Four papers for the APCM relating to church activities from May 2022 to May 2023;

Churchwardens Report by Janine Dunnell

Vicar’s Report by Jez Carr

Charity Commission Report by Jane Spoerry

Children and Families’ Ministry Report by Janna Holder

# **CHURCHWARDENS REPORT FOR THE 2023 APCM**

This has been another challenging but rewarding year, as we made our way through the last months of vacancy and then warmly welcomed our new vicar.

# Background

This report covers the main activities of our parish since our last APCM on 23 May 2022 until the licensing of Rev. Jez Carr at the end of September 2022. During this period our parish continued in vacancy.

# The leadership teams

During the final months of the vacancy, Holy Trinity was excellently supported by the Benefice Rector Rev Dan Beesley, and Assistant Priests Rev Jenny Tebboth and Rev Paul Henderson.

Janna Holder diligently and energetically led an All-Age service nearly every month. She continued to supply all the music for our services, whilst continuing her work as our Children’s and Families Worker. We are very thankful for her support, enthusiasm and creativity.

## PCC

The PCC continued to meet regularly with Olwyn as lay-chair to discuss all aspects of our church life and how we may best manage our stretched resources. We are very grateful for their dedication in serving Holy Trinity, as they bring a wide range of skills and experiences and always endeavour to come to a wise conclusion.

Our PCC members are - Olwyn Davison Oakley (Lay chair), Audrey Hardy (Treasurer), Mark Webb, Nora Bennett, Sue Puttergill, Linda West (LLM), Janna Holder (Children’s & Families Worker) and Churchwarden Janine. Our especial thanks to Kathy Campbell, our minute taker.

# Services and seasons

The number of people attending our services in person has continued to grow, and we have continued to stream our services for those who are unable to attend in person.

## Regular Monthly services

**8am:**

1st & 3rd Sunday-BCP Communion Service

**10am:**

1st Sunday-All-Age Service

2nd Sunday-Holy Communion Service

3rd Sunday-Morning Praise Service

4th Sunday-Holy Communion Service

5th Sunday-Holy Communion Service

## Other services

On 12 June, on Trinity Sunday, Rev Jenny Tebboth led our 10am service as we celebrated our 175th birthday, both during the service and with an afternoon tea in the churchyard, and a raffle to raise funds for the church.

On 21 August, Rev Jenny Tebboth led our 10am service to celebrate Climate Sunday. Our thanks to Nora for the posters and Facebook pages to provide more information and to show what the CoE, the Diocese and our parish are doing to support the environment.

On 4 September we joined with Chalfont St Giles for their morning Service on the Green, and with SGBC in the afternoon for In Praise at the Jolly Cricketers. There was a good attendance from Holy Trinity at both events.

## School service

Seer Green School have continued to come for a service in church. See Janna’s report for lots more information about her work in schools.

## Special services

We held two weddings in this period (one combined with a baptism), and a renewal of marriage vows. We also had a busy schedule with six baptisms.

We held two funerals, remembering and celebrating the lives of two long term members and friends of Holy Trinity, Pete Bingle and Ann Wyllie. Both enthusiastically contributed so much to the church and our community.

## THE DEATH OF HER MAJESTY THE QUEEN

When the death of Her Majesty the Queen was announced, Holy Trinity arranged a Book of Condolences with a photograph of Her Majesty, the tolling of the bells at the designated times, and a service of remembrance before the State Funeral. Jez Carr, our new vicar but not yet licensed, was given approval by the Diocese to lead our service on 18 September to reflect on the life of Her Majesty the Queen.

# Activities

## 175th HOLY TRINITY Birthday tea party

On 12 June, we invited Seer Green and Jordans villagers to join us for afternoon tea to celebrate Holy Trinity’s 175th birthday. The Flower Guild decorated the church with beautiful arrangements, various items on the church’s history were displayed, and Geoffrey Brand did a sterling job in sharing the history of the church with our visitors. The sun shone and many came to sit and chat. We also held a raffle to raise money for the Buildings Fund. Thank you to all who made cakes, served tea and coffee, sold raffle tickets, and helped set up, take down and do the masses of washing up – we could not have done this without you.

## Toddlers in the woods

This activity continues to thrive and serve our community of young families with toddlers. We are very grateful to Ali Cork and her team of volunteers for all that they do.

## Pastoral Care Group

The Pastoral Care group, under Heather Rowe’s guidance, continue to support those in need in our villages.

## Prayer Group

Led by Linda, Muriel and Ali, members of the Prayer and Intercession group pray daily and in strict confidence for those who request prayers.

## 8 O’Clock Club

Led by Monica Sado, the 8 O’Clock Club continues to meet monthly in the Seer Green Baptist Church. We are very grateful to Monica for her amazing work and the continued variety of speakers and subjects.

## Wednesday study group & Thursday discussion groups

The Wednesday group continues to meet on Zoom to support those less able to meet in person, and has been working its way through Acts. The Thursday group meets in person, covering many different topics with lively discussions. Membership has grown in both groups.

# OUR RECRUITMENT

We had an unusual interview process to select our new vicar. The interview team from Chalfont St Giles, Holy Trinity, the Deanery and Diocese agreed that we would proceed with only one candidate after our selection meeting – Rev Jez Carr. As Jez was living in Canada, we held a Zoom interview on 17 May with the easier questions to get our first impressions. We all agreed that we wanted to continue with Jez, and would wait until the family was settled back in the UK. The face-to-face interview (with the difficult questions), the school and church service, and a time for the clergy to meet the candidate took place over 12 and 13 July. Jez was offered the position and accepted. We then had a long wait over summer before Bishop Alan came to lead Jez’s Licensing Service on 28 September, and we could formally welcome him.

# Communications

Holy Trinity uses many ways to communicate with congregation, community and beyond. We continue to live stream nearly all our services to our YouTube channel, and we also stream special occasion services such as weddings, baptisms and funerals if requested. We are very grateful to the team who provide this service. Thank you, Janna, Carole and Lois.

Janna continues to maintain our lively Facebook page which posts news of our activities and services.

David Wall maintains our website and brilliantly keeps it up to date. We are deeply grateful for his diligent and resourceful approach.

The Parish Magazine team continue their wonderful work in providing interesting articles and keeping the villages informed about activities and events. We are very grateful to the editorial team of Sue, Carol and Phil for their dedication.

Our very hard-working pew sheet editors Geoffrey, Pam and Nora produced a pew sheet each month, managing to include all the necessary information. We are very grateful to Jane Spoerry as she provides the framework each month. These are emailed to about 125 households with 8 delivered by hand.

# Support for the church

The number of people attending in person has continued to grow and we are very pleased to welcome both those in church and online.

We are very grateful for all those who support us in creating a welcome, comfortable, clean and attractive church. Thank you to our lovely side people (welcomers), our conscientious cleaners and our fabulous Flower Guild. Thank you to those who read and those who prepare prayers (intercessors), and thank you to Ann, our Sacristan. Thank you to those who serve tea and coffee after our 10am services, and those who make cakes for special occasions. Thank you to our vergers who support the wedding and funeral services. Thank you to those who open and close the church daily – this is very much appreciated by our villagers and visitors from further afield. These are all such important services that contribute to and enrich the life of our church and community.

**Janine Dunnell, Churchwarden**

**April 2023**

**APCM 2023 Vicar’s Report – Jez Carr**

**First Impressions**

Let me start by saying a big thank you for the welcome you have given to me and the family. As I recall my initial impressions of the community of Holy Trinity upon our arrival a few months ago, ‘Welcoming’ comes top of the list; there is a lovely warmth towards newcomers, and that is a huge gift – to me and others. ‘Accommodating’ comes next; you have been keen to communicate to me that you are open to new things for the sake of the Kingdom, even when that requires the sacrificing of personal preference. I have seen that play out in the discernment process around the building’s future, and in the way we embraced the Scout Hut during the winter. I should add that, of all the changes I have introduced, many of them I will have done so unknowingly and unintentionally, so feel free to discuss them with me as I don’t want to introduce change for the sake of change. Anyway, the third impression I recall (and I mean this as a good thing) is ‘Impatience’; a determination to take initiative where things aren’t as we would like them to be. As we navigate the upheavals in the Church and the world, these three traits will be hugely helpful to our flourishing.

**So, what’s been happening?**

For me, the autumn was about ‘getting my feet under the desk’; thank you for patience (if I’m allowed to contradict myself!) with allowing that to happen. I have greatly enjoyed the time I have spent getting to know people and participating in the various programmes connected to the church, including doing school assemblies every other week (and welcoming Year 2 to explore the church), and re-launching a midweek communion service on the first Wednesday of every month. I’m so grateful to so many of you for the efforts you make to run events and services, and especially to our warden, Janine Dunnell, for her work in easing me into the role and continuing to support the ministry of the church in so many ways.

Christmas was somewhat affected by the total failure of our heating system (more on that later). A particular thank you to Janine Dunnell, Jane Spoerry, Janna Holder and others for working so hard, and with such grace and creativity, to search out last-minute solutions. As part of this, we moved our two carol services to the Jubilee Hall, and both felt fantastic. At the first, ‘Sing Into Christmas’, the Seer Green Singers contributed to a fabulous evening of jovial song and reflection; the second, more traditional ‘Carols By Candlelight’ was led by the wonderful Village Voices. We were so thrilled to host these choirs, and especially Jane and David Smith their director and honorary accompanist, and we hope we get to have them all again next year! Our reflective Midnight Mass and celebratory Christmas morning service went well and saw reasonable numbers despite the cold.

By late January, once it was clear there was no quick fix for the heating, we moved our 8am service into the vestry and our 10am service to the Scout Hut. Our 10am congregation seemed to handle – possibly even enjoy! – the simpler, brighter space, and the ability to position chairs in a more communal layout. By Easter Sunday, the weather allowed us to return to the main church, to a pretty-much packed Easter Day celebration. Prior to that, we had a lovely Maundy Thursday meal together in The Three Horseshoes, a rich joint service with the Baptist Church on Good Friday, and a fabulous Saturday Easter Egg Hunt which seemed to draw out the entire village! We have also ben enjoying a rich, creative prayer station for the Easter season, centred around the Fruit of the Spirit; thanks so much to Sarah Allen for initiating that. As warmer weather continues to inch its way to us, we’re enjoying being able to meet once again back in the centre of the village.

We have also three baptisms so far in 2023, and a number more are on the way. These generally happen at 12pm, though the 10am service will start to feature more in that regard. Thank God for the opportunity this presents to invite young families in the village into a fuller expression of the Christian faith.

**The Heating…**

The failure of the heating system kickstarted the main storyline of the last six months. Amid the challenges, a question emerged: while we’re doing the deep-dive required to replace the heating, what else might we do? A number of people seized the opportunity to express ideas and longings they have for the space. ‘Vicaring 101’ says, ‘Don’t attempt a major renovation in your first year in post (obviously)’, but the heating had other ideas and it has been hugely exciting to see what is starting to come together.

**What’s the vision?**

Various needs in the community were (re-)articulated in this process: the need for alternative layouts and formats for church services which connect with under-represented demographics; the lack of spaces in the village where people can come together in ways that don’t suit the pubs (especially families with littlees); the lack of provision for youth; the need to improve our step-free accessibility and increase our fire limit (which currently prevents us from hosting the whole school). As a result, a vision is coming together to draw the community through the doors of the church; to create a space which responds to their felt and unfelt needs, and which is able to host them in a greater variety of ways. To these ends, possible facility developments we are exploring include:

* Raising the floor to make space for under-floor heating;
* Replacing the pews with more comfortable, flexible seating;
* Creating a step-free access through the north side of the church, possibly including a substantial new atrium with café area and break-out spaces;
* Getting plumbing and catering facilities to the back of the church (or to the atrium);
* Removing the pulpit, along with the rail between the nave and chancel, to better accommodate a variety of events and services alongside the traditional;
* Putting solar panels (disguised as tiles!) on the south-facing roof to cover our heating costs and indeed sell back to the grid (note that the roof will need substantial attention in the coming years either way);
* Insulating the roof better;
* Glass doors in the current main south entrance;
* A mezzanine floor in the back half (though it’s unlikely we’d do this if we did the atrium).

None of these have been finalised, and all will involve consultation with the congregation, diocese, and various experts. Thank you to those of you who have responded to the above as you’ve heard about it. As ever, we would love to hear thoughts from everyone – we are keen to listen! Projects like this create opportunities for us to exercise the love of God’s family in the midst of differences of opinion and preference. They also hold lots of potential for engaging with the wider community. Let’s pray that this is indeed our experience of the process, and that the result brings glory to God in the lives of all those he is calling, within and without the current congregation. A big thank you to the working group which is pushing forward with this project: Tom Allen, Janna Holder, Peter Vinall and Jane Spoerry.

The Holy Trinity SG&J Parish Profile by which I was enticed here states: “Our vision is to live and share Christ’s love.” We look forward to all that the next year holds, regardless of longer term projects, as we seek to do exactly that.

**Jez Carr, Vicar**

**April 2023**

**Charity Committee Report, 2022/2023**

This report covers the period from June 2022 to May 2023

**Background**

Each month Holy Trinity Church draws attention to the work of a different charity. The mix of charities changes from year to year, some charities appear annually as part of our longer-term commitment to them, while others feature for only a year or two. Being a charity for the month provides an opportunity for us to bring to wider attention lesser-known charities or to feature a cause that is particularly close to someone's heart. The charity committee meets in the autumn to agree the programme for the year ahead. Please see below our current schedule.

**Charity for the month schedule**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **2022** |  |
| October | One Can Foodbank |
| November | Royal British Legion |
| December | Children’s Society |
|  | Housing Justice |
|  | Disasters Emergency Committee |
| **2023** |  |
| January | Kisiizi |
| February | David Nott Foundation |
| March | Cure Parkinson’s |
| April | CRANE |
| May | Christian Aid |
| June | St Andrews Family Project |
| July | Church Action on Poverty |
| August | Bible Society |
| September | A Rocha |

**Aspects of the year so far…**

In October Holy Trinity’s harvest weekend was again the focal point for collecting donations from the school and villages for One Can foodbank in High Wycombe. Janna organised themed activities on Saturday and there was an opportunity to ‘meet our new vicar’ and drop off donations. She and Janet Stewart also arranged a speaker from One Can to attend the service on Sunday.

Royal British Legion was the charity for November. Guy Upward local resident and representative wrote a helpful article for the parish magazine about this years focus of their appeal, ‘the sacrifices our Armed services make and how they are willing to risk everything to protect us, despite having never met us.’

For many years Holy Trinity church family has collected presents and vouchers for the children and families of those who attend St Andrews Family Support Group. In November Rachel and Katharine in collaboration with Claire Jenkin arranged for the gifts to be bought to the Advent Sunday Service at the end of November. Again, they were overwhelmed by the generosity of the congregation and villages.

The work of The Children’s Society is the focus of giving at the Christingle service. We were pleased to welcome a hardy and cheerful speaker, Jane Penson, from The Children’s Society who highlighted some aspects of their work in our very cold church, the heating having completely failed.

In January we were very pleased to welcome Ian and Hannah Spillman to the warmth of the Seer Green Scout Hall where Ian preached as well as updating us about the work at Kisiizi, both in the hospital and the new business administrative software initiatives they have successfully undertaken.

In the spring we supported two very different medical charities, both undertaking crucial work- The David Knott Foundation and Cure Parkinson’s.

Paul and Alison Bosson were in Seer Green for Easter so they were able to come and talk about the work of CRANE and their connections with it through their work in Uganda.

**Looking forward….**

We look forward to Claire Jenkin coming to speak in June about St Andrew’s Family Project and in September we will be supporting A Rocha for the first time. An environmental charity which the PCC led by Nora worked with to gain Holy Trinity bronze eco church status.

**Raising Awareness**

We continue to try to raise the profile of our charity of the month by ensuring it is mentioned on a slide at every service as well as an enlightening article in the parish magazine and inclusion in the pew sheet. Geoffrey is vigilant in ensuring someone is tasked with producing the article.

We also display a poster on the blue notice boards outside church. We continue to invite informed speakers to further enhance the congregations understanding of the charities work.

It is hard to quantify the financial benefits for charities of our work as only some donations go via our blue envelopes to our marvellous treasurer Audrey Hardy. During ‘the covid lockdowns’ we encouraged donation directly to charities via their websites and many have continued to do that. The charities websites also contain abundant information about their work for those seeking more information and looking for other ways to support with gifts of time and goods.

**Charity Committee**

I would again like to offer my warmest thanks to Katharine Parker, Geoffrey Brand, Rachel Gibson and Nora Bennett for their energy and enthusiasm. They are always modest about their contributions but their diligence and commitment make it happen.

**Jane Spoerry**

**28 April 2023**

**Children’s and Family Report 2022-2023**

As I reflect on this time last year, we had navigated the world of Covid restrictions and uncertainty, and with the interregnum hopefully soon drawing to an end, things were starting to head in the right direction. The appointment and subsequent arrival of Rev Jez, Miriam and Asher has been such a blessing.

In the autumn Rev Jez and I sat down and started to dream of what we could do with some of our children and families work and we shared some initial ideas, and then the heating broke – scuppering quite a lot of these plans.

A friend once said to me, its isn’t a light at the end of the tunnel that we need, it’s knowing the Light of the World in the darkness of the tunnel. I firmly believe that God has great plans in store for our church, the Christian community within Seer Green and Jordans and all who live and work within our two villages. He is guiding us and encouraging us to look differently at things and see the possibilities around us. God is faithful and there have been so many different ways in which he has been speaking to us and showing us the way, especially during this last 6 months.

Whilst our plans have had to change somewhat over the last few months, here’s a summary of what we have been up to over the last year.

**Sundays**

May – November saw our All-Age Service continue but with the pressures on Sunday mornings we saw few younger people attending these. From February our monthly 10am All Age Services stopped with the aim to replace them with a a new afternoon gathering, particularly aimed at families, but this has been paused due to the issues with the heating and flexibility of our building.

Explore pop up church in the woods has now taken place 6 times and is particularly linking well with our baptism families. This joint initiative with SGBC enables families to spend time with each other whilst getting involved in themed activities set out in the woods, and concluding with a short gathering including a song, story, game and prayer.

It has been great to be involved in our baptism services during this year with Rev Jenny and Rev Jez. The baptism prep sessions prior to their child’s baptism have given the parents an opportunity to understand more about baptism, and the Christian faith. This continues to be an exciting area of mission and ministry, and it is wonderful to welcome these families to church and to the other activities we do.

**Toddlers in the woods**

Toddlers in the woods has continued each Friday in term time and is a favourite with the families that attend. Thanks to Ali, Nora, Rachel and Brigit who faithfully serve in running this weekly ministry in Jordans. Please chat to them to find out more.

**Special Events**

The Summer Holidays saw the return of joint church children’s activities, including Create, Film nights and Family Fun, all giving opportunities to continue to develop relationships with and between the children and their families.

At Harvest we once again joined with the village street heroes and collected a large number of items to support One Can and a number of us enjoyed a Harvest meal at the Three Horseshoes.

Our popular event of Fun, Food and Fireworks returned, and tickets sold out (400) to this joint churches event, held at The Jubilee Hall. Grateful thanks to my friend Andy (who professionally lights fireworks) for being in charge of setting off the fireworks.

Jez was thrown in at the deep end in December and had to use my plans for Christingle following my positive test for covid. A rather chilly church welcomed a number of our baptism families to start the festive season remembering that Jesus came as a light to the world. Again this year we used cakes as our bases for our Christingles, to eliminate food waste with the oranges.

We invited families into our building post school pick up for cookies and carols, where we held a short time of carol singing which was well attended.

Rev Jez and I worked with Jane Smith to create the new ‘Sing into Christmas,’ which combined elements of our previous Christmas Celebration and Jane’s Christmas school ‘singalong’. This was a joyous occasion combining carols, readings and festive songs. It was wonderful to have the men’s choir involved with this, and the women’s choir with our carol service. Both of these were relocated to the Jubilee Hall but were enjoyed by those who attended.

Our first crib services in the building since 2019 were very well attended, with (free) tickets selling out. It was very special to have so many gathered in our building once again to remember those events of the first Christmas.

Expanding on ‘Explore pop up church’ we held Explore Christmas and Explore Easter as joint ventures, using SGBC building. Both of these had around 100 people at them and at each families enjoyed toys and activities, followed by a gathering together to close, thinking of the reason for the seasons. At Explore Easter it was lovely to have SG Gardeners helping and encouraging families to get involved in their fuchsia in the pot competition by planting their plug plant at the event.

On Easter Saturday The Great Seer Green Easter Egg Hunt took place. Not quite as warm as last year but the sun shone and over 80 families got involved, wandering around the village solving clues, collecting eggs, finding cheeky chicks and winning chocolate! It was great to interact with so many people and share the Easter story with them. There was a lovely buzz in the village as families and friends enjoyed doing the hunt together.

Easter Sunday saw a packed church celebrate that Jesus is risen – with party poppers and confetti canons! (A huge thank you to those who helped the clear up!). A number of children enjoyed running round the churchyard collecting plastic eggs in exchange for chocolate!

**Schools Work**

Open the Book has continued to share God’s big story with the children at Seer Green CE School each Tuesday morning. The majority of the collective worships have been in person, although every now and then Zoom enables us to continue if the hall is being used for another purpose, or when the children had to bubble again due to norovirus. It is such a privilege to be able to tell the children Bible stories each week and let them think about how the message of them apply to their lives today. The team are fantastic, but we would love a couple of new team members, especially some men, if you are interested, please come and speak to me.

Throughout the year I have visited Jordans Infant school to take their Tuesday afternoon every 3/4 weeks and have enjoyed joining the children and parents to celebrate key festivals in school.

In July, on the hottest day on record, the Year 6 children at SGCE school and their parents visited Holy Trinity for their leavers service, each child receiving a Bible as a gift from Holy Trinity. Remarkably even in Holy Trinity it was too hot – a strange thing to imagine at the moment!

In November it was great to be able to be back in Seer Green SC School running a number of creative prayer activities to mark European Pray Day. All the children spent time in the hall engaging with areas of different themes of prayer, such as thankfulness, confession, petitions, values, praying for other people and being still. The children wrote feedback saying that they enjoyed the opportunity to be quiet, reflect and enjoyed the fun prayer activities.

Whilst not with my HT hat on I work in SG school on Monday and Tuesday lunchtimes and I continue to be a governor, chairing the Pupil Matters Committee. The new Head teacher Laura Morel has settled in well, and is supportive of the links with Holy Trinity and we look forward to developing our relationship with her and the school over the next year.

Our children and family’s ministry continues to evolve as we seek to reach out to those of faith and those searching. We want to provide opportunities to create and develop relationships, explore faith, and see lives changed as people choose to follow Jesus. Come back next year and read my report to see what happens next!

Thank you to everyone who is involved in our ministry with children, young people and their families. Very little could happen without the time, effort, resources, prayer and finance that you bring to this vital work, which is so appreciated.

If you would like to know any more about the work we are doing, please do come and have a chat with me.

**Janna Holder,**

**Children and Families Minister**