

# Annual Parochial Church Meeting

The Parochial Church Council of  
The Parish of St Leonard's  
Stanton Fitzwarren

Reports and Accounts  
For the Year Ended 31<sup>st</sup> December  
2022

## Contents

Churchwardens Annual Report 2022 St Leonard Stanton Fitzwarren; .....	3
THE BUILDING:-.....	3
EXTERIOR:- .....	3
INTERIOR:-.....	4
MAINTENANCE:-.....	4
CHURCH LANE .....	4
LIFE of the CHURCH.....	5
Safeguarding Report for the APCM April 2023.....	6
PCC Secretary's Report .....	7
Health & Safety Officer's Report .....	7
Elizabethan Armorial Restoration .....	8
Family Services .....	8
Coffee Morning Report 2022 .....	9
Team Choir .....	10
Deanery Synod Annual Report for 2022 for St Leonard's APCM (April 2023).....	10
Financial Statement for the year ending 31 December 2022 .....	12

## Churchwardens Annual Report 2022 St Leonard Stanton Fitzwarren;

On the condition of the church building and grounds and the life of the Church;

The Triennial Archdeacons inspection on 20<sup>th</sup> August 2021 found that St Leonards is very well maintained inside and out, thanks to the Churchwardens their spouses and a team of committed volunteers. It has new improved lighting. It still has the feel of a rural church in a small village. Adjacent to a popular wedding venue, the mission focus is wedding ministry.

### THE BUILDING:-

The quinquennial report by Oliver Wilson, architect, on behalf of Andrew Townsend Architects, was carried out in November 2021. No urgent problems were reported.

The architect was impressed by the condition of and regular care the building receives. The lighting/rewiring project in 2021 has proved a success with greatly improved lighting and we now have certificates showing that all the electrical installations are satisfactory (the highest category) and commenting on the high quality of the new lighting. The clock works well and is serviced by a qualified volunteer. Volunteers wind it regularly.

### EXTERIOR:-

**Roofs-** Satisfactory- . Several damaged or slipped slates were replaced during the delayed annual maintenance by Mr Hawkins. His report has been circulated to all PCC members.

**Stonework-** good condition since the masonry repairs identified as part of the 'tower project 2013-16' have been done. There is some new damage from masonry bees on the walls of the chancel and vestry which will be repaired in the summer. Some exposure of ancient loamy mortar on the north wall of the nave continues to be monitored.

**Tower-** This remains safe and waterproof. Urgent masonry repairs were completed in October 2015. The P.C.C. has undertaken to continue with the regular maintenance programme and to open the church building for 40 days a year until December 2024. This year, this was done as far as possible while conforming to any Covid restrictions. The Turret clock had extensive servicing and repair in 2018 and remains in full working order.

**Water Disposal-** good- Volunteers have repainted 3 down pipes on the south wall. Some roof gutters need to be redecorated especially on the north side of the nave. This is planned to be included in a future maintenance plus programme.

**Windows and Doors-** Satisfactory.

**Boundary walls-** the low wall to the west boundary with the Hotel Gardens is in poor repair-it remains in need of proper rebuilding. The capping stones on the high wall in the north east corner remain firm.

## INTERIOR:-

1. Roof- Satisfactory-
2. Walls- Satisfactory –The making good after the lighting project was undertaken by Mr Hawkins .
3. Woodwork- Satisfactory –only one pew has no central support
4. Doors- Satisfactory
5. Windows- Safe and secure- one small broken pane in west window.
6. Flooring-Repair is needed to the decorative tiles in front of the Altar (see quinquennial report) - a quote has been obtained and grants will be applied for this work which needs to be done in warm weather and not walked on for weeks
7. Furniture- Satisfactory –A wooden panel in poor condition identified as a possible royal armorial dating from reign of Elizabeth 1<sup>st</sup> is being evaluated by conservators

## MAINTENANCE:-

- Annual Maintenance by Mr Hawkins was done December 2022
- Organ- tuned
- Fire extinguishers- inspected and serviced in November 2022
- Electrics-The five yearly safety check done in November 2021 found the wiring to be safe and satisfactory,
- The PCC rejoices that the new LED lighting is an enormous improvement and has been fully paid for thanks
- to the generous gifts the PCC received from the late Eric Barnes. The Church Wardens express the thanks of
- the whole congregation to David Thomas who commissioned and oversaw the work on behalf of the PCC.
- Annual Clean-up. This year on various occasions, a few socially distanced volunteers oiled wood, treated
- floors and doors, vacuumed, mopped, dusted and polished. The door hinges painted, the path edged and
- the churchyard kept tidy and tree trimmings burned
- Routine graveyard maintenance carried out by Mr M Dyball.
- Gravestones- Satisfactory- some are leaning but safe.

## CHURCH LANE

Stanton House Hotel, owns the lane (a private drive). People using the church have the right of access on foot and in vehicles but the PCC has an obligation to contribute 'a fair share' of the cost of repair and maintenance. The lane safe to use for now but it's condition remains a concern which has been discussed with the Operational Director for the new owners.

## LIFE of the CHURCH

The **Covid 19 outbreak** had an enormous impact. Services take place again in our beautiful building. The building has remained accessible.

We enjoy being a **parish in the Stratton Team** Ministry and support monthly team services and other events.

**Rev Elveen Mead** has settled in as our **Vicar** and Priest-in Charge of the Benefice. This year she has had no curate, we miss **Rev Mark Tidey who was an enormous asset throughout his curacy**. She has been helped occasionally by **Rev Rachel Cook** when available from her own chaplaincy at RAF Brize Norton.

**Worship Services of Holy Communion. Morning Worship; and Family service** take place each month. Team services are also celebrated here from time to time; In December the **Family Service Christingle** was enjoyed and raised monies for the Children's Society. The **outdoor Christmas Eve Nativity** was organised involving village families.

We pay tribute to **Liz Bannister** who retired as Church Warden after years of service as PCC secretary and as Warden and welcome **Chris Pope** who was elected as Church Warden in her place.

**Mike Curtis** has taken on the role of PCC secretary and we are grateful for all he does and for the lead he has taken with the conservation of the armorial.

**The website** [www.stantonchurch.info](http://www.stantonchurch.info) continues to be improved and updated by Robert Breakspear.

**Family Services** continue to be a success –see separate report by **Robert Breakspear**

**Lent** – meetings were on-line and organised for the whole team

**Child Protection-** PCC members continue to hold DBS certificates. and have attended Diocesan led training courses.

**Safety- Mr M Curtis** our volunteer safety officer has worked with his colleagues in the other parishes and the PCC has accepted all his recommendations. Several members renewed their First Aid certificates

**Rogation Sunday-** we thanked God for our farmers and everyone involved in producing and distributing our food

**People work quietly behind the scenes-**by keeping the church building clean and tidy; preparing for Covid-safe services, taking part in services and praying for the life of the church.

**This year many times small jobs were done;** these involved volunteers who do not regularly attend services as well as many that do.

**Wedding Ministry-**This year only a few couples wanted to marry at St Leonard. We look forward to being again able to welcome and get to know couples and their families who join our worship as they prepare for marriage. Numbers may be limited by having so few Clergy.

**A good relationship with the Hotel** has been maintained. We are grateful for the use of their toilets and car park.

**Wiltshire Historic Churches Ride and Stride** gave us another chance welcome visitors and to raise money -over £300 was raised- half to the Trust and half to St Leonard.

**Harvest Festival-** Many people gave tins and non-perishable food to go to the Swindon food bank---the money collection was given to the 'Farmers in Crisis' charity

**Christmas Eve-** was busy the outdoor Nativity was valued by the many people who came. Carols by Candlelight was well attended

**Supporting others-**food is still collected for the Swindon Food Collective. Contributions can be left in the porch. Collections made for the Children's Society, Farmers in Crisis, Crisis at Christmas. As a church we support Emmaus homeless charity and Swindon Youth for Christ and Shine Pinehurst. As individuals we support many other charities.

**Joining in with our Community:-**As individuals we visit and support fellow villagers; join in with village events ; serve on the Village Hall committees and support other activities as we try to be good neighbours.

**Chris Pope and Liz Hillman**

### [Safeguarding Report for the APCM April 2023](#)

Since the last report in April 2022, Mary and Mike Bosher, Joint Parish Safeguarding Officers (PSOs), have been keeping a close eye on all aspects of safeguarding for the Parishes of St Margaret's Stratton, St Leonards Stanton, St Mary Magdalene South Marston and Coleview. Ably assisting us are the 'eyes and ears' in the parishes, Chris and Anne Pope for Stanton and Mary Crichton for South Marston. The 'eyes and ears' are the close personal local contact in the churches who can pass safeguarding concerns onto us. Their contact details can be found in the porchway of each church. We thank them for their vigilance.

We have been keeping all members of the two PCCs current with their DBS certificates. There were a number that needed renewal during this year as part of the 3 yearly renewal cycle. All members of both PCCs are now current with their DBS requirements and will not need to renew again until 2024. 23 DBS Certificates were renewed this year.

A Safeguarding Report is presented to every PCC meeting for both the Stratton and South Marston PCC and the Stanton Fitzwarren PCC to keep all members up to date with safeguarding developments and information. Safeguarding management is also monitored by the Diocese via the Parish Safeguarding Dashboard which is maintained by the PSOs

The Parish Safeguarding Officers welcome the fact that regular meetings continue to take place with the Priest in Charge 4 times a year to keep the Church leadership up to-date with all aspects of Safeguarding.

A very positive 2 session Safeguarding Leadership Course (C2) led by the Diocesan Training Officer was undertaken by 25 people in October. Training is regularly taking place for the two PSOs and members of the church family and there will be a

Domestic Abuse Awareness course taking place in September. This is now required training for all clergy, members of both PCCs and the Licenced Lay Ministers.

The thrust of our work continues to ensure that all members of all the Churches are safe to worship and go about their church business without risk. To that end, Mike and Mary would ask every member of every church, both leaders and congregation, to recognise their personal responsibility in making Safeguarding their concern. There is no option to leave a concern to someone else. If there is an identified issue, it must be passed on to the PSOs to be investigated and acted upon as a matter of urgency. "If you see something, say something" should be a point of action for everybody.

Mary and I would ask all of you to observe and exercise an attitude of informed vigilance. In that way, everyone will be as safe as possible. If you have a cause for concern no matter how trivial you think it might be, please talk to the 'eyes and ears' in your church or contact the PSOs Mike or Mary via the parish web site email address or call on 07799835437.

**Mike and Mary Boshier**

**Parish Safeguarding Officers (PSOs) April 2023**

### **PCC Secretary's Report**

The PCC is the executive committee of the parish and consists of clergy, churchwardens and elected representatives of the laity. Five full PCC meetings were held over the course of the year. These follow a standard agenda and typically cover apologies, approval of previous minutes, matters arising, clergy matters, finance, fabric, correspondence, health & safety, safeguarding, deanery report and any other business.

We also hold an annual meeting of parishioners (APCM) to elect churchwardens and other officers. This was held on 1st May.

During 2022 there were 5 baptisms at St. Leonard's, 3 weddings, one marriage blessing, and 1 funeral service/burial of ashes.

**Mike Curtis**

### **Health & Safety Officer's Report**

Actions taken during the course of the year include:

- Review and updating of Risk Assessments and our Health & Safety policy document.
- Annual Health & Safety inspection
- Training of First Aiders and replacement of our First Aid box
- Introduction of policy for dealing a medical emergency at church

Despite our efforts to make sure that our premises and activities are safe, there have been two minor incidents this year – both trips/falls, one causing minor injury. After any such incident we aim to find corrective measures to prevent re-occurrence, but in these cases we could identify no new actions to take, other than to step-up awareness and vigilance.

We ask all church users to act safely and report any concerns or observations to a member of the PCC.

**Mike Curtis**

## Elizabethan Armorial Restoration

Some years ago, during an inventory of the contents of our building, church members discovered a dilapidated wooden board with carved and painted heraldic figures. No one locally had any idea what it was. Limited research was carried out at the time, though a visitor, with an amateur interest in coats of arms, suggested that it could be a Royal Armorial from the time of Elizabeth 1st.

Records from 1913 show that the panel was gifted to the church at that time by the Rector, Canon Caldwell Masters. Recent discussions between a surviving family member and a conservator at the Wiltshire & Swindon History Centre have resulted in deeper understanding, and the piece has been described as important.

Unfortunately however, the armorial is in very poor condition: the main panels are warped and split, parts are missing, paint is faded and peeling, and there has been attack by woodworm.

The first step in any restoration programme would be the undertaking of a conservation survey and we are pleased to report that such an exercise has recently commenced, thanks to generous grants from the Church Buildings Council and the Thomas Freke and Lady Norton Charity.

We look forward to a time when the panel can be professionally restored and properly displayed in our church.

**Mike Curtis**

## Family Services

The monthly Family Service at St. Leonard's is run by a lay team from the church who both plan and lead the services. Whilst the services are unashamedly child-centric in their feel, they are enjoyed by a regular congregation that ranges from toddlers through to nonagenarians. We always aim to present familiar themes and bible stories in a variety of different ways with related activities, and it seems that – perhaps not surprisingly – the simple approach and fresh angles appeal as much to adults as to children.



2022 began with a series of three services looking at the life of St. Paul – the banners that were created from ideas generated in these services are proudly displayed in church. Palm Sunday fell on our usual second Sunday, which gave us the perfect excuse for an outdoor procession in the sunshine. In May we were joined by Rev Elveen who baptized an adult - who was soon to be a godparent - during the service. In June we reflected on the Queen's example of service at the time of her Jubilee.

The long hot summer meant that we were able to worship outside in July and August as we looked at Jesus's "I am" sayings, and then The Feeding of the Five Thousand where the activity included a chocolate fountain ... and why not? The September service came a few days after the death of Her Majesty the Queen, and the prayer tree that was created during the service was seen and appreciated by a number of those who came to sign the book of remembrance. The year's services concluded as always with Harvest Festival, Remembrance and Christingle.

Christmas Eve afternoon saw our third annual "Walking Nativity" as the Christmas story was retold and re-enacted along church lane. Around 60 people came out from the village and beyond for what has quickly become a very special Christmas tradition.

**Angela and Robert Breakspear**

### [Coffee Morning Report 2022](#)

Regular meetings, which started in 1985, resumed in February at Stanton House Hotel as the risks from Covid reduced. Tea and coffee provided by the Hotel at £3 a head.

We enjoyed being together again; 'Behind the scenes at the convent'; 'Where's Home'; 'Scouting for Boys'; 'Marching with Meg'; 'Eye Can Write' to mention a few-- we heard so many amazing stories. The December Christmas meeting, with carols and mince pies was great.

It is lovely to see more people coming to join in the Coffee Morning. Sadly, we have said "goodbye to some of our friends.

It is hoped that with the kind co-operation of Stanton House Hotel we can continue to look forward to our monthly meetings and listening to inspiring speakers who share something of their Christian journey with us.

Till then –Take care keep safe and God bless-

**Liz Hillman**

## Team Choir

The choir continued to progress musically during 2022. In Lent we sang our first piece of unaccompanied Tudor renaissance polyphony together at St Mary Magdalene for the team service, which was beautifully presented and sounded wonderful in that glorious acoustic.

Much of our choir practice time in the early part of the year was spent concentrating on rehearsing for a Musical Extravaganza – “Jerusalem Joy” which told the Easter Story. We presented this at Palm Sunday with home-printed tee-shirts, some staging and props. This was well received by the congregation and we feel encouraged to do more of this in the future. Easter was a very busy, but fantastically fulfilling time for the choir, with three services on Easter Sunday, and plenty of chocolate!

We sang our first choral evensong on July 10th at St Leonard's, which included some delightful unaccompanied psalm singing – something many of the choir had not done before. We then celebrated together at the Choir Summer Barbeque in late July before taking a break over the summer. After a later-than-usual restart in September the choir sang a beautiful advent service in St Leonard's including three anthems, and followed this up with Christmas Carol Services in all three churches, which were very well attended.

My thanks go to the choir for their continued commitment and enthusiasm, to Geoff Walters for his support and amazing flexibility, whatever music I throw at him, and also to the two Roberts – South and Breakspear for their assistance in running the choir.

We are always looking for new members – no musical knowledge necessary, and no auditions. If you like to sing and would like to join in – just come along.

**Angela and Robert Breakspear**

## Deanery Synod Annual Report for 2022 for St Leonard's APCM (April 2023)

### **In February:-**

#### **Eco church - The environmental challenge facing our churches**

Our main agenda item was a presentation and discussion about the environmental challenge facing our churches. This was led by Claire Fussell, our diocesan Environmental Advisor and we were delighted that regular synod members were joined by a number of guests representing various churches around the deanery.

#### **Eco-network Swindon Deanery**

We would like to create an informal network of people in Swindon Deanery who are interested in sharing information about the 'green' projects that they have going on in their churches, or who would like to know more about what other people are doing, so that they don't need to re-invent the wheel. Your church may already have a designated 'eco-champion', or perhaps there is someone who is interested in looking after the churchyard in a more nature friendly way, or maybe you're just concerned

about your heating bills... If there are people in your church who would appreciate the opportunity to share in the wisdom of others with similar challenges then please ask them to get in touch with Revd Phill Harrison (vicar@wroughton.com).

A number of churches in our Deanery have gained their Eco-church Bronze awards (well done!).

Links to energy saving and green energy resources:

- The Net Zero Carbon Church Checklist is here:  
[https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2021-01/PP2NZC\\_SelfGuidedChecklist\\_onscreen\\_version.pdf](https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2021-01/PP2NZC_SelfGuidedChecklist_onscreen_version.pdf)
- Switching to green energy using group procurement:  
<https://www.bigchurchswitch.org.uk/> or <https://bigcleanswitch.org/>
- National church guidance and resources on energy saving:  
[www.churchofengland.org/resources/churchcare/net-zero-carbon-church](http://www.churchofengland.org/resources/churchcare/net-zero-carbon-church)

### **Living in Love and Faith**

Details of how to express interest in the Deanery wide courses can be found here  
<https://bit.ly/SwinLLF>

### **Transforming Church. Together**

Working groups have been discussing possible ways of implementing the vision and values which have been discerned as part of the Transforming Church.

### **In July:-**

#### **Harbour Project – Supporting Refugees and Asylum Seekers**

We heard about the work of the Harbour project from its Chief Executive Claire Garrett. Please consider how you and your congregation can help asylum seekers and refugees in your area. Claire's most basic message was a plea for us to be kind – but there are many other opportunities too. Her presentation contained lots of interesting fact and figures and their website is here: <https://harbourproject.org.uk/>

#### **Supporting people in Swindon: 18 things**

Swindon Borough Council and the Citizens Advice bureau have identified 18 things that could help people who are struggling with the cost of living.

#### **Supporting people in Swindon: From the bottom to the top**

Bishop Lee and a friend were cycling from Land's End to John O Groats to raise money for the disadvantaged in Swindon

**In October we focussed on Education** – particularly hearing from Liz Townend the Diocesan Director of Education and Jez Piper, the CEO of the Diocese of Bristol Academies Trust, which included background information about the Diocesan Board of Education, Christian Distinctiveness in our schools and future plans for DBAT. There are plenty of ways in which schools and churches can support one another.

**Anne Pope - St Leonard's**



**Parochial Church Council of St. Leonards, Stanton Fitzwarren**

**Financial Statement for the year ended 31 December 2022**

**General Receipts and Payments Account**

<u>Receipts</u>		<u>2022</u>		<u>2021</u>
		<u>Unrestricted</u>	<u>Restricted</u>	<u>Total</u>
<u>Voluntary Receipts</u>	Planned Giving	10,793		10,750
	Collections and other giving	769		629
	Income tax recovered	5,482		7,642
	VAT Recovered		5,057	0
	Donations	118		1,773
		<u>17,162</u>	<u>5,057</u>	<u>22,219</u>
<u>Receipts from activities for generating funds</u>	Other Fund Raising	809		383
		<u>809</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>809</u>
<u>Receipts from Church Activities</u>	Fees	1,638		814
	Wedding & Baptism Collections		253	214
		<u>1,638</u>	<u>253</u>	<u>1,891</u>
<u>Other income</u>	Fabric Fund (Restricted Funds)			0
	Bank Interest Received	596	81	37
		<u>596</u>	<u>81</u>	<u>677</u>
<u>Total Receipts</u>		<u>20,205</u>	<u>5,391</u>	<u>25,596</u>
				<u>22,242</u>
<u>Payments</u>		<u>2022</u>		<u>2021</u>
		<u>Unrestricted</u>	<u>Restricted</u>	<u>Total</u>
<u>Grants</u>	Mission & Charities	1,481		1,385
<u>Church Activities</u>	Diocesan Parish Share	11,500		10,500
	Team Expenses	1,125		900
	Church Running Expenses	2,638		2,298
	Church Maintenance	1,043		33,198
	Churchyard Maintenance	420		1,065
	Cost of Services	521		171
	Administration	528		99
		<u>19,256</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>49,616</u>
<u>Total Payments</u>				
<u>Total Net Receipts</u>		949	5,391	-27,374
<u>Balance Brought Forward</u>		53,953	2,287	83,614
<u>Balance Carried Forward</u>		<u>54,902</u>	<u>7,678</u>	<u>56,240</u>
<u>Monetary Assets</u>	Current Account			4,750
	CCLA Deposit Account			51,490
<u>Total</u>				<u>56,240</u>
<u>Debtors</u>	Income Tax Claim			4,564
<u>Creditors</u>	Electricity			30
	Team Expenses			225


The financial statements of the PCC have been prepared in accordance with the Church Accounting Regulations 2006 using the Receipts and Payments basis.

Approved by the Parochial Church Council on 23 March 2023

Rev Elveen Mead



David Thomas - Treasurer



**INDEPENDENT EXAMINERS REPORT  
TO THE TRUSTEES OF ST. LEONARD'S CHURCH, STANTON FITZWARREN  
PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL**

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the Parochial Church Council (the PCC) for the year ended 31 December 2022.

**Responsibilities and Basis of Report**

As the charity trustees of the PCC you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ('the Act').

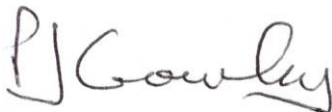
I report in respect of my examination of the PCC's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

**Independent Examiner's Statement**

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe that in any material respect :

- (1) accounting records were not kept in respect of the PCC as required by section 130 of the Act ; or
- (2) the accounts do not accord with those records.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this respect in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.



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23 March 2023