



All Saints' Church
Preston on Tees

Annual Report – 2022

All Saints' Church

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Chair's Report

There is much to be grateful for this year and there have been many highlights.

23 people got baptised; many of whom made public professions of faith and shared their stories with us. What an encouragement!

This year we have done quite a lot of tweaking of what was good for people to explore faith more easily. This has often meant going smaller with numbers to ensure space to explore and go deep in relationships. This has been true across Friday night youth, across Messy Church, and Connect are looking this year at how to offer more opportunities to those wanting to find out more about Jesus.

We have seen new Life Groups begin as well as the 20+ group gaining momentum. In addition, this year we launched mentoring, and it has been a joy both to mentor some people myself, but also to see some of the change it is making in the faith and lives of others within the congregation. To me it feels as if we are gaining new confidence in the role God has called each of us to play, the gifts he has given us, and the story of our lives transformed by Jesus which is so good to share with others.

The Church Camp back in October was brilliant and gave opportunity for getting to know each other on a deeper level across all ages. It was also great to mix with folks across All Saints' and St Mary's as part of it and to forge some of those bonds. I look forward to our next camp in July (which should be warmer!) and avoiding getting pushed around in a Zorb this time!

We have continued to grow as a church both numerically and in seeing God move in our services. People have continually remarked what an easy church it is to join, and for it to become home. Looking back over the year it is significant how many people have not only started to attend on a Sunday but gone on to join life groups, to serve and become integrated into the life of the church.

Our services, both 9am, 10.30am and Encounter continue to develop with new people starting to preach, lead and lead worship, moving forwards as well as including discovering all our sound desk can do! We have pressed into celebrating risk and my thanks to those of you who are stepping out and seeing what God will do and being vulnerable enough to share those things with us.

Behind the scenes a lot has been going on to improve our systems, and my thanks to Diane in Safeguarding, and those who have worked to ensure our policies are fit for purpose. The Wardens have been amazing and have helped no end in providing wise counsel and keeping us moving forwards together.

As we continue through 2023, we look forward to seeing all God will do. It may at times be a bumpy ride with all that is going on nationally and internationally with the Anglican Church, but God is good, he will continue what he has started. God uses all things for good and perhaps the current storm will lead us deeper in prayer

and to further the excellent work that has gone on by many of you to help us hear God more clearly and share his love.

Locally, amongst us and in our communities, I could not be more grateful to God for all He is doing and to you all for how you are continuing to say to him 'Here I am send me'. Thanks for being part of the All Saints' family and for all you do to help it serve God in this place.

With every blessing

Rev. Matt Levinsohn

Wardens' Report

It is our privilege to serve as wardens at All Saints' Church where all are warmly welcomed. As an inclusive church we believe that we are here to serve the local and wider community within the parish.

During this last year it has been possible for us to gradually return to normal worship and to take Communion without the necessary Covid safeguards and restrictions being in place.

It is difficult to estimate the level of disruption Covid caused to us at All Saints', but we now feel excited at all the different initiatives and opportunities that are taking place and we have been so blessed with many newcomers attending and contributing in different ways to our work at All Saints'.

The new Baptistry was installed prior to the Covid restrictions and was tested before it was used for the first time. This year several baptisms have taken place and having a permanent Baptism Pool available has certainly contributed positively to the experience of those being baptised and their families and our congregation.

There is a Church of England Directive that states our Church Building must be inspected every 5 years by a suitably experienced professional. This is known as a Quinquennial Inspection. This year our previous Architect, David Beaumont, retired which meant we had to appoint a new Inspector. We interviewed and took up references on three candidates from which we selected Jamie Holden of Studio Tamacoco Architects. Once we obtained approval from the Diocesan Advisory Committee, we were able to appoint Jamie Holden. His QI Inspection took place on 23rd June 2022 and the report followed promptly. A copy of which was sent to all PCC members. The purpose of the Quinquennial report is to ensure that All Saints' Church buildings are safe and in good repair and generally our report was positive. Following the recommended timeline within the report, the PCC Building Group is focusing on undertaking the remedial works required to be completed by June 2023.

Due to storm damage, repairs to the Church, Centre and 558b and 558a roofs have taken place and the problem of water leaking from the skylights in the Centre foyer and kitchen has been rectified.

Towards the end of the year, it was noted that squirrel damage had occurred to the fascia and soffit boards on the north side of the centre building. A pest control inspection was arranged, and a temporary repair completed. A full repair has been arranged for March 2023.

Various work has been carried out in Flat 558b, in the main to solve the ongoing issue of damp due to excessive condensation. In addition, some work has been carried out to the shower room although a complete refit will take place next year. Our thanks to both Matt Falcus and to our Caretaker, Peter Lankford, for their continued assistance in improving the conditions within the Flat and in managing repairs and remedial work.

Tees Valley Youth for Christ continue to rent the upper level of Flat 558a and this arrangement continues to work well.

The Diocesan Records Office visitation of our Parish Records took place at the end of December. The inspector was complimentary of the wardens for the way they had maintained the Church documents.

Our thanks go to: -

Nina Rye for continuing to manage the Food safety and kitchen teams and ensuring we retain our 5-star food safety status. Food Hygiene refresher courses are planned for next year.

The team of Assistant Wardens, namely: Karen Killick, Matt Falcus, Martin Howard, Stuart Johnson and Kevin Webster. Our thanks go to them for ensuring the smooth running of our Sunday services. If you would like to join the team and wish to find out more of what is involved, please have a chat with us.

Shiromi Davison, Rachel Levinsohn and Peter Lankford for all their amazing work in supporting the running and administration of All Saints' Church.

John Belmont for remaining as our Treasurer for far longer than he initially anticipated.

And last, but not least, Matt Levinsohn, for his prayerful, open and honest leadership of All Saints'.

Chris Vass and Anne Rolfe
Churchwardens

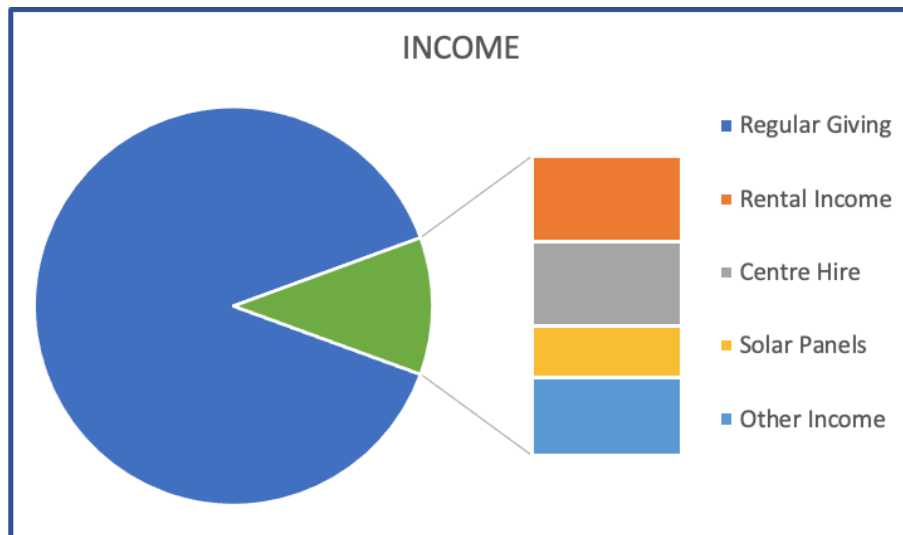
Treasurer's Report

Review of 2022

2022 has yet again been an encouraging year financially. Having set a deficit budget for the year, we were blessed with one off donations at the start of the year which put us on track to be almost in line with our budgeted expenditure. During the year, we incurred significant expenditure on maintenance due to being back full time in the buildings. Despite this increased expenditure, we were still able to report a modest surplus of £296.47 for the year!

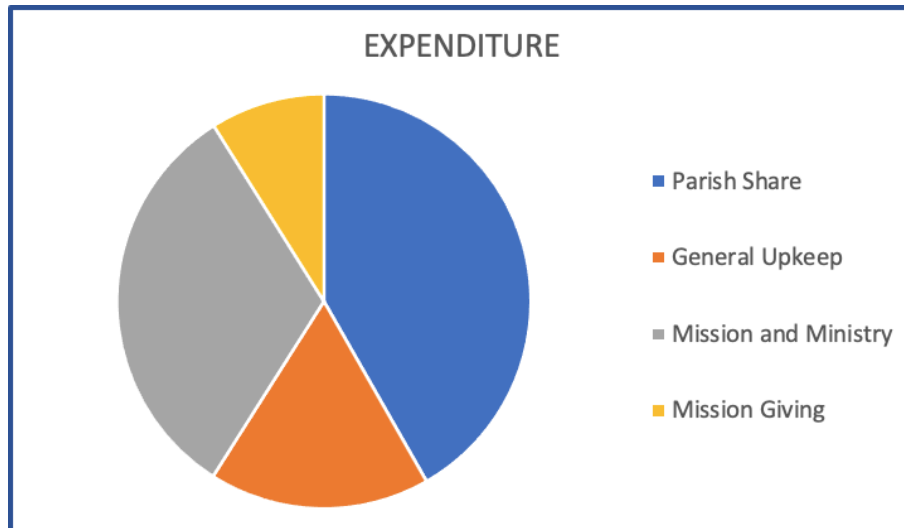
Income:

- Voluntary income for 2022 has once again increased, with notable increases in the amounts received through the Parish Giving Scheme. We received one-off donations again during the year which was a welcome boost to our regular giving. The number of people giving through the collection plate has reduced.
- Income from the hire of the Centre has increased during the year, notably due to Slimming World using the premises twice a week at levels similar to 2019.
- The Solar panels continued to contribute to unrestricted income.
- The overall unrestricted income for the year was £264,008.80.



Expenditure:

- We continued to give away 10% of our unrestricted voluntary income to local and overseas mission.
- The PCC paid its Parish Share pledge in full in the sum of £106,600.
- All Saints' PCC continued to ensure that all staff are paid at, or higher than, the Living Wage advised by the Living Wage Foundation.
- Overall expenditure on unrestricted funds totalled £263,712.33 for the year.



The budget for 2022 was approved with a deficit of £7,000. Despite having increased expenditure as a result of returning to normal ministry activity, we were blessed with increased giving and also some significant one-off donations at the start of the year. The current levels of reserves are approximately £50,000 which has meant that the PCC were able to approve a deficit budget of £10,000 for 2023. The PCC continue to balance the need for prudence and common sense with faith that God will provide for what we are called to do as a church.

I would like to thank, in particular, Margaret Vaughan for her support as Gift Aid Secretary and Gill Wake for her regular trips to the bank to deposit the weekly collection and other income throughout the year.

Most importantly, we are so grateful to each and every person who have contributed to God's work here at All Saints' Church through prayer and/or financial giving. Prayer underpins everything we do and our finances enable it to happen. Please continue to pray for God's provision and protection as we endeavour to realise the calling of His Church; to worship Him, proclaim the Gospel and reach out to those in need.

Finally, I would like to commend Guy Wingate to you, who has agreed to take over the role as Treasurer following the APCM. I have enjoyed serving All Saints' in this capacity once again but am excited for what Guy can bring to this role in the years ahead.

John Belmont
Treasurer

Safeguarding Report

Safeguarding is part of our core faith and an integral feature of Christian life.

In the Parish Safeguarding Handbook, Justin Welby, Archbishop of Canterbury, says, “‘Safeguarding’ means the action the Church takes to promote a safer culture in all our churches. In order to achieve this we need to do a lot of hard work. We will promote the welfare of children, young people and adults. We will work to prevent abuse from occurring. We will seek to protect those who are at risk of being abused and respond well to those who have been abused. We will take care to identify where a person may present a risk to others, and offer support to them whilst taking steps to mitigate such risks.”

To accomplish this at All Saints’ during 2022 we have:

- Continued to follow National and Durham Diocese Safeguarding policies and guidelines. At the beginning of the year the new Church of England ‘Safer Recruitment and People Management Policy’ was implemented. We have managed to embed this into our procedures and all ministries that involve children, young people and vulnerable adults safely recruit their volunteers in line with this policy.
- Continued to update DBS checks (now every 3 years) and safeguard training as needed. We are encouraging staff and volunteers to use the DBS update service.
- Have completed Level 1 of the new Parish Safeguard Dashboard implemented by the Church of England. Levels 2 and 3 are to be completed during 2023.
- Continued to have safeguarding as an item on the agenda at every PCC meeting for updates.
- 39 strategic members of All Saints’ having completed additional training: ‘Raising Awareness of Domestic Abuse’.

Throughout the year there have been several safeguard concerns raised. These have all been sensitively handled and supported, and advice from Diocesan Safeguard Adviser, Beth Miller, has been sought where needed.

Previously I have stated that it is everyone’s responsibility to create a proactive culture of protection in developing a thriving, healthy and safe church. During 2022 I have seen much evidence of this working at All Saints’ extremely well. I would, therefore, like to take this opportunity to thank everyone for their commitment to help make All Saints’ a safe place for all, and for the support and encouragement of individuals as I have continued in this role.

Diane Backhouse
Parish Safeguarding Officer

Parochial Church Council

At the last APCM, the following nominations were declared as All Saints' PCC members:

Diane Backhouse (Safeguarding Officer)	Sarah Hope
Jonathan Backhouse (PCC Secretary)	Geoff Jowett
John Belmont (Treasurer)	Alexandra Lamond
Mark Boyes	Pamela Rushton
Rob Govier	Elaine Webster
Simon Honeywell	Paul Wheeldon
Martin Howard	

In addition, other members became ex officio PCC members:

Lucy Falcus (Deanery Synod Member)	Anne Rolfe (Warden)
Karen Killick (Vice Chair & Diocesan Synod)	Margaret Vaughan (Diocesan Synod)
Rev. Matt Levinsohn (Chair)	Chris Vass (Warden)

At the May 2022 meeting I informed the PCC that I was going to focus solely on the role of PCC Secretary and would, therefore, not take on the additional roles of Health and Safety Consultant, or the GDPR Officer. During 2022 there were two resignations from the PCC: John Belmont as Treasurer, and myself as PCC Secretary, both with effect from 31st December 2022. Guy Wingate took on the post of Treasurer. Diane Backhouse has taken on the role as Interim PCC Secretary, until the APCM in May 2023.

For 2022 we tweaked many of the PCC working parties, so we were slightly differently focussed to 2021. Each group has made significant progress with the **Buildings team** now working far more closely with the wardens and helping take some of the strain to keep us on track in that area. The **Environment team** has been working on engaging others in and outside the church in helping us be mindful of the environment and pursuing Eco church status. The **Discipleship team** has helped launch a calendar of courses such as the Shapes, Hearing God, and Sharing Faith course with more to follow on Parenting, Marriage, and other topics. The **Community Engagement team** continues to work with local partners and to show people we care and are interested in the benefit of those who do not come to this church. The **Social team** have done a wonderful job of organising opportunities for us to come together and get to know one another. The introduction of a calendar so we can plan what is coming has been particularly welcome. And finally, the **Policy team** has helped reduce and rewrite our policies, so they are easier for you to use. Matt expressed thanks to all for their work. He hopes it has been made clear that these groups are not exclusive so if you want to join one to pitch in just let Matt know.

As I close off my last official act as the [now Immediate Past] PCC Secretary I would like to thank those who have served All Saints' during my tenure for the last 2 ¾ years.

Jonathan Backhouse
PCC Secretary

St Paul's – The Road Goes On

It is great to know that you are praying for us and supporting us as we continue in building church here at St Paul's. It is wonderful to know that we have Jesus, who binds us together as part of his body.

Serving God at St Paul's is awesome! We can really see God at work here. From the kids in our youth club beginning to make right choices in life, to our wonderful toddler group where community worship and mission seem to just work, or our regular coffee mornings or other community events that reach people and connect with them to help them to see more of God's love in this part of town.

God has grown the church family: we now have a community of nearly 60 people, and we have needed to start a new service to make room. The congregation is now much younger. About half are new Christians or returning to church. Our life group has experimented with planting a café and prayer space (called Oasis) in our local community centre, and this has proved a valuable place for people who need it as well as a great lesson in taking risks for Jesus.

It can be easy to let some of the challenges blind us, despite God's goodness here. We are growing fast and needing to keep pace with growth in our structures, relying on a small team of volunteers which can be exhausting. Whilst we have some great ministries happening, we know that our ability to afford them financially is still very dependent on money from the central church which has a time limit on it. But we put our trust in God and know that where he wants things to happen, he will motivate people to pray, to give, and to serve with his love.

Do keep praying for us that we may continue to see people coming to Jesus, and for his provision. I will leave you with some words from one of our older members: "I used to tell people I was thinking about them. Now, I tell them that I am praying for them."

Rev. Paul Arnold

Deanery Synod

2022 saw four meetings of Stockton Deanery Synod – the group that meets regularly to connect the Church of England churches in our area, share good practice and mutual support and encourage each other in mission and ministry.

February 2022, we met at Christchurch and heard from Jennie Sharp how the parish is addressing poverty through a new venture – Chad's Pantry which sells short dated or donated food and supports the local community.

May 2022 the meeting was held at St Michael's Norton. We heard from an American mission team, and Catherine Simpson spoke on growing in faith.

September 2022, we met at St Albans, Trimdon Grange where John Cottey, from Stockton Parish Church, challenged us about how we can disciple others, particularly through adult mentorship.

November 2022, we met at St Peter's Yarm Road. The theme of the evening was Diocesan Transformation – how the Church of England needs to develop and change in the next 10 years. Duncan Podbury spoke, and the meeting was open to anyone who wanted to attend.

Over 2023 the meetings will focus on some of the Diocesan priorities - Growth, Youth and Children's work, Caring for God's Creation and Tackling Poverty.

Lucy Falcus

Diocesan Synod

There have been two meetings of Diocesan Synod in 2022 (both in person meetings).

May 2022 had significant items on:

- The progress on plans for the Diocesan Transformation programme.
- The 2021 Financial statements for the Diocese.
- Focus on how parishes could engage with supporting the Ukrainian refugee crisis and living out “caring for those in need” as part of the Diocesan priority on poverty.
- Input on the experiences of the Gypsy, Romany and Traveller communities and how churches can support them.
- Bit of legal stuff about how the Diocesan Board of Education (responsible for church schools) needed to be reshaped to meet changing ecclesiastical legal requirements.

November 2022 meeting had items on:

- Caring for God's creation with a focus on the environmental footprint of churches.
- A "financial technical" item on adopting a total return policy for the Diocese's capital investments (this will result in additional funds being released to support the Diocese's mission and ministry).
- Update on Diocesan Transformation plans and details on the streams of activities being developed for funding from central church.
- Adopting the 2023 budget.
- Focus on how churches can support their communities as the cost of living crisis /energy costs crisis starts to impact.

The Diocesan Synod operates on a three year cycle of membership - Karen Killick and Margaret Vaughan are both lay members and Matt Levinsohn is one of the clergy members, all till summer 2024. Please do ask any of these three if you want further details on any Diocesan Synod business.

Canon Margaret Vaughan

Administration

Finally, a full year of things being back to 'normal' at All Saints! It has been lovely to see our building busy with lots of people here during the week, as well as on a Sunday.

I have worked on keeping ChurchSuite up to date including adding on new members, adding new events we are holding and new private bookings.

Diane and I work together to ensure we complete DBS checks on any new volunteers. As renewals now need to be done after 3, not 5 years, I am making sure DBS renewals are done on time.

Thanks to help from Adam Burns we got a new visuals PC in 2022, which makes setting up the visuals (notices, songs, readings, etc) for both Sunday services a lot easier and I know it helped the visuals team too.

It is great to work alongside Rachel and Peter (our caretaker) to keep the building running smoothly and to help all those who call into the building.

I am very happy to be serving God by working at All Saints' and am very grateful for all those who support me and encourage me – especially Anne, Chris, Matt and of course my family.

Shiromi Davison
Administrator

Reception

2022 has been a year of settling into my role as Receptionist and seeing ministries and church groups gathering pace. I love seeing the variety of people - both church members and members of the public who come into the building midweek.

This year I have reinstated Monday morning coffee, which is a nice opportunity for people to start off the week with a good catch up.

Shiromi and I have been keeping our public Facebook page up to date and I have started a weekly post so that the public can see more of what goes on at All Saints' throughout the week. I also make sure the TV in reception has up to date visuals for people to see what is happening from week to week. This coming year we will be setting up an Instagram account to hopefully connect with a younger demographic too.

Rachel Levinsohn
Receptionist

Publicity, Communication & Website

During 2022 the Communications Working party has continued to work closely with Shiromi to help improve our communication.

Website - Various changes to the website have been made including making the calendar more visible so it is easy to see what's on at All Saints'. The website is updated weekly with details of our Sunday services, live-streamed service links and sermon audio recordings. The front page of the website shows our upcoming events and is updated as they change.

Live Streaming - We continue to live-stream our 10.30am services plus some of our Christmas services. Thank you to the small team of volunteers who run this for us.

Facebook and Other Communication - Our All Saints' Members Facebook group keeps our church family up to date, Rachel adds our weekly Thankful Thursday post, and it is wonderful to see the responses. She has also started a weekly round up on our public Facebook page - a fantastic way to let our community see what we get up to! We use ChurchSuite to help us with communication as much as we can - if you don't know how to access it, please speak to me or Rachel and we can help you.

We now have a new banner outside the church and others may follow.

Shiromi Davison

Health and Safety

Health and Safety is really part of what we do in caring for people. We want to ensure people can use our buildings free from the risk of injury and to take part in church activities as safely possible. In doing this our Risk Assessments have been updated, tweaks have been made to working practice and we have a new Health and Safety policy which is going out to all who need to help us adhere to it. We have had a handful of minor accidents which have each been dealt with effectively. Our staff team and a select few others attended first aid training, fire training, and alongside our policies I feel we are taking prudent steps to mitigate risk.

Rev Matt Levinsohn

Staff Management Team

In the Summer we said goodbye to Debbie Bunford, who had been on the team since it was set up about 20 years ago. We have really appreciated her and all the wise contributions that she has made. The current members of the team are Elaine Webster, Michelle Honeywell, Gemma Elysee and myself. We have met with Matt every 3-4 months to review the appraisal process and policies relevant to staff. We have helped with the appraisals and other staff related matters.

David Emerton

Music and Worship 09.00

The nine o'clock service continues to worship with a mix of traditional and new songs. We are grateful for the team leading each week - Pamela, Janet or Lucy, and we are very thankful to Kate Pickover, Sue Jennings and Margaret Vaughan who continue to sing regularly.

The worship often has a reflective or contemplative feel along with the more celebratory services such as Advent or Palm Sunday. Songs are chosen both to complement the theme of the service and uplift the congregation in worship. The songs we use often contain wonderful words and phrases that can be used also in private prayer, following the service. Over this year we have learnt a few newer songs alongside many favourites.

Lucy Falcus

Music and Worship 10.30

The worship team at the 10.30 service has grown over the last year! We now have 5 rota'd bands led by Adam Burns, Anneliese Myers, John Belmont, Sue Jennings and Jim Daniel. We are blessed with some excellent singers and musicians and have had prophetic words, the presence of the Holy Spirit and times of prayer and fellowship with each other. Jacob Howard has been with us on youth apprenticeship and has organised and led services from the guitar and keyboard - an amazing talent which we are all pleased to have with us! The amazing PA team has been making improvements to the band set up, with easier desk settings and have been working on reducing the noise from the small monitor speakers on the stage. Please pray that God will keep inspiring us and giving us energy and delight in his worship.

We are always grateful for any volunteers wanting to join the group and would love to hear from you, especially if you play drums or bass. Any other instruments are welcome too, of course!

Thanks to everyone who lets us know when you have been blessed or have enjoyed the worship on a Sunday morning, it is very much appreciated!

Jim Daniel

Encounter

Our Encounter evening services are only 1 year old, but we have seen, heard and experienced our living God in genuine and powerful ways. When we started last February, we had a sense of this being a place for "Deep calling out to Deep" where we would intentionally give space and be open to hear and receive from God through the Holy Spirit's leading and through worship and the Word. During this past year that is exactly what we have experienced. Many voices have spoken up and shared what our Deep Father has been speaking to us, as individuals and the whole. We have spoken words of encouragement over each other. We have shared testimony of God at work in and through us in our daily lives as we live out Jesus in the world he created. We have brought our deepest desires for His Spirit to work in our world, repairing broken and hurting lives. We have sung songs of praise and worship to our King. Each month has been slightly different: different worship leaders, service leaders and, most wonderfully, many voices from within the whole gathered group of believers, from the youngest to the oldest, speaking out in this safe space. If you have not joined us, please do, you will find a warm welcome, as we collectively Encounter our Wonderful God together.

Adam Burns

Youth

We want to help young people become life-long followers of Jesus.

With this vision in mind, it has been such a joy to see our young people connecting with God this year.

There have been many ways for them to do this:

- Attending Youth Church where we connect as family, invite God to speak to us through talks, and worship and pray together.
- Joining us at Life Groups where we read the bible, discuss our faith in a fun, safe environment, support each other through the highs and lows of life, and respond to these things in prayer. We run 'Streams' fortnightly, which are more activity based, and a great place to bring friends.
- Committing to Doulos, a course run by Tees Valley Youth for Christ, which is about 'raising up servant leaders.'
- Taking part in Youth Apprenticeships once a month. This gives our youth the opportunity to serve with a ministry during the 10.30am service, helping them to discover their God-given giftings and connect with the wider church.
- A good number of our young people have mentors who meet with them regularly to encourage them in their discipleship.

It has been amazing to see Teesside young people come together for Refresh! Refresh is about 'Bringing Teesside young people together to encounter God, be transformed and change their world'. We welcomed amazing speakers like Tim Alford (Limitless Youth) and Esther Swaffield of International Justice Mission who spoke at our first ever day festival!

We were excited to return to summer camps in 2022, and our youth group attended 'Satellites'. It was an incredible time of meeting with God, and we saw a few young people make commitments to Jesus as well as others who had a profound experience of God.

We returned to Mexico where, thanks to the sacrificial support of our church family, we were able to bless a family with a new home, which will provide them with security and enable their family to remain together. As a team we connected as family in a beautiful way and most importantly connected with God in a powerful way too.

Throughout the year we have also been connecting with young people from our local community. Our detached youth team visited the skate park regularly, showing local young people that God loves them and so do we! We have welcomed many local young people to our Youth Club and tell them about Jesus every week. Kathryn had the opportunity to return to Egglescliffe School to deliver Christmas assemblies. Our quarterly Café Church is also a great, relaxed place for young people to invite their friends to discover Jesus!

There are many other things happening which do not fit into this report, but please do chat to us about the Youth Ministry sometime! I would like to take this opportunity to thank my amazing team, who give their time sacrificially so that our young people can discover Jesus for themselves. Please do continue to pray for our young people throughout the coming year!

Kathryn Belmont
Youth Pastor

Children

This past year has been exciting because most areas of ministry were able to start back up with a few tweaks, and we were able to move forward with new ministry too. Here are some of the highlights:

God's Giants Group – I started this after school group for our church children in years 5 and 6 in March and we have been meeting fortnightly ever since. It has certainly been a highlight for the leaders and children who say they love coming to it. We play football, games/activities, have a Bible time and discussion based around that, and eat treats. It has been such a great way to help the children build good friendships together and with us as leaders, and to feel they have their own more grown-up space to play and grow spiritually. A boy from the community, who we link with through Preston school, comes along too and he is coming some Sunday mornings to church. Another highlight is the trips out with this group - things like Clip and Climb, Burger King, and bowling - opportunities for fun and friendship building.

Schools Ministry – after losing connection with some local schools during covid times, 2022 provided several key opportunities to re-connect and build on those links.

The Life Exhibition – (a multimedia presentation) which we hosted for a week in March and provided a fantastic opportunity to invite more than 300 primary aged children with their teachers from 7 local schools to discover all about Jesus' life and ministry in a fun and relevant way. It was also a great time to talk with teachers and arrange to support their schools in other ways.

Puppet Based Bible Themed Event – we invited 120 younger children from Junction Farm and Preston schools to our All Saints' in June for activities, songs, instruments, puppets, etc. all based around a Bible theme. They were so excited and responsive, as were the teachers.

Christmas Schools Event in Church – was attended by approximately 320 children from 3 local schools. As well as the puppet songs the children loved the interactive activities we did as we shared the message of Christmas. School church tours, leading assemblies and lessons on baptism have also been highlights, along with the time spent with Preston Primary in church as they rehearsed, then presented their nativity and Christingle for their families.

Messy Church – it has been a joy to welcome back families who used to come prior to covid but also getting to know new families who have been joining and particularly encouraging that a few families from Preston school and our local community have come along. It has also been a really good time of developing the format from our normal way of running Messy to more of the Discovery/Café style church which we had only just started when covid hit. This has been allowing us to help families go a bit deeper spiritually and we will be moving fully from doing 'Messy church' to 'Discovery church' from May 2023.

Sunday Morning Ministry – Gems, Trailblazers, Trailblazers club

This past year has been a joy running our Sunday morning children's groups live again, and we have a few new families who have joined the church which is encouraging.

Trailblazer club – on a 3rd Sunday is popular with the children and a good way to help them bond. It is also a good intro for children from the community who have joined us and enjoy the club format.

Toddler Group and Play and Praise – it has been a positive year for both Toddler group and Play and Praise with new parents/carers joining us and opportunities to get alongside people to provide a listening ear, offer prayer and support.

Puppet Ministry – our Puppet team have worked hard recording videos of God songs and stories that are used in Gems and Play and Praise. Also, families love them at Messy church and they have been heavily involved in school events.

Family Social Events – other highlights include our family fun event in September and the Glow party in October which were well attended and enjoyed by families from our community and church.

A big Thank you to all my teams and we are excited to see what God has for 2023.

Jan Peters
Children's and Families Worker

Connect Lunch Club

In March we were able to resume Connect lunch club, having had to close again before Christmas due to a resurgence of the pandemic. This meant that our Christmas meal (2021) became an Easter meal when we were able to resume in March 2022.

After lunch activities have included quizzes, crafts, a talk on painting and a sing along. We were able to have our Christmas lunch 2022 and were joined by the Choral group to sing carols. The seated exercise group have continued to meet during 2022, supported by Pam Rushton.

Our numbers are not as large as previously, approximately 50 each month, but they are slowly increasing. About 20 people attend the short service in church before lunch. Anne Wildsmith stepped down from leading this in March. Sue Levan has taken over. I would like to thank Anne for her excellent leadership. We praise God that many of our guests have returned but miss those who are no longer able to attend. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all our wonderful Connect team and God who enables us to show his love for our Connect friends.

Karen Snowden
Team Leader

Prayer

This year, we have continued with prayer high on our agenda. We have so many Bible verses that instruct us to pray, with all kinds of requests, at all times and in all situations, faithfully. Also, we are promised that He will hear us, and He loves to give us good gifts.

Our prayer ministry has found a place, to the left in front of the stage (near the ramp) which suits the immediate in-service and after service needs. It is also a good place for prayer before the service. However, as we ask God to show us where we need to change and follow His leading, we have found praying in coffee time, in church where people are sitting, or after a conversation, is happening too. It feels right not to separate spiritual and “nonspiritual” times, as God is in it all.

Obviously, it is a call of all Christians to pray for others but if you prefer, please ask for someone from the prayer ministry team, who have extra training and safeguarding checks.

Prayer Appointments

The offer of longer and more private in-depth prayer appointments is something we continue. Some people have found it a very helpful way to work through difficult times and have met with God in a powerful way. Booking through the office is the best way to access this ministry.

Sandra Griffiths

Prayer and Worship Saturdays

We have continued to run the monthly Worship and Prayer meeting Saturday mornings, usually the second Saturday of the month. We were meeting 10-11a.m. but have now moved to 9-10a.m. Our numbers are between eight to eighteen. We have extended times of worship alongside thanksgiving and intercession for All Saints', plus local, national and world issues. Do come and join us if you have a heart for worship or prayer.

Rev. David and Jill Munby

Morning Prayer Zoom Meetings

Since the outbreak of Covid, Morning Prayer, previously held in various locations on the church premises, has been conducted on-line. Some 6 to 8 people are still regularly using this opportunity to start the day with communal prayer. We have, during the past year, been using the format of Lectio 365, led by members of the group attending, which combines readings from a Psalm and from either the Old or New Testaments with prayer times focused on particular themes, changing daily, and a time of more general intercession. We meet weekdays, except on Wednesday (to avoid any conflict with the Wednesday Communion Service) 09.10, and usually finish by 09.30. This means, of course, that many people will be at work, and unable to be involved, but if you are able to join us, I think you will find it a rewarding and worthwhile experience. We have been using Zoom, with the Meeting identifier 862 4733 2301, and the passcode 316316.

John Littlehailes

Pastoral Care

The Pastoral care team in All Saints' endeavoured to play its role within the church and the wider community.

Currently the team is: Chris Vass, Karen Killick, John Taylor, Evelyn Leadbetter, Nicola Dursley, Kate Pickover, Claire Warren, Rachael Levinsohn and Peter Gray. We listened, prayed, and offered practical help whenever called upon and, ideally, face to face.

Referrals to the team came invariably from within the church membership asking for prayers or to help/initiate actions which might be needed. These concerns, shared with the team, made a meaningful difference to the well-being of many.

We remain thankful for those valued personal relationships and friendships, including those Life Group contacts, which remain firmly at the forefront of meeting most needs, both immediate and long term, spiritual and practical, which presented themselves over the last year. We regularly monitored the membership list to try and ensure that, as far as we were able, no-one was overlooked, and all members had someone who "had their back" and could encourage them in their faith during those difficult days.

We continue to thank God for such a caring church and for the support of you all.

Peter Gray
Team Leader

Life Groups

We now have ten Life Groups plus the Wednesday morning communion group.

Two new groups started in 2022 since most of the existing groups were full. The first group meets on Friday evenings at church and is aimed at parents of children attending Youth Club. The second group is being led by us and is meeting in Eaglescliffe on Tuesday evenings.

Most of the groups continue to use WhatsApp to share prayer matters and to keep in touch. The groups also continue to be linked with our six mission partners. The feedback from this is very positive and it is fantastic to be able to support them all in this way (and be blessed in return).

We are continuing to seek opportunities to add more people into Life Groups and to encourage discipleship and mentoring relationships within the groups and in other contexts.

Thanks to all the leaders who have served their groups so faithfully through the year.

Stuart & Ruth Johnson
Life Group Coordinators

Walkers

The Walkers started to meet once more in June last year, after the hiatus imposed by the Covid precautions, with a walk each month except for August. We aimed to provide led walks of either 3-5 miles (short) and longer walks of the order of 8-10 miles, ideally with at least a couple of weekend walks per month. We have, in the past, also regularly had shorter walks on Wednesdays. The walks were open to all who enjoy walking: church members and unchurched walkers alike, and we hope that in the coming year (when walks will restart in May) we will be joined by others who draw inspiration and pleasure from the beauty all around us, and joy from the company of others who are moved by the same impulse.

John Littlehailes

Choral Group

In last year's report I wrote that the Choral Group had decided to cease singing in harmony for services but to continue to meet monthly and to encourage others to join us singing hymns. We are fortunate to have Janet Smith playing for us. Most of us are of an age where we were taught hymns to sing in school assemblies and a lot of us enjoy the chance to sing favourites, old and new. We usually number 15-20 attendees.

We were very sad in December to learn of the sudden death of Audrey Whitfield, who, along with her late husband Tom, had been a member of our original choral group from St Mary's church. We were privileged that both had continued singing with us to the end.

Singing is good for you! Most people enjoy the sessions, particularly those who may be experiencing memory problems. We welcome anyone of any age and any ability to join us in All Saints' on the last Monday of the month from 6.30pm to 7.30 pm. If you enjoy the chance to sing, do come along and give it a try.

Kate Pickover

Ukrainian Family Support Café

The alternate weekly meetings of the Ukrainian Family Support Café have been invaluable for hosts and guests as they arrived and chatted and picked up advice on various aspects of settling in. On average we have had about 15 hosts and guests each week, including children and young people. Staff from Stockton Council have attended and been available to answer questions or give advice. Friendships have been built with hosts and guests, and our team of helpers has expanded. This has meant there have been enough people to circulate and get to know people and there have been some opportunities for prayer.

As guests are settling into life in the UK their needs have changed, but having a safe and friendly place to come and meet others has been important to them. Please pray for the team as we consider how to develop the café and identify ways for Ukrainian guests to integrate in to our church activities and to build wider friendships in the community. The Facebook page for the Support Hub now has over 600 followers and we would like to build on sharing information and events that will be helpful for people.

Ruth Johnson & Judith Evans



All Saints' Church
Preston on Tees

Annual Report – 2022
