Church Council

The rules allow up to nine elected and two co-opted members. Neil Branscombe has now left the church to join one in Bath. Geraldine Richardson has also decided to retire from the role thus leaving two vacancies. Last year Graham Baker was a co-opted PCC member but it is desirable to elect him so that the co-opted membership is vacant should the new PCC chose to co-opt someone else.

The following new PCC members have been nominated:

Graham Baker nominated by June Hewitt and seconded by Gloria Wright.

Emma Speakman nominated by Jane Kopsch and seconded by Sara Spottiswoode. Both were elected unopposed.

The meeting appointed Elizabeth Fry, LLM, to be on the PCC.

PCC for 2023/4 now comprises:

Ex-Officio - Vicar – currently vacancy.

Church Wardens

Heather Daw and David Spottiswoode

Deanery Synod

Elizabeth Marks and Chris Wright.

Elected PCC

With 3 years to serve -

Emma Speakman

With 2 years to serve -
Zac Abraham (Treasurer) (2nd term)
Peter Marks (2nd term)
Graham Baker
John Hewer

With 1 years to serve
Mark Temple (Secretary) and Teresa Goodall

Co-opted Members

None

5. Electoral Roll

Paul Cockram summarised the changes over the last year. At the start of the year there were 67 on the roll. During the year 1 died, 1 moved away and 6 joined the roll. At the close of the year there were 71 on the roll. Paul is now standing down as Electoral Roll Officer.

6. PCC report

Mark Temple summarised the activities of the PCC and Standing Committee. The main issues were the vacancy, re-tiling of the nave roof (completed in autumn 2022), other property matters, recruitment of children's and families minister and finance matters.

7. Church Warden's Report

Heather Daw thanked everyone who had joined in over the last year doing more than usual to help run the church. We look forward with confidence to St Edyth's future with a new vicar. We will need to embrace, love, and assist the new vicar. An appointment has been made but cannot yet be announced. Over the last year we have enjoyed welcoming new people to our congregation including children. Unfortunately, the children's and families minister we appointed has had to return to South Africa because of visa problems. St Edyth's will have to assess what it does in this situation.

Susan Cockram proposed a vote of thanks to the church wardens for all they had done in the last year which was widely applauded.

8. Vicar's Report

None.

9. Fabric Report

John Hewer introduced the Fabric Committee report. Neil Branscombe had been Chair of the committee for the last year but has recently left the church. The largest job he had completed was the re-tiling of the south side of the nave roof which cost over £40k. Other members of the committee are Barrie Havens, Peter Marks, Wiseborn Danquah and Heather Daw and Zac Abraham have also attended.

Current issues for which the committee is developing proposals are the re-pointing of the church walls, the disabled toilets, disabled access to the Lady Chapel and chancel. Heather thanked John for all the practical work he does for the church and his servant-hearted attitude, which was met with warm applause.

10. Finance

Zac Abraham thanked the congregation for their generous giving. St Edyth's has paid 100% of its Parish Share in 2022 and plans to do the same in 2023. We had paid a lower proportion of our Parish Share during the covid years of 2020 and 2021.

Utility costs rose from approximately £4,000 per annum in 2021 to £10,000 in 2022. During 2022 we paid over £40,000 from the fabric fund for the re-tiling of the south nave roof. In the year 2022 we had a surplus of about £6,000 on our general fund.

God is good and he is faithful.

11. Other Ministry Reports

See the Annual Reports and Accounts document for detail.

Gloria Wright thanked Paul Cockram for his many years of cleaning the church foyer and toilets weekly – to general applause. The church now has a paid cleaner but there is a limit to what she can do. It would be good if the church members could complement it with quarterly cleaning sessions.

Sara Spottiswoode reported on the children's work. More volunteers are needed to spread the load.

David Spottiswoode mentioned that it had been raised by a couple of people, not present, that they were not happy with the APM and APCM being held on a Sunday.

David also thanked Heather and apologised that due to periods of ill-health over the last year he felt that he had let her down.

A vote of thanks to the church administrator Katharine Wiltshire was also recorded.

Heather Daw closed the meeting with prayer at 12.45 pm.

4. Elections

- (a) Church Wardens
- (b) Deanery Synod Representatives
- (c) Parochial Church Council
- (d) Appointed LLM

5. The Church Electoral Roll

Katharine Wiltshire - Electoral Roll Officer

I have now taken over as the Electoral Roll Officer and a big thank you to Paul Cockram for keeping things running efficiently over the years. As of the 2023 APCM, there were 71 people on the electoral roll, which was last fully revised in 2019. Since then, three people have left the church and one has passed away, leaving the total at 67.

We have received two requests to join the Roll in the past few weeks and any further changes will be notified at the meeting on 21st April 2024.

6. PCC Report

Mark Temple - PCC Secretary

St Edyth's PCC has the responsibility of working with the Incumbent in promoting the mission of the Church. The PCC is responsible for sharing the leadership, management, and administration of a parish with the incumbent. Since the last Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM) there was no incumbent from April until Sally Thomas joined us as vicar in September.

The incumbent's duties which the Church Wardens and a Transition Team had been carrying out were smoothly transferred to Sally. Members of the PCC are elected by the APCM and serve for three years. Its function can be summarised as follows:

- It exists to enable the church to play its part in God's mission to his world
- It exists to co-operate with the minister in sharing leadership
- It exists to ensure legal compliance with charity law and ecclesiastical law, in particular in the areas of finance, employment and appointments
- It exists to care for the buildings and grounds so that they may be best suited for the purpose of the church's ministry and mission
- It exists to be a channel of consultation within the wider Church through its synodical structures on matters that affect the Church locally and nationally

During the year, the following have served as members of the PCC

Heather Daw	Church Warden
David Spottiswoode	Church Warden
Rebecca Cross	Parish Safeguarding Officer (PSO)
Elizabeth Marks	Deanery Synod
Chris Wright	Deanery Synod

Voted on members:

Zac Abraham (Treasurer), Mark Temple (PCC secretary), Teresa Goodall, Peter Marks, and Emma Speakman.

Co-opted members:

Graham Baker and Elizabeth Fry.

The PCC met 6 times during the year for its regular meetings every two months.

Our Standing Committee comprises the Vicar, Church Wardens, and Treasurer. It meets every two months and has the power to transact PCC business between meetings, subject to directions given by the PCC. Where necessary the PCC can now conduct business by email correspondence where the chair decides that it can be properly carried out in that way. Minutes of the PCC meetings are available in the Church Office for anyone who wishes to read them. Any member of the church who has an issue they wish to be raised in the PCC is invited to bring this to the attention of a PCC member.

We thank Rebecca Cross who has been Parish Safeguarding Officer for a long spell. This is a role that is essential to the church. We are pleased that Emma Speakman has agreed to take on this responsibility.

Issues with which the PCC has dealt during 2023 include matters relating to the vacancy, property, recruitment of a children and families minister, planning events throughout the year and finance matters.

7. Church Warden's Report

Heather Daw & David Spottiswoode – Church Warden

Well, what a difference a year makes! This time last year, we were anticipating the interviews for the vacant post of vicar with a mixture of apprehension and excitement. As a church, we had prayed our little socks off that God would send the right person to St Edyth's, to help guide us forward in His service.

Those prayers were answered in the most wonderful way with the arrival of Sally and Neil. We have been so blessed by Sally's thoughtful, biblical preaching, her pastoral heart, commitment, and hard work. Alongside Sally, Neil's amazing music ministry and servant heartedness have also greatly enriched our life as a gathered church family.

Sadly, our hoped-for appointment of a Children and Families worker has still not come to fruition. Please continue to pray that God would prompt the person of His choosing to fill this role, and for energy for the fabulous volunteers running things in the meantime.

Looking back over the vacancy, we are so thankful to God for His guidance (and peace) as we navigated various challenges! We are also thankful to the other members of the transition team for their support and commitment over what amounted to almost 18 months – Hartmut and Jane Kopsch, Liz Fry, Zac Abraham and Reuben Coulter. Also, huge thanks must go to all those from St Edyth's who helped on the Familiarisation and Interview days, especially Sue Cockram for heading it all up.

To quote a well-worn cliché, although 'church' is not a numbers game, we were pleased to note that the numbers worshipping at St Edyth's did not reduce during the vacancy but increased, and it is a joy that this trend is continuing.

On a November Saturday evening we welcomed Sally and Neil informally by way of a Barn Dance which was a fun event and attended by about 40 people.

Almost from the moment she arrived Sally had been planning our Christmas events! We were able to reinstate the Christingle Service this year, which is always well supported by the local community, which it proved to be again. Our 'Carols by Candlelight' is another popular Christmas event and we hosted well over one hundred people this year. A new event was the Crib Fest which encouraged people to display their treasured crib sets. The Fest was staged on two consecutive days in early December and was well supported by local people.

We were shocked and saddened by the unexpected loss in May of John Hewer who contributed so much to the life of St Edyth's. His Thanksgiving Service at St Edyth's was a moving and fitting tribute to him and saw the church full to overflowing.

It was a great joy to share in the marriage ceremony in June of two of our church family – Lynn and Steve Newell. Lynn and Steve had put together a moving and joyful service, and once again the church was full. TO GOD BE THE GLORY GREAT THINGS HE HAS DONE!

8. Vicar's Report

Rev Sally Thomas

THANK YOU! ... for such a wonderfully warm welcome to St Edyth's. Neil and I have felt a growing certainty that this is truly the church God has called us to, and we are so grateful for your many kindnesses and encouragements.

Wonderful People

The first six months of the year covered by this report (and previous year too) were extremely well-led by the **interim leaders** that God appointed (see the Wardens' report). A big thank you to all those who stepped up to take on responsibilities, produce the profile and many other tasks that crop up during a vacancy.

Our **churchwardens**, Heather and David have been such a support to you all, and to me as I've settled into the role, along with Zac Abraham on our Standing Committee, and the rest of the PCC. As Heather's time as warden finishes, we look forward to seeing God lead her into new ministries amongst us. For now, we will start the new church year with one warden, sharing out some practical tasks through the role of **Welcome Team Leader** – please pray about helping if you can.

My **colleagues in ministry**, Hartmut and Liz, have also carried a heavy load during the vacancy and continue to provide such valued **teaching** to both adults and children, leading us in our **prayer life** and with such insight. We have recently said thank you and goodbye to our Trinity ordinand, Graham Baker and family as his curacy begins at St Giles, West Bridgford. We were sad to say goodbye to the Coulter family but know that Highgrove Church will be blessed, as they all played an important part in the life of St Edyth's.

Enormous thanks go to Rebecca Cross for her 12+ years of so faithfully being our **Parish Safeguarding** Officer. Thank you to Emma Speakman who is taking that role on, already on the PCC, which will help continuity and communication in this vital area of church life. Our Parish Administrator, Katharine has taken up many of the administrative aspects of the safeguarding role, allowed for by her increased working hours. Thank you to Sara Spottiswoode too, who has passed on most of her DBS Validating tasks to Katharine.

Stepping Forward

Belong • Believe • Become

Our invitation to those who don't yet know Jesus and to those who are longing to know Him better is to **belong** to Jesus and His family, **believe** in Jesus through His Word and **become** like Jesus by His Spirit.

Thank you for contributing to our recent **vision building**, when Si Jones urged us to pursue God's direction for the sake of those who don't yet know Jesus, and for our own growing up as mature followers. We spent time and prayer identifying our starting point and looking towards the next stages on our journey towards being the church God wants us to be. We'll now be forming teams with PCC members and others with a particular passion for **Belong, Believe or Become** – if you would like to be included, please speak to me.

Back in September, God reminded us that He rejoices over us with singing, as He holds us in His arms Let's be full of that same joy so that others will be drawn to Him too.

9. Fabric Report

Heather Daw – Fabric Committee/Church Warden

We thank God for the provision of a beautiful and well-equipped building to serve the church family and local community.

Our Team

We remember, with gratitude the tireless services rendered by Neil Branscombe, Chair – Fabric Team, who stepped down, as he moved to a Church in Bath. We were also saddened by the sudden loss of our dear member John Hewer and recall with thanks the significant contributions that he had made both to the Fabric Committee and very many aspects of the life of St Edyth's Church.

Our current Team members include Peter Marks (Team Secretary), Heather Daw (Church Warden), Zac Abraham (Treasurer), Barrie Havens, and Wiseborn Danquah. We welcome Neil Thomas, who will soon be joining the Team.

Projects Completed during 2023 and/or in Progress

- | | |
|--|------------|
| • Upgrading of Lighting Church hall & rooms to LED | completed |
| • Sensor controlled Lighting – toilets | completed |
| • Hearing loop – remedial work | completed |
| • Upgrade to Amplifier – Sound system | completed |
| • Re-pointing of the stonework on the south exterior. | April 2024 |
| • Ramp Access to the Chancel (project managed by Chris Wright) | 2024 |
| • Disabled toilet door modification to enhance floor space | 2024 |
| • Automatic opening facility for main entrance to the building | 2024 |
| • Energy Efficiency Audit (Diocese) | 2024 |
| • Improve reliability/efficiency of sound/visual equipment | 2024 |

10. Finance Report – 31st December 2023

Please see full Finance Report and Statements, prepared by our Treasurer Zac Abraham in Appendix I. This will be in a separate document (if electronic)

11. Other Ministry Reports

Children's Ministry Report – Liz Fry & Sally Thomas

The search for a children and families minister has proved rather longer than we had hoped, but we are so grateful to our God who is faithful and knows our needs so well. The delay has given Sally the chance to lead school assemblies, join in with the fun at Make Lunch/Breakfast Club on Wednesdays in the school holidays, and experience the delights and challenges of toddlers and babies at Seedlings. We are so grateful for both prayers and funds given by you for this ministry. At the time of writing, we have some applications for the post and your prayers for our discernment are really needed.

Knowing that we long to welcome more families to St Edyth's, we have moved the play area nearer the front of church so that children can see what is happening and be more involved and parents are less isolated too. We have a new All Together service once a month which is NOT a children's or family service but an opportunity for us to learn together at different levels. We are also trialling a once a month Family Communion service, where the liturgy visuals are more suitable for children, and there's an opportunity for parents to bring their children forward together for a prayer of blessing. This service allows for the children to understand a little more about our reasons for coming to the Lord's Table.

Our children's team continues to provide an amazing ministry of teaching, love and nurture for the children who come each week. We thank God for the commitment and faith of these leaders and helpers.

We recently changed the name from Saplings to The Lighthouse Club so that children can talk more easily with their friends about what they do on Sunday mornings – and perhaps invite them along.

Seedlings on Wednesday mornings is a joyful time of providing a chance for friendships to grow between mums, dads, carers, and grandparents. We provide a Christian ethos, praying before and after for those who come, sometimes with a Bible story and always with some favourite toddler songs. Our teams of helpers have been brilliant – and dedicated – and we were sorry that both our refreshment team helpers had to stop on health grounds in February, whilst thankful for a new team member who is helping out – we would be glad of one more helper to provide refreshments.

Our connection with Sea Mills Primary is important and we're grateful for the Make Lunch/Breakfast Club team that help maintain that connection during school holidays. Assembly leading is every Tuesday and shared with Highgrove Church, and occasionally our ASMA colleagues. We've welcomed the school for seasonal services and celebrations, and Neil Thomas has become a school governor. You will also know that we have provided some support and prayer for the whole school community during the terrible tragedy that happened in Blaise Walk.

Saltshakers is a collaboration between us, Highgrove and local Christian parents and has provided primary aged children a chance to learn about Jesus with games, craft, food and stories. We had a Special Edition of Saltshakers at our Glow in the Dark party on 31 October, which was well attended.

Please keep praying for how we reach out to toddlers, children and their families, with practical evidence of God's love and clear proclamation of the good news of His kingdom.

Safeguarding Report - Rebecca Cross, Parish Safeguarding Officer

We have a duty to value all people as bearing the image of God and therefore to protect them from harm.

The PCC reviewed the Safeguarding policy in October and is responsible for safe recruitment of people wanting to work with vulnerable groups.

DBS Checks

As part of the safer recruitment process, where eligible, volunteers working with vulnerable groups have been DBS checked at the level appropriate to the role.

There are 24 volunteers / PCC members who require a DBS check for their role and 20 of them have a current check.

Training

Safeguarding training at different levels is a requirement for all roles, the current situation in terms of meeting the requirements in the parish is as follows:

Basic Awareness

Number in Role	Number completed training in last 3 years	Number with no or expired training
17	9	8, mostly from Make Lunch. Planning an ASMA wide training soon.

Foundation Safeguarding

Number in Role	Number completed training in last 3 years	Number with no or expired training
12	10	2

Leadership Safeguarding

Number in Role	Number completed training in last 3 years	Number with no or expired training
6	5	1

Domestic Abuse

Number in Role	Number completed training in last 3 years	Number with no or expired training
10	7	3

The PCC is updated about Safeguarding matters at every meeting.

The Parish Safeguarding Dashboard is 46% at level 3 and once updated an action plan will be shared with the PCC.

A recent ASMA safeguarding leaders meeting was helpful, sharing resources and good practice. Katharine our administrator has taken on the admin function.

Mission Focus Spend – Heather Daw and David Spottiswoode, Church Wardens

Last year, we continued the recent policy of allocating a monetary sum (typically £500 per organisation) to support selected ministries, both at home and abroad, which mirrored our aim of following Jesus and bringing hope.

In 2023, we supported Tear Fund, Christian Aid, Open Doors, and Bristol North West Food Bank in this way. A gift of £2000 was also given to the Syria/Türkiye earthquake appeal following a donation from a church member.

The PCC is still prayerfully reflecting on where our giving should be directed this year, with the thought of supporting two local and two international charities. Further reflection on this will be included in our Vision Day on 23 March. In the meantime, we have decided to give £500 to the church in Knowle West, to show our love to them as they seek to serve in a very challenging environment.

Parish Centre Bookings – Katharine Wiltshire, Hall Booking Manager

I am pleased to confirm that bookings continued to trickle in during 2023 with the usual regular children's birthday parties and some community events taking place.

Our regular clients such as Friday Calligraphy, Slimming World and Clifton Quilters continued to book the hall throughout the year and into 2024. Two of our other regular groups decided to go elsewhere last year, however we have also welcomed a new Pilates group and a Friday children's group, both of which are utilising our upper hall. We also have a semi-regular booking in the Quiet Room. It is great to have the whole Parish Centre being used, as our rooms are good spaces to book and remain competitively priced.

Our income for 2023 bookings was over £10,000 which has remained a steady amount over the past few years.

We continue to advertise in the local BS9 Magazine and on a handful of space hire websites. Please continue to spread the word about our fantastic rooms for hire and thank you to everyone for your support in keeping the spaces tidy after use.

Pastoral Care – Karlynn Evans, Coordinator

The Pastoral Team for St Edyth's includes Pam Jenkins, Chris Woodhouse, Barbara Hewer, Gloria Wright, and Teresa Goodall, with Karlynn Evans coordinating. They continue to organise lifts to church services and events for those that need them, plus work together to visit church family and members of the community that are unwell and cook meals, etc for anyone needing a helping hand. The team meets every so often to chat and pray about who may need their help and we are so grateful for these kind volunteers. If you would like to join the Pastoral Team, please speak to Karlynn Evans.

Bristol West Deanery Synod Report 2023 - Elizabeth Marks & Chris Wright

There were 3 Deanery Synod meetings in the last year which were attended by Rebecca Cross (outgoing Deanery synod rep) and then Elizabeth Marks and Chris Wright, our present reps.

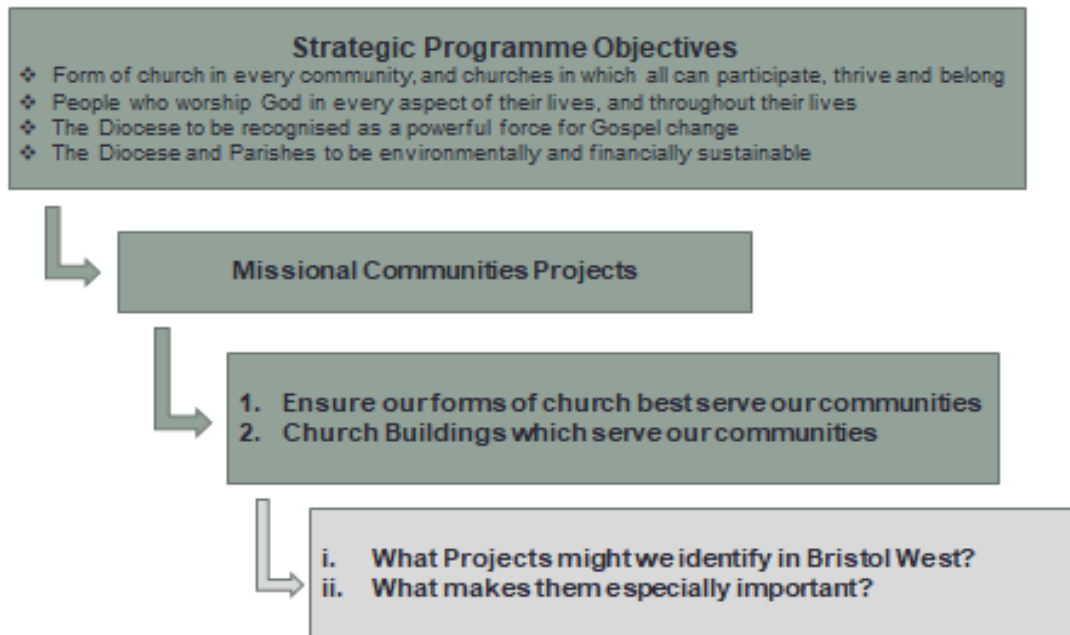
St Edyth's is within the Bristol West Deanery and 'Synod' is another word for Council – being a council of Christian denomination, in this case an assembly of clergy and laity. A Deanery Synod operates as part of the wider synodical government within the C of E, linking groups of parishes with the wider church. As a Deanery Synod works on a Triennial basis, deanery reps and the deanery leadership team are elected for a three year term, and the second meeting held elections to the Deanery Leadership Team (DLT).

The Diocese has a 'Transforming Church Together' (TC.T) strategy which is outlined in the diagram below. Diocese TC.T plans include a fund (£8.4m) for youthwork, mission areas etc. Parishes and deaneries may bid for a share of this. Key parts of the strategy are **People Orientated** including: • Investing in people • Investing in people's wellbeing • Investing in volunteers and **Growth** (sustainability) including: • supporting the local church • ensuring church(es) are where they are needed • developing fresh expressions etc. These are where the local Deaneries have (plenty of) opportunity to make an impact.

Four values of TC.T are: Openness, Creativity, Generosity and Bravery, and some of these have been discussed at deanery meetings.

Last October we discussed different types of creativity that could or was being used in the diocese. In March we considered volunteering within our worshipping communities asking: is it purely unpaid time to benefit others or a 'calling'? and what roles do volunteers play, why are they difficult to fill.

So far there has been limited opportunity to get to know the other deanery members, how other churches in the deanery are faring, what the opportunities are, how the deanery can or should operate and what difference it can make. There seems – to your reps – to be plenty of opportunity for this Deanery Synod to become effective and have an impact.



ASMA Mental Health Groups – Rebecca Cross

We want our churches to be safe supporting spaces where everybody is welcome, where we can talk about mental health and reduce stigma. We have trained Mental Health First Aiders in most of our churches across ASMA who will be due to do a refresher course in 2024.

Rev Alison from St Mary’s Shirehampton has met a local need through running the Bereavement Course at Shirehampton and Avonmouth and is hoping to run one at St Edyth’s this term.

In the last year 3 Kintsugi Wellbeing Groups were run across Stoke Bishop and Sea Mills with a total of 18 people completing. There are two small follow on groups that meet regularly and some occasional meet ups. In total 12 groups have been run across ASMA with 67 people completing the course. There are plans for a course to start in Lawrence Weston in April and another at Stoke Bishop school in the autumn.

Non-Christians who want to improve their wellbeing are very welcome at Kintsugi Hope groups and it is something Christians can bring friends to. Pray about who you could bring along. Going with a buddy for the taster session is really supportive.

Kitchen Hospitality– Barbara Hewer, Church Hospitality Coordinator

Refreshments and hospitality are something we do well and is an important time to get to know visitors and new people 'joining the family', as well as catching up with others.

I want to thank everyone who has helped on refreshments. We have lost a few and gained 3 new regular volunteers (there's always room for more if you'd like to join us!). As the church grows we're contemplating another flask of coffee at the morning services, which is wonderful.

Church lunches are always popular, with lots of variety and delicious contributions. Again thanks to those who help with setting and clearing up, as well as contributing.

Prayer Ministry Report – Teresa Goodall

We had an inspirational morning in September, led by Matt Holman (former youth worker at St Edyth’s), where we were encouraged to listen to God for any words or pictures we felt He was giving us for others. We seek to do this each Sunday too, when we meet before the morning service, and are deeply encouraged when God gives us words, pictures, or verses to give to the congregation, and it is exciting when people respond to these.

Some can seem a bit obscure but so often they do mean something to someone! How amazing that God knows and cares about every individual aspect of our lives! We keep a record of words given, and whether they were responded to (no names used).

We meet every other month at Karlynn Evans' house for prayer or the occasional speaker. But the main focus of the team remains to be available for anyone to receive prayer for absolutely anything that is on their heart. We have welcomed two new members to the team recently - and if anyone feels they have a heart to pray for people, please do get in touch with either Karlynn, Richard or Teresa. You would be so welcome!

Home Groups / Small Groups – Liz Fry, Small Groups Coordinator

We have six home groups, meeting in the afternoon or evening, either weekly or fortnightly and the leaders have tailored studies to their own group's needs.

During the vacancy, home group leaders' meetings have not taken place but it is hoped to renew this in the coming year. We thank God for our leaders who give up their time to prepare and lead their groups in Bible study, prayer, and support of each other and in encouraging discipleship and witness.

Sally Thomas has started a group for newcomers/ those who are new to the faith, at the Vicarage, called "Rooted" and this has made a good start, plus Hartmut and Jane Kopsch continue to meet others new to the faith on an informal basis to disciple them.

We thank God for all that has been done in our home groups and how much this contributes to our walk with God, discipleship, fellowship with each other, deepening commitment to St Edyth's and our witness in Sea Mills, Coombe Dingle and beyond.

Women's Fellowship – Gloria Wright

Over the past 12 months we have met regularly and donated to various charities. I would like to thank Ann Green who has been our very competent treasurer and to Pauline Quintanilla who has kept us in tune.

After a lot of prayers over the past few months, it is with regret that the decision has been made to end the group in its current form.

With dwindling numbers and the lack of a volunteer to run the group, I feel it is the right time. It has been suggested that something else could take its place in the coming months, but that now would be a good time for a break. We will, however, continue to meet with Sea Mills Methodist at Abona Court on the third Tuesday of each month.

This has been a very hard decision to make, but I am confident that God will lead us all to something different. Thank you to all the ladies (and some men) that have come along and supported the group over the years, and to all the speakers and presenters who gave up their time to talk to us. We will decide as a group where to donate any remaining funds.

Flower Guild 2022 – Sally Thomas

Flowers and foliage can lift our hearts and remind us of God's wonderful world, as we worship Him together, so we are very grateful to our team of flower arrangers led by Di Goodison and Hilarie Adams. We have seen some beautiful displays at Harvest, Christmas, and Easter. We continue to value our extensive collection of good quality artificial flowers to reduce our impact on the environment. If you would like to consider joining the team, please contact Di.

Church Cleaning – Katharine Wiltshire

Our parish centre cleaner, Chihenyio is still with us and we are so grateful for her flexibility when it comes to fitting her hours around our hall and room bookings.

It has been decided that a second paid cleaner will be appointed to cover the main church, as the previous cleaning team has decided to step down. As of writing, I have already had one or two people in the wider community interested in taking this on, so I am hopeful this role will be filled sooner rather than later.

Thank you to Pat Hegarty and Gloria Wright, with some occasional help from David Spottiswoode, for keeping the church fresh and clean. Also, thank you to those of you that attended any of the spring cleaning days we held during the year. Finally, I must say a big thank you to Barrie Havens who tirelessly continues to keep the church running and in good working order. He does so much that we don't see and I can't imagine things running so smoothly without him.

Make Lunch - Sea Mills Breakfast Club - Gill Slee, Coordinator

We continue to provide a free, healthy breakfast and craft activities to families in the local area during the school holidays. Each time we open our breakfast kitchen at 10am we serve between 20 and 25 families. As always we are so fortunate to be able to use the school kitchen and have the support of St Edyth's and Highgrove Church.

We receive financial support from local and national donations, St Monica's craft group in particular are very generous and we must thank Margaret Scott for her great support. Also a big thank you to Anna Arnold and the Dancercise group for their continued support and donations.

Sadly, we miss John Hewer very much in the kitchen. His kindness to the children and attention to detail is much missed. We also said goodbye to Mandy (a great washer upper and cooker of sausages) who has moved out of the area. Nicky Philips, the Family Support worker from the school also retired and her expertise is much missed. She was a huge support when we first started seven years ago. In return we have welcomed Sally and Neil who are very good at meeting, greeting, and getting to know our families.

Please continue to pray for our local community, particularly the school. This last month have been particularly distressing in Sea Mills Primary and the children, staff and head teachers need prayer and support.

Dancercise 2021 – Anna Arnold

Meeting in the church really enhances the sense of being in God's presence, it also provides an easy setting to share a word or testimony as the Lord directs me. The words of some of the songs used speak of God's love for all and I believe this is reflected in the friendly caring atmosphere within the group. This was evidenced a few weeks ago when a newish member shared that they suffered from lack of confidence to the point where they often didn't leave the house and their family were worried about them. Dancercise was one of the only places they made an effort to get up and out for as they were made to feel safe and accepted. Others have shared that coming to Dancercise has improved their physical wellbeing which has always been part of the aim – to live and breathe and have our being in HIM.

In July Francis Nkurunziza visited from the charity Hope for Life Katanga – a contact I made during a Diocese trip to Uganda and some of us attended an awareness and fund-raising dinner.

At least 6 members of the class came to the church barn dance and several came to the Carols by Candlelight service. It would be great to have more low key events that we could invite people to as Dancercise to Sunday church is a huge step. Financially the class supports Make Lunch with a regular £25 monthly donation. Other donations since March 23 have been given to Make Lunch (£50), Caring for Bristol (£48), Hope for Life, Katanga (£219) and to St Edyth's for heating etc (£900).

Sea Mills Community Initiatives – Rebecca Cross

SMCI is a charity from St Edyth's Church and Highgrove Church seeking to show God's love to the local community through the staff and many volunteers working in the café, baking cakes, running the Methodist Hall and the community garden.

Three Trustees have joined from Highgrove Church including Sian Hearsey as chair. From St Edyth's Nicky White has joined as a trustee alongside Barbara Hewer. Rebecca Cross has recently left.

SMCI joined with St Edyth's and Highgrove churches to run the Cribfest in December. It was a popular event with people sharing their Nativity scenes with the community. There was also close working with the churches following the recent sad loss of 3 children locally. The Methodist Church Hall was opened to local people the following week and a weekly support session for the Sudanese Community is now running with Quartet funding.

Other events during the year such as Apple Day was well attended and helped a bit with funds.

Prayers for SMCI are said in both churches. Do get in touch if you want to volunteer or be on the prayer WhatsApp group. We thank God for his provision and blessings.

The Avonside Mission Area in 2022 – Rev Jema Ball

The Avonside Mission Area is a covenanted partnership of five churches in North West Bristol which includes Lawrence Weston, Shirehampton, Sea Mills, Coombe Dingle, Avonmouth and Stoke Bishop. Whilst the churches run separately, there is a strong sense of family and sharing of resources and ideas.

2023 saw more change in the clergy team across ASMA. Rev Andy Murray, Vicar of Avonmouth and Lawrence Weston returned from a period of Extended Ministerial Development Leave, and later in the year was made Dean of Priority Communities. He will continue to be Vicar part time alongside this new role, with plans in 2024 to appoint an Associate Minister.

In September we welcomed Rev Sally Thomas as vicar of St Edyth's Sea Mills. The team at St Edyth's navigated the vacancy amazingly and Sally landed in a church ready to welcome her but in great health. ASMA clergy were pleased to be able to offer continuing support throughout the period of vacancy in 2023 and then to serve alongside Sally as she settled quickly into her role. Her husband Neil has already led worship at several ASMA events.

Sonia and Julie, our ASMA curates, were ordained as priests in July, enabling them to serve in new ways across the mission area. They have enjoyed learning the different eucharistic traditions and presiding across the Mission Area.

Llewelyn Lawton, Church Warden at St Peter's Lawrence Weston, also joined the ASMA team as Ministry Experience Scheme worker. He has helped serve in a variety of ways across the Mission Area including the student ministry in Stoke Bishop, toddler groups, and listening cafes.

Alison Sowton, Vicar of Shirehampton, is already a much-loved member of the community there. As part of her role as ASMA Life Events Missioner she has led two Bereavement Course groups in 2023. These were offered to those recently bereaved from across the Mission Area and greatly appreciated by those who attended.

In Lent we gathered together across the Mission Area, firstly on Ash Wednesday at St Andrew's Avonmouth, and then weekly throughout Lent to worship and reflect together on the topic of forgiveness. Approx 60 gathered each week, moving around the Mission Area churches, and enjoyed the chance for connection and learning. July and October saw Prayer and Praise gatherings bring the churches together again, something

that will be continued termly. Gathering together also happened monthly at the informal prayer and worship event now rebranded as 'Deeper.' This is a great chance to worship together and listen to God.

As members of the youth and children's team across ASMA have had periods away from work, the teams have been able to support one another, drawing in volunteers able to serve in this area too. This continues to be an area of need in which it would be great to have additional team members.

Providing cover is one core way the Mission Area provides mutual support. This happens across the church for life events, preaching and leading Sunday services and mid-week communions. Support can also be provided for new initiatives such as the More@4 service that started at St Peter's Lawrence Weston this year, which gives families who have attended Messy Church the opportunity to attend a weekly service more similar to that creative format. Ideas have been shared from St Mary's Stoke Bishop Explore@4, and the service has grown through the year with a regular group of local families now attending. Other new initiatives include bacon butties and prayer for the community that gather in the churchyard at St Mary's Shirehampton.

The Ukrainian Hub and North West Bristol Foodbank continue to be places where volunteers from across the Mission Area serve, meeting vital needs. Wellbeing groups have also continued to serve the area. In 2023, three groups took place across Stoke Bishop and Sea Mills, serving 18 people in a variety of locations including local schools. There are two small follow-on groups that continue to meet regularly, and ad-hoc meet ups too. The partnership with Kintsugi Hope, who provide the materials for these courses, is funded, and administered by St Mary's Stoke Bishop.

The ASMA clergy continue to value their breakfast meetings as an opportunity to pray for one another, share needs and updates. Prayer needs have also continued to go out across the Mission Area by way of the seasonal praise and prayer newsletter. This has been supplemented by the occasional video update.

12. Any Other Business

13. Closing Prayer

Appendix I

Annual Report & Financial Statements

If viewing electronically see separate attachment.

Appendix II

Bristol West Deanery Synod Report 2023 – Bristol Diocese

Three Deanery Synods took place, all were held in person, unlike the two previous years when many meetings had to be conducted by Zoom.

In 2023 and the key themes were:

- Missional Communities and Missional Engagement TC.T
- Understanding the TC.T Value - Generosity
- DLT Elections and understanding the TC.T Value - Creativity

March Deanery Synod: Missional Communities and Missional Engagement TC.T

Deanery Synod on 14 March 2023 focused upon this being a Triennial Year and exploring the missional opportunities with Bristol West. The Meeting was held in person at St Mary's Leigh Woods.

Triennial Year

Synod was reminded by the Area Dean that this is a Triennial year. Consequently, Deanery Representative will need to be elected at APCMs for a three-year term of office and in accordance with the number stipulated for parishes and united benefices.

The Deanery Synod Annual Report will be ready for circulation prior to the commencement of APCMs.

The Main Theme: Missional Communities and Missional Engagement TC.T

The Area Dean welcomed Rob Mountain, Director of Transformation, and members of the Diocesan Transformation Team. Rob introduced the session with some slides demonstrating the reason why this Diocese is participating in the National Emerging Church programme and how this begins to translate at a local level.

Following the TCT overview, Synod broke into discussion groups to identify the active opportunities that might start to shape the projects across the Deanery that could form a focus for TCT Missional Community activities. Recognising that some of these projects could and should cross boundaries of geography, parish, deanery, denominations, inter-faith, and other organizations.

Discussion output is included with these minutes (see attachment) and have been gathered under the emergent headings:

- Activities and Events
- Worship and Teaching
- Crossing Boundaries
- Culture Shift
- Resourcing

The Uganda Link

Rev Janet Lee and Sarah Thomas updated Synod on the Deanery trip to our link Dioceses in N Uganda which took place at the end of October 2022.

May Deanery Synod: The 'Transforming Church. Together' Value 'Generosity'

Deanery Synod on 17 May 2023 focused upon our understanding of the TC.T value – 'Generosity' - and how this is exhibited in our words and actions. The Meeting was held in person at Christ Church Clifton.

The Main Theme: Generosity, one of the four values within Transforming Church. Together

The Area Dean reminded us of the four values of the diocese, Openness, Creativity, Generosity and Bravery. We reflected in pairs and groups on the diocesan definition,

'We value generosity and receive and give sincerely. We give our time and resources to share what we know of Jesus' love. We want our communities to feel supported and cared for in the way Jesus would do, to experience God's love through our action and an opportunity to journey into faith if they choose.'

Then in different groups we discussed what generosity looked like, we shared ideas and wrote on post it notes. There was feedback from every group, including a range of suggestions, from publicising food baskets in churches to showing generosity in our listening towards other stories.

The Uganda Link

Rev Janet Lee showed slides from the trip last October and in particular of Lira Palwo clinic, the remote health clinic in Kitgum Diocese which is this year's deanery project.

October Deanery Synod: The 'Transforming Church. Together' Value 'Creativity

Deanery Synod on 5 October 2023 focused upon DLT Elections and the TC.T value of Creativity. The Meeting was held in person at Holy Trinity, Westbury on Trym.

The Main Theme: Creativity, one of the four values within Transforming Church. Together

Elections to the DLT

It was noted that there was a lack of clarity as to the purpose and functions of the DLT, action on Area Dean to circulate role descriptions for clergy and lay reps ahead of next Deanery Synod.

Creativity

Caroline Jowett-Ive, Diocesan Director of People and Bishop's Staff link to Bristol West, reported on the Transforming Church Together, TCT, 5-year programme to bring transformation with £6.8million grant. The money would help fund new roles, both full and part time, permanent and temporary, clergy and lay. Two particular new roles to note concerning clergy in our deanery, were Rev Andy Murray, now made Dean of Priority Communities and Rev Anjali Kanagaratnam, Racial Justice coordinator.

Caroline then introduced the evening's key topic 'Creativity':

'We value creativity and we co-operate with the work of the Spirit. We are faithful, rooted in faith and responsive to the Spirit. Our communities feel inspired, this is bold and joyful faith, work and worship that engages us all. We want our communities to experience a variety of projects and worship styles, celebrating tradition and innovation in connection to God.'

Looking at the definition of creativity, the synod then discussed in small groups how creativity was and could be expressed in their parishes. The results are attached to this report.

The Uganda Link

The Revd. Janet Lee mentioned the bank issues currently being addressed and which will be shortly resolved. She also talked about the Bristol-Uganda partnership, which is now 54 years old, and that it will be an item for discussion at Bishop's Council in December.