



allsaintsworcester

ANNUAL REVIEW 2022

CONTENTS

VICAR'S REPORT	3
1. GOVERNANCE AND OPERATIONS	4
PCC	4
ELECTORAL ROLL	4
SAFEGUARDING	5
BUILDINGS UPDATE	11
2. LOOKING OUTWARDS	14
MISSION PARTNER SUPPORT	14
WORCESTER FOODBANK	15
ECO GROUP	16
3. COMMUNITY AND GROWING DISCIPLES	18
GROUPS	18
FOOTBALL TEAM	18
REVIVE	19
MEN TOGETHER	19
ARTSPACE	20
ALPHA	24
CHILDREN'S CHURCH & MAINLY MUSIC	24
STUDENTS	31
PASTORAL CARE	32
4. PRAYER, WORSHIP AND TEACHING	33
PRAYER	33
WORSHIP	33
GATHERINGS	36

VICAR'S REPORT

The past ministry year has been a good one for All Saints, which much to be thankful for and much to be excited about. Early 2022 was about navigating the end of the worst of the Covid-19 pandemic. There was understandably much uncertainty and a shared awareness of the need for reconnection with one another as the church after so much social and therefore relational distancing. The first few months were tentative and slow, with a steady but understandably cautious return to much of "normal" church life for many of us, and a need to work hard to reboot as a church family.

The highlight of the year for me was "The Big Weekend" in June at The Poplars. This proved to be catalytic in us reconnecting and rebooting as a church and I am very thankful to the PCC for so generously underwriting that event and to all of you who came. It was the perfect moment to celebrate the 20th anniversary of our replanting as a church, and to share stories with one another on the Saturday evening, to honour Paul & Viv Swann and all those who involved in that project. It was a joy too to see so many friends return to be with us after having moved on.

The autumn term saw us really get fresh momentum and a sense of clarity and expectation of what the Lord is wanting to do in our midst in this new season - our sense is that we are being called to embrace a new season of dependence on God, commitment to holiness and to boldly articulate and embody the gospel in fresh and innovative ways. We have increased the amount of corporate prayer since September and I believe some of what we are seeing God do is the answer to our prayers prayed. I want to encourage us all to press in to God, to commit afresh to our vision and to one another, and to give generously to the church for our future.

Another highlight and much worked for project is the reordering of St Helen's which got underway in 2022 and is due to complete in the summer of 2023. This will provide a beautiful, flexible and sacred space in which church and community life can happen. I want to say a particular thank you to Stella Power for the extraordinary way she leads on this project, with such attention to detail, enthusiasm and ability to relate to our contractors.

As ever, church life can only happen because we all play our part. We are blessed with a quite extraordinary staff team who work tirelessly to serve us all; they're creative, humble and fun! The PCC and ministry leaders - too many to name - are also so central to making sure church life and it is a genuine privilege to lead alongside them.

Thank you too to everyone who is part of the family of All Saints. As you read on to hear all about the last year, be encouraged as you see what a difference our shared commitment to God and one another has made!

Rev Dr Rich Johnson
Vicar

1. GOVERNANCE AND OPERATIONS

PCC

The Parochial Church Council (PCC) met nine times in 2022-2023 and as worked hard to grapple with the challenges of overseeing a small charity in such uncertain financial times. It is no surprise that we are dealing with a drop in income as households feel the impact of rising bills and food costs at a time when the church's costs are also under pressure.

The PCC has also worked hard to:

- ensure we continue to comply with all safeguarding, health and safety and environmental health, and data protection (GDPR) regulations.
- oversee robust systems for financial giving and monitoring
- ensure excellent HR practices are in place, and complete the annual salary and pensions contribution review
- ensure the staff team are properly managed and supported
- oversee the good running of Worcester Foodbank

Rev Dr Rich Johnson
Vicar

ELECTORAL ROLL

At the APCM 2022 the electoral roll stood at 177. The annual electoral roll revision took place in February and March 2023. Over the course of the 12 months since the last APCM 23 names have been added and 13 names have been removed. The new roll stands at 187.

Philippa Barton
Electoral Roll Officer

SAFEGUARDING

'Speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves, for the rights of all who are destitute. Speak up and judge fairly; defend the rights of the poor and needy.'
Proverbs 31:8-9

Safeguarding is becoming more embedded within our culture as time progresses. However, there are key members of our community with special responsibility for safeguarding:

- **Rich Johnson**, as incumbent has the overall responsibility to create an environment which enables safeguarding concerns to be raised and responded to openly, promptly and consistently.
- **Mark Carrington** who is responsible for all posts in church being safely recruited and maintaining those records, as well as risk assessments in regard to safeguarding, and updating the Parish safeguarding dashboard.
- **Ministry Leaders** who ensure that appropriate safeguarding practices happen within their ministry area and receive any safeguarding concerns from their teams and handle them appropriately.
- **Grahame Lucas** has responsibility for all safer recruitment and safeguarding concerns in relation to Foodbank.
- **Sue Price** as Parish safeguarding Officer who is responsible for implementing the safeguarding policy by working closely with the above people to advise, support and, where necessary, logging safeguarding concerns, as well as determining appropriate levels of DBS checks.

Practical Safeguarding Measures

All Saints follows the Church of England Safer Recruitment policy. This is a formal application-based process for appointing people to roles. This is now coordinated centrally so that it is channeled through the office, for visibility and consistency. Where a role requires a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check we use an on-line application system. It is the expectation of the Diocese that all DBS checks are renewed every 3 years. This is being phased in over the next 12 months.

Operational Safeguarding group (Chaired by Sue Price)

This group meets every 4- 6 weeks to review the processes involved in safer recruitment and safeguarding. The administration completely electronic with files securely stored in shared files accessible to relevant team members. All safer recruitment and some Safeguarding files are being gradually moved to Churchsuite database. Rachel Gurney is now responsible for implementing safer recruitment having been supported by Carol Rogerson, who has now stepped down – Many thanks to Carol for her support and wisdom in this area.

Strategic Safeguarding group (Chaired by Rich Johnson)

This meeting takes place bi-annually. The team discuss specific safeguarding concerns and appropriate mitigating actions which may be taken to protect all members of the community at All Saints.

Key headlines this year:

- 35 DBS applications have been processed – of which 6 were renewals and 4 were using the update service. No referrals to Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSA) of the Diocese were required.
- 45 volunteers were safely recruited to a variety of church ministry teams.
- 31 volunteers were safely recruited to Worcester Foodbank.
- There have been 2 safeguarding incidents. Neither incident resulted in any harm to any member of our community. Advice was sought from the DSA and action taken to reduce the chance of the incidents occurring again.
- There have been no serious incident reports made to the Charity Commission.
- 2 people have completed Basic awareness (C0) safeguarding training
- 24 people have completed Foundation (C1) safeguarding training
- 1 person has completed Leadership (C2) safeguarding training

Safeguarding training continues to take place and I urge anyone who is overdue in completing this to do so as soon as possible. All Safeguarding Training is now being delivered online.

- C0 which is a one hour basic course – appropriate for all volunteers; and a prerequisite for C1/2
- C1 which is a two hour extension course, for **all DBS** posts and a prerequisite for C2
- C2 is the face-to-face course which is now delivered via Zoom- for anyone who has leadership responsibilities within the church, a church officer, or is leading activities in their church role with children, young people and/or vulnerable adults.
- Safeguarding training must be undertaken every 3 years.

We must thank God for his hand in our work; both safeguarding and throughout the many ministries at All Saints and praise Him that we have had no serious situations throughout this year!

Safeguarding is the responsibility of all of us within the community at All Saints and I would like to thank everyone for their efforts throughout this year, whether seen or unseen, to keep our children, young people and adults safe this year.

Sue Price

Parish Safeguarding Officer

OPERATIONAL UPDATE

From an operational perspective, the period of 2022 to 2023 has seen quite a few changes and challenges that we have had to grapple with. There are many different elements of church systems and processes in place that facilitate us to function effectively. Some of these are more obvious, with others being behind the scenes.

HR and Staff updates

The period of 2022 saw continual changes to the shape of our staff team.

- Apr 2022: Teresa Green joined the Foodbank team as administrative assistant (p/t).
- May 2022: We increased the hours of our finance assistant Jan Mitchell to reflect the increased demand on her capacity in an expanding role in working alongside our church treasurer Grahame Lucas.
- June 2022: We said goodbye to ordinands James and Emily Roe and their family when they headed down to Brighton to take their next step as curates.
- Aug 2022: Rachel Gurney joined the team as our new ministries coordinator. (p/t)
- Sept 2022: Claudia Catterall joined the staff team as an intern to work alongside our curate Jess Fellows to develop and grow our student and young adult ministry.
- The role of associate vicar remained unfilled in 2022.

Upcoming changes

- We will soon be joined in the summer 2023 by Jamie Klair as curate, along with his wife Zoe and their children.

Safeguarding, Safer recruitment and volunteering

The main safeguarding report will be available separately, however it has implications on operations which require some brief mentions.

The process of recruiting volunteers (Safer Recruitment) is laid out for us by the Church of England, with the principles of best practice and thoroughness as a way to effectively safeguard church communities and protect both the teams and public that they serve. The All Saints Operational Safeguarding team have been able to refine this process and streamline it to a certain degree, however some aspects of the process, such as reference gathering, which just take time. For roles that require a DBS, the process has additional steps.

One step we have taken to streamline the process is to make it totally paperless using our Churchsuite system, leading to time-saving and improved handling of personal data. We were very blessed to have Carol Rogerson join the team as a volunteer in March 2022 to assist with volunteer recruitment and admin. Carol did an excellent job and was a fantastic presence in the office. Due to other demands on her time, Carol stepped back from the role at the end of Jan 2023 to hand it over fully to Rachel Gurney.

We are always on the look out for new volunteers across the many ministries and groups, including to provide administrative assistance in the church office. Serving on a team is an excellent way to meet new people and find a place to serve in the community. To find out more about joining a team, or where there is particular need, then chat to myself or any of the group/ ministry leaders, and they will point you in the right direction.

Operations Items and Buildings Upkeep

A challenge at the start of 2023 has been the parking charges that people have received in error from parking at the college on Sundays when attending church gatherings. In October 2022 the college brought in a monitoring company to oversee their car parks. They have been fully supportive in continuing to allow us access on Sundays during our times of worship. An error occurred on their system resulting in many people in the community receiving parking charges, and I have worked with the college in getting all of these charges cancelled. We believe that the issue has been resolved, however anyone with outstanding parking charges from the college from Sunday parking should continue to contact me directly.

There have been a number of building items that have needed to be addressed over the past year:

- All Saints church had several high level repair items carried out: repairs to the lead work on the tower roof, as well as to the downpipes from the roof.
- The All Saints boiler has continued to cause issues and be temperamental. High humidity levels and damp in the external basement has caused the boiler to trip regularly. This was compounded when one of the roof downpipes failed causing the basement to flood several times over the winter period. The sump pump in the basement was replaced and upgraded.
- The All Saints cabins have seen various works carried out. We have installed internet and a wifi point in the scramblers cabin to improve the experience for the Scramblers team and users. A couple of plumbing issues have required repairs and finally the leaky roofs gave way and needed to be replaced in February 2023.
- After suffering from storm damage, the main external sign of All Saints was replaced.
- High level loose plaster in All Saints was identified and rectified with the assistance of Spithath (our building contractors at St Helen's) who were able to reach the area using scaffolding to remove the section that was seen as a risk. The area is currently being monitored.
- Minor projects took place around grounds of All Saints with thanks to a small team of volunteers in the operational Practical Support team.
- In the summer of 2022, the office heating system was modified to remove the old fan heaters and replace with large central heating radiators.
- Items of maintenance and repair were carried out to St Helen's church alongside the main reordering project to ensure that the church is fit for use once it reopens on project completion.

One of the significant operational challenges in the life of the church in the past year has been the reality of losing access to St Helen's for the current reordering works. You can read more about the St Helen's re-ordering project below.

The project is currently on schedule, and is focused on reordering the church to be a multifunctional space so that it is not just a place of worship, but also a functioning hub of community. To this end, we have had a duty to ensure that the works compliment the historical significance and beauty of this listed and ancient building, but also to meet the needs of our various groups, ministries and as a financially viable venue for hire. We are excited at the progress of the project and looking forward to how we can use it to compliment and expand our mission and ministry in the community and city.

We have drilled into the detail to make sure that the church ready for use when it reopens, such as making the church friendly for disabled access, planning the space within the main area and the kitchen servery alongside the allocation of storage, placement of the new sound desk and tech infrastructure.

For the duration of the project, we have been able to maintain our use of the church office in St Helen's Church House, however we have lost use of the carpark area on site. The Cathedral has very generously granted the staff team permission to park at the Old Palace when required for work purposes. All of the mid-week groups have transitioned well over to being based at All Saints including Youth socials. However, the biggest shift has been moving Adventurers out on Sundays over to a separate venue, and the many practical implications that has come with that.

Finance Systems Update

For a comprehensive view of the church finances, refer to the main Church Finance Report by our church treasurer Grahame Lucas.

The operational requirements of our Finance Team continue to grow in complexity, and has been reflected in the flexed increase in hours given to Jan Mitchel, our finance assistant in 2022. The Finance Team consists of Grahame and Jan, as well as Ann Statham who deals processes the church gift aid. The Finance Team has direct lines of input from Rich, the Wardens and PCC, and is assisted by myself as Operations Manager. The church is always looking to improve our finance processes and systems as a matter of best practice, and from a place of striving to be good stewards of the money given to us from members of our community. One such improvement that we have rolled out is the updated and regular reporting to budget holders in order to improve the transparency and accountability of how budgets are utilised.

With the fundraising year ahead, and the need to increase our income from giving and donations, we have made various improvements to facilitate this:

- The giving point in All Saints has been updated with new board and signage to inform of the ways that people can give, as well as it's impact.
- We have integrated a new system and app called 'Give a Little', which allows for seamless card and contactless donations at the giving point in church, as well as

donations directly through our giving webpage. 'Give a Little' also processes gift aid as an additional system benefit.

- We have created a new finance landing page on the church website that simply and easily identifies the different ways that people can give.
- We have instigated new liturgy for giving as worship as part of our weekly Sunday gatherings.

To find out more about giving, go to www.allsaintsworcester.org.uk/give
or email Jan or Grahame at
jan@allsaintsworcester.org.uk
treasurer@allsaintsworcester.org.uk

Opportunities to help

Please feel free to get in contact with me if you would like to find out more about any issues or items detailed, and if you would like to find other ways to get involved and help out with more practical and operational elements of church life. I am always on the look out for more people to help with practical work such as DIY and gardening.

Mark Carrington
Church Operations Manager
mark@allsaintsworcester.org.uk

BUILDINGS UPDATE

St Helen's church

Work at St Helen's is now well underway! Here's a reminder of what's included in the SDU funded reordering project:

- installation of under floor heating, new stone floor throughout (allowing the floor to run at one level)
- relocation of the servery kitchen
- relocating the toilets into a new extension on the side of the Tower where the boiler house currently stands, with access from the Nave via the currently bricked up doorway.
- a new ramp from the south porch (our existing entrance) will improve disabled access and to allow for this the font will be relocated to the other side of the entrance.

Here are some photos of the work so far!



For more photos and regular updates do take a look at our Facebook page 'St Helen's on the High St.'



Please do be praying that the works continue to progress smoothly and for our fundraising campaign to meet the shortfall in funds to complete this project and allow us to equip the space for use for by All Saints and the wider community. We look forward to the 're-opening' in September when St Helen's will, as well as hosting the 6pm Gathering and Adventurers, once again become the base of our mid-week groups. As part of our continued commitment to the terms of the HLF grant, the church will also be open to the public every week once the works are complete.

Separate from the SDU funded works, there are several Quinquennial Inspection (QI) flagged priority repairs including stonework – in particular to the base of the tower, roof and window repairs and repair work to the Victorian reredos (altar area) that require attention. These repairs are included in a Buildings Maintenance Framework which is currently in development. This framework underpins the Cyclical Maintenance budget and will allow the PCC to make an informed judgement to assess the priority of repair works and steer efforts to seek funding for items beyond the scope of this budget.

Issue regarding 97 High Street

In September 2022 we received a letter from Savills (the company that manage 97 High Street on behalf of St Johns College, Oxford) making assertions that, according to a Structural Engineer's report carried out on their property, St Helen's church is causing structural damage to their building. On the advice of our Architect, we appointed our own Structural Engineer to carry out a detailed survey of both St Helen's and 97 High Street and this concluded that the claims made by Savills are largely erroneous (there is one small, localised area of potentially active movement which could correspond to damage at the neighbouring property). Acting upon the advice of the Diocesan Registrar and our insurers we have responded to Savills disputing their claims and we will take

steps to monitor the small area of potentially progressive movement over the next 12 months or so.

This issue is not related the SDU Funded Building work at St Helen's church but is a wider issue that presents a long-term risk and this has been added to the PCC's Risk Register accordingly.

All Saints Church

The SDU funded work to replace the pews with flexible seating, along with the removal of the radiators and electric heaters, the relocation of the chained bible, and the installation of new servery kitchen continues to enable the building to facilitate engagement and community in novel ways - this year All Saints church hosted our first ceilidh!

The SDU funded Phase 1 works have enabled us to take the first step in meeting our vision to create a multi-functional space. However there remains some way to go for the building to be fit for purpose for greater use by the All Saints and wider community and there are several urgent Quinquennial Inspection flagged repair items which are included in the Buildings Maintenance Framework mentioned above.

Stella Power
Buildings Project Manager

2. LOOKING OUTWARDS

MISSION PARTNER SUPPORT

All Saints Worcester gives 10% of income received to a number of Mission Partner Agencies on the basis of a three year cycle, currently this runs from 2022 to 2024 and amounts to £22,000 pa.

Local Partners

1. Chapel House, situated in Hallow is run by Paul and Jane Willcox, former members at ASW, providing a ministry of mentoring, retreats and counselling.
2. Street Pastors is a group of volunteers from Churches 'on duty' in Worcester late evening / early morning to help those leaving night clubs needing support.
3. Maggs Day Centre on Deansway provides a dry, safe, welcoming place for homeless people along with a hot meal and clean dry clothes.

National Partners

1. CPAS. (Church Pastoral Aid Society) is an Anglican evangelical agency working in England and Ireland with a vision for growing leaders and training young people.
2. Fusion Student Ministries is passionate about mission to students. It equips students, serves churches and develops student workers.
3. Adventure Plus helps young people to 'realise their potential through adventure and education in a positive Christian environment.'

International Partners

1. Jon and Carita McCririe (former members of ASW) are part of the leadership team at LIV village in KwaZulu Natal South Africa helping to provide holistic, long term foster care in family settings to vulnerable children many of whom are referred to LIV by the Courts.
2. Simon Stretton-Downes (Dentist) and his wife Grace (Nurse) work in a mission hospital in Libya.
3. International Justice Mission is a global organisation partnering with local justice systems to end violence against people living in poverty.
4. Tear Fund coordinates a group of Churches of which ASW is one to support the "Church and Community Transformation Project" in Morogoro Tanzania.

It is exciting to hear from our Partners how the Holy Spirit is working. If you want to know more about any of these Partners or if you have a suggestion of a body needing help please contact either Andrew Jackman or Bryan Mason who are the Mission Partner Support Group.

Andrew Jackman, Bryan Mason
Mission Partner Support Group

WORCESTER FOODBANK

Worcester Foodbank is an All Saints mission project that opened its doors on 21st June 2012. We marked 10 years of service during 2022 giving thanks for the amazing support and work of volunteers, Worcester churches, local charities, and businesses.

We continue to help people in crisis of all ages and from all walks of life by providing three-day emergency parcels containing food, toiletries, cleaning products and pet food through a voucher referral system. We also provide our own recipe book and cooking parcel to help make better use of our food parcels, fresh eggs, artisan baked bread, cheese slices and spread. At Christmas we provide festive products and toy vouchers. We provide gifts for Father's Day and Mothering Sunday, and easter eggs too.

During the year we secured grant funding to provide recipe parcels; a bag of ingredients to make specific recipe including fresh products like onions, peppers, garlic, and vegetables.

We have recently employed our own Citizen's Advice advisor, dedicated to Foodbank clients.

In 2023 we plan to offer fresh fruit and vegetables.

2022, what a year! Demand continued to grow at an ever increasing rate. December 2022 was our busiest month ever by far. We have been very busy – very very busy! We have been forecasting that 2022 and December 2022 in particular would be our busiest yet, and indeed we have been preparing for the storm, which I am sure is not over by a long way. We have successfully navigated our way through 2022 and the very busy Christmas period thanks to the amazing foodbank team and the wonderful support from Worcester people, churches, organisations, and charities.

We have listened to a wealth of stories shared with us by our clients. The sad stories have been a real challenge for all our team who have direct contact with clients. But there have been many uplifting stories - stories of how clients have been helped by the support of foodbank; stories about how the food we have provided has helped clients to get themselves straight and healthy again; stories of gratitude and thanks, turning frowns upside down!

As for the figures: in December we fed 2,373 people (up by 44% on Dec 21) and 13,444 during the year. Within these figures children represented about 45% of those fed. These figures are 25% upon the previous year. Demand continues to grow! People tell us that low income was the main driver for them to turn to foodbank for help has increased by 104%.

This is shocking, but a real testimony to the amazing work of the foodbank team. What's more, as in previous years we have maintained a healthy and resilient financial position.

We have secured many grants; most notably the Worcestershire Ambassadors (£48K) and the Trussell Trust grant to fund our Citizens' Advice advisor. In order to cope with the workload, we have refined our operations, opened an extra day each week (Tuesdays) making sure we are more accessible to clients, and expanded our capacity to serve clients.

Looking to the future and 2023, what will that bring? We have already been selected by Worcestershire County Cricket Club as their charity of the year. The proposed redevelopment of Lowesmoor Wharf forces us to look for new premises. This will have a material impact on the way we work and increase our costs considerably. It already costs us about £250k p.a. to run Worcester Foodbank, and new and expanded premises could easily add another £70K p.a. to that.

We continue to practice the way of Jesus and champion the ending of hunger with a living household income for all. We aim to close as soon as we are no longer needed.

Grahame Lucas
Worcester Foodbank Manager

ECO GROUP

The All Saints Eco Group is a new area of ministry - so the main aim for the last year was forming the group, gathering ideas, and generally building momentum!

Following on from the Climate Sunday service in November 2021, people interested in joining the group came forward, and the first meeting took place in late April 2022. At this initial meeting, the group members pooled their thoughts and ideas - big and small - on how to better care for God's creation by making All Saints a more sustainable and environmentally friendly church. The main outcome was that we wanted this to be a journey which the whole of the All Saints community can embark on together, equipping everyone to make changes in their own lives, not just changes to the literal church building.

Following on from the group's first few meetings, we began working towards the Bronze Eco Church Award (A Rocha UK) and did a baseline survey to understand our starting point. We have a long way to go in many areas, but were also able to identify some quick wins to start addressing!

In addition to measuring a baseline for the church building, we also wanted to work out where our baseline was as a congregation, so the first project for the group was to produce an Eco Survey. This survey went out in November 2022 and received 87 responses (thank you again to everyone who filled it in!). The results and comments have

been taken on board and will greatly help in giving us direction, as we begin work on various projects such as making the church kitchen more eco-friendly, creating an urban garden, and planning 'green' events.

We've been able to develop a rhythm as a core Eco Group and now meet once a month. A new Eco Community has also been set up which will meet once a quarter, receive updates from the core Eco Group and have a chance to get involved with projects and running events.

I am personally thankful for this great group of people who have been passionate and dedicated - despite so many pulls on their time and energy already. As a group we believe that loving our neighbours and caring for creation go hand-in-hand, as part of living justly and following Jesus. Your prayers would be greatly appreciated as we continue to forge ahead in living this out, and make a start on projects. We would also appreciate prayer that we can show Worcester that All Saints is a church which cares about the climate crisis and is making practical steps in caring for Creation.

Sarah Croft

3. COMMUNITY AND GROWING DISCIPLES

GROUPS

Life groups have always been a significant part of how we - as a reasonably large city-centre church - ensure that we have spaces for deep fellowship and intentional discipleship beyond our gatherings. We currently have 11 life groups scattered around Worcester that meet in homes on different weekday evenings to study the bible, pray, and share life together.

We are currently in a draft phase of articulating a new vision for Life Groups at All Saints, inspired by the early church, where our groups are purposefully defined by shared faith, shared life, shared rhythms, and shared mission. We are hoping to bolster this with a strategy that includes clearer accountability, contending for varieties of people in our groups, groups that are strategically located across the city, and groups that are actively seeking to grow and multiply. We also have several other groups that meet during the week, these being Artspace, Commune, Dive Deeper, (a new) Eco Group, Men Together, Men's 5 A-Side, and Revive. All these groups provide different activities and spaces to get to know other people and to enrich the life of faith.

Please continue for all these groups in All Saints: for their leaders, for their members, for their vitality and devotion to Jesus, and for their impetus to see people saved and mature in discipleship.

Fraser Oates
Curate

FOOTBALL TEAM

All Saints 6 aside has now been running on Tuesday evenings for 16 years (and yes, we do all still run). In fact, many of our current crop of players are young and as keen as ever. We are in our third year of playing at KGV Brickfields and have a squad of about 30 players, from which up to 14 of us can sign up to play each week. Some are members of others churches but most would probably not consider themselves Christians: they have gravitated to us as friends of friends in their quest for a regular game of football which is always played in a good spirit. Please join us in praying that God would continue to bless us and work among us as we come together for a shared highlight of each week. And please contact Andy Sheppard if you'd like to join our ranks and run around with us every Tuesday or just once in a while.

Andy Sheppard

REVIVE

Revive has had a very positive year with a number of new ladies coming along. We are an inclusive group, welcoming members at the beginning of their faith journey along with Christians of many years.

Our aim is to deepen our faith through Bible study whilst visiting speakers widen our horizons. Prayer times are part of each meeting and we also have occasional reflective days.

We are a warm and friendly group and enjoy craft days and lunches together on a regular basis. One thing which has encouraged us is the growth of prayer times around tables - people being confident to share needs and pray out loud.

The group is led by a team of four; Judith Mason, Catherine Wightman, Di Levins and Helen Dean.

Judith Mason

MEN TOGETHER

Why call it 'Men Together'?

By meeting together we connect get to know each other more deeply. This enables us to support one other through our spiritual and life journeys.

Monthly meetings include a short talk which promotes interaction between those present. This year we have enjoyed some diverse and interesting talks including fossiling, bee-keeping, climate change and cheese! The idea is to be able to invite friends, neighbours etc. as we meet in a Christian environment. Hopefully this will make it easier to invite them to church.



Our daytime meetings have regularly seen 10-15 men coming together...most of whom are retired. As a group we have helped out at Foodbank, cleared the church garden and spent time helping at Good Soil. The group has also been on a brewery tour, been out for breakfast and a Christmas Meal.

We also meet in hubs. These comprise groups of 6-8 which provide time for deeper relationships.

Looking to the future, we would like to see the group develop a wider demographic.

Dave Christmas

ARTSPACE



2022 was a very busy year for members of Artspace. Just before the last APCM the group had their first exhibition at Number 8 in Pershore...the community arts centre and gallery. For several of the group this was not only the first time that they had exhibited work...but it was also the first time that they had ever sold work. The primary purpose of the exhibition was to show what the group and all those involved had achieved. However, in addition it provided a springboard for what was to become our biggest event in the last four years.

With the support of the All Saints PCC we held an exhibition at the Hive in Worcester for a month. This exhibition comprised work by seventeen artists and included over 160 pieces of work.

The ethos of 'Artspace' is all about developing individual self esteem in conjunction with an individual skill base. 'Artspace' is so much more than simply a group of creatives coming together to be self indulgent. We seek to express our faith through our work...'art is not what you see, it's what you make others see' (Edgar Degas).

Being vulnerable promotes authentic relationship and as such this opportunity provides an open door...where the adventure of 'yes' is more alive than the safety of 'no'.

As you might imagine, curating an exhibition of this scale involving this number of people proved to be a rather challenging task. However, the feedback received by the group from staff at the Hive, as well as from members of the public proved to be extremely encouraging. Coverage by local press and radio helped promote the exhibition.







Once again, several members of the group were delighted to find they were able to sell work directly from the exhibition.

The group continues to exhibit work online

https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1iGtybhuT55x7F_dak6zWLZJ-FsydoK8c

as well as via Instagram (search for 'asw_artspace' or use the QR Code)

https://www.instagram.com/invites/contact/?i=10lphtyz91f2&utm_content=8y8sm

It was really exciting to find that our number was added to at the start of the Autumn term as a direct result of this exhibition.

At the end of September/early October a number of those involved with the group had work accepted in the Number 8 annual 'Open Exhibition' which received more submissions than they have ever received previously.

I am particularly grateful to those who have helped the group to thrive over the last few months in my absence (holiday in New Zealand).

Artspace is open to everyone. If you would like to explore your creative talent whilst becoming part of an established community in an informal setting then do please get in touch, we'd love to hear from you. No qualifications or previous experience are necessary, there are no direct costs involved, and there's always tea and coffee on the go.

Paul Long

artspace@allsaintsworcester.org.uk

ALPHA

In Autumn 2022 we launched our next Alpha course which sadly didn't have a massive uptake on. However, there were 6 people who were interested in exploring faith and so we decided to run the course from my home. This really worked as it created a more homely feel and allowed people to eat together and share more openly. I was surprised at how well it worked and how quickly the group jelled together.

By the third week one of guests shared that he was ready to make a commitment to Jesus. So after the other guests left to go home, myself and Fraser sat with him and prayed for the Holy Spirit to fill him. He put his trust in Jesus and said he felt this enormous sense of peace. He was clearly moved, and it was one of those holy moments you don't easily forget.

As we move forward with Alpha, I think there needs to be a whole church engagement with mission and evangelism. The need is great. There are so many people curious about faith and I would love to see us run a larger course in Autumn 2023. There are also opportunities to invite other churches in our diocese to bring guests and run a wider course.

Jess Fellows
Curate

CHILDREN'S CHURCH & MAINLY MUSIC

I have been in post as Children's Worker for over a year now. Many of you may have read the threefold vision I put together for Adventurers last year. Let me unpack how we are getting on with each of these statements.

Community and Outreach

It has been a joy to get to know our All Saints families, where church and parents come alongside one another to disciple the children of All Saints. We have been intentional with this by setting up a monthly Adventurers Parent Prayer Zoom meeting and a termly Parent evening, where there will either be a time of equipping or socialising. We are so thankful to have welcomed new families over the last year and seen our children's church grow. We hope and pray that this continues. One of my highlights was our Family Sports Sunday last July. It was a beautiful day to gather all the Adventurers, youth and their families to compete in sports and get to know each other better. At the end of the morning, we had a special moment presenting our year 5's with a Bible and praying for them before they transitioned up to youth. We then had a lovely picnic all together.

At the beginning of the year, we ran a Parenting For Faith course. It was appreciated by those who attended, and I hope it equipped parents with the resources and tools to

disciple their children and form a supportive group of parents to pray and come alongside one another.

As you may have noticed, we have been exploring different ways in which we can engage the whole church family in worship, through whole church gatherings once a term. We have received great feedback on each of these gatherings and I want to thank the wider church family for participating and enabling our children and young people to engage with church.

Due to only being part time, unfortunately, I haven't been able to build relationships with local primary schools. I would really appreciate prayer for the provision of more hours in my working week, so that I could pursue this in the future.

Mainly Music is a thriving community, a safe, welcoming space for parents with children under 5. We provide a time of singing, a story, free play, and refreshments. I am very grateful for a wonderful, faithful, prayerful, hardworking team, who do their utmost to serve and care for those who attend Mainly Music. Mainly Music has a strong culture of hospitality and gift-giving for events, such as Mother's Day. Those who regularly attend Mainly Music are a mixture of those who attend church, whether that be All Saints or elsewhere and those who don't. Since taking on Mainly Music this time last year, we have been able to connect Mainly Music more to what is going on in All Saints by inviting people to various outreach events, such as Christingle, Church in a Tent, the Ceilidh, and we have also seen a few Mainly Music members attend and join All Saints. Please do keep Mainly Music in your prayers.

Resourcing and Discipleship

Last summer term we launched our Adventurers groups: Scramblers 9 months-3 years, Explorers 3-5 years (Preschool and Reception), Discovers 5-7 years (Year 1 & 2), Trailblazers: 7-9 years (Year 3, 4 & 5). The children spend the first 15 minutes or so in church, to engage in worship and be with the wider church family and then during the Adventurers sessions, the children break out into their specific age groups. We provide each age group with age-appropriate activities/curriculum, including games, craft, teaching, discussion, a story, prayer, and fun! We have had some great feedback, for example, Scramblers parents are able to leave their children and engage with the gathering in All Saints, enabling them to have their own uninterrupted time of worship.

A lot of the Explorers (3-5's) found it overwhelming to be in a big group with the older ones, however it has been wonderful to see them now thrive having their own space, where they feel comfortable and familiar to make friends and engage with an age-appropriate programme. As we have moved out of St Helen's while the building work is in motion, we have been using St Andrews Methodist Church (across the road), which has worked out well. We have the use of two rooms, so since September our Discovers and Trailblazers have been merged. But this has worked well. We are very grateful to St Andrews for allowing us to rent this brilliant space and making the transition of buildings so easy for the Adventurers team as well as our All Saints children, as no-one seemed to

be too fazed by the change in location. We are currently thinking what our children's ministry looks like when St Helen's is re-opened. So, we would appreciate prayer for discernment and guidance for that.

It has been so special to see so many dedications over the past year. How wonderful it is to see our All Saints family welcome, celebrate and pray over the children in our church alongside these families who commit to raise their children in the ways of God.

We are excited to be able to implement a few different helpful ways for our year 5's to transition to youth in September. We hope this will ease their transition and give them confidence and excitement about moving to Youth.

I have recently been able to connect more with local Children's workers in the area. It is brilliant to be able to build relationships with those in the same role, in the same city. I am hoping these relationships can turn into regular meet up's and one day present opportunities to collaborate.

Environment and Experience

I can't express how grateful and thankful I am to all Adventurers volunteers! They are so hard-working, serving our All Saints children and just going above and beyond. It has been great to meet termly with the team and share vision, hear their thoughts, input training, and receive incredible support.

Recruitment continues to be a high priority. Especially for September 2023. As I previously mentioned we merged our two older groups in September, due to a change in location, however, we have a lot of children moving up age groups this coming September and will need to separate the two older groups again. This means that we need more team to be able to serve our children well. Please pray and if when you read this you have a sense that God is asking you to input into the next generation, then I would love to chat with you more about this.

How families are experience church is very important to us, especially the safety of our All Saints children. So, we have been working on a new check-in, check-out process that will hopefully be launched in the Summer Term.

There are so many ideas and plans that have not been realised yet for our children's church. We are so thankful for what God has done over the last year and expectant for what God will do over the next year. So, please continue to pray for our Children's Ministry. Please specifically and most importantly pray that our All Saints children will come to know Jesus for themselves and deepen their existing faith in Him.

*Annabel Wade,
Children's Worker*

Summer Party - Summer 2022



Family Sports Sunday - Summer 2022



Foodbank Visit - Autumn 2022



Mainly Music - Christmas 2022



Scramblers Christmas Party 2022



Adventurers Christmas Party



Christingle 2022



YOUTH

It feels like we have found, by trial and error, a steady rhythm of smaller group connections & discipleship spaces for young people to journey in their faith authentically. Alongside these it's been brilliant to see numbers at socials and Sundays growing steadily. We currently average at around 20-30 young people on a Sunday and 30 at a social.

We have developed invaluable relationships with youth leaders from across a number of churches in Worcester which has meant that 'Unite', a termly youth gathering, was birthed. The first, in July 22 had 5 churches and 48 young people. In March 23 we had 92 young people from across 11 churches. It has been moving and significant to see so many young people gathering to worship God and for them to grasp that they are part of something bigger.

I have had the privilege of being a chaplain, alongside another youth worker from Worcester Baptist, at Worcester Sixth Form College. We have been so encouraged by conversations with students and their warmth towards us, as-well as the steady relationship building that has blossomed with the college over the last year and a half. We have been facilitating a CU and hosting a Lightbox in the college on a Thursday lunch time, connecting with over 50 students and creating space for the students to have fun, connect with each other and the team.

Twice a month faithful members of the youth team host and run a Bible study for the young people, we also hold a drop-in twice a month after school for those who might just need that little connection point, we have seen more young people connected in and serving across the church in various ways: host teams, adventurers & scramblers teams and the worship team. And of course it was an absolute joy to see over 20 young people leading/praying/preaching/hosting in the main gathering at our first Youth Takeover.

It feels like a significant time as we fully develop and build Lightbox in partnership with other churches. We have some good connections now across schools, colleges, churches and other youth spaces but prayer would be appreciated as we really fine-tune the vision and prayer for the details as we start to have Lightboxes popping up around the city.

A prayer we have been praying often lately is for the young people in All Saints to have such courage and confidence **in Christ** that they can disciple their friends. It also feels like an important prayer for the coming months and key in the bridge-building between Church and young people.

All that has happened/is happening has only been made possible with the Holy Spirit guiding us and a team of people dedicated to journeying with the young people - a huge 'thanks and keep going!' to all those involved; leading, praying, parenting.

Jo Oates
Youth Worker

STUDENTS

Our student community has continued to grow this year. There is a mix of University of Worcester students, Regents theological students and others who are 18-25. This year we have had the help of our wonderful intern Claudia. Claudia started working with us in September 2022 with a focus on student ministry. She has poured so much time and energy into developing a student life group that meets on Thursday evenings at Jess's house.

This has been such an important midweek activity as we have seen many students grow in their love for God and his word. We weekly have about 10-15 students come along. But in totally we now have about 25 students regularly attending church. Many bring their friends along to the socials (a further 10 people who aren't usually connected to All Saints) There is a great sense of community amongst them.

I have also continued as Assistant Chaplain at the University. This has been another way to connect with students and I often help at their wellbeing drop-in sessions. I helped to plan the annual Carol Concert in the cathedral which we saw many students come along to. Getting to preach at that was a real privilege and sparked some good conversations.

A particular highlight from the last few months has been seeing one student finding faith quite miraculously. She got in touch out of blue asking to talk about Jesus. She shared she had cried out to God and had encounter where she was filled with light and peace in her bedroom. We are meeting regularly to read the bible and she wants to get baptised soon. How amazing!

I would love your continued prayer within this area for more doors to open within student ministry and particularly at the University.

Jess Fellows
Curate

PASTORAL CARE

We continue to be served in this area by a dedicated "Pastoral Care Team" (PCT) who give oversight to the spiritual, emotional and relational wellbeing of the church, ensuring that everyone is cared for as they need. The primary place of belonging and therefore care is always in our smaller midweek communities, and the PCT is there to augment what is offered here.

This year both Chris Green and Heather Christmas decided it was time to step off the team. Heather has given a huge amount to this area over 10+ years and we will be thanking her formally. Pete Barton has joined and we will add more in the coming months.

Rev Dr Rich Johnson
Vicar

4. PRAYER, WORSHIP AND TEACHING

PRAYER

We have deliberately sought to increase both the amount of prayer and the fervency of prayer in the church since the pandemic, and we are now seeing more people than ever engaged in prayer in differing ways across any given month.

The Prayer Team are a joy to work with and between us we ensure that the following aspects of our shared prayer life are led and resourced:

- weekly online Zoom prayer groups (these started in lockdown and have continued to be a source of encouragement for people and little powerhouses of prayer!
- monthly "Hungry" gatherings for prayer, worship and ministry
- termly "24:3" prayer weekends with a focus on intercession
- the epayers@allsaintsworcester.org.uk email which allows us to alert people to specific prayer needs (you can sign up to receive these via our website)

We are so excited about the impact of all our prayer is having - seen and unseen - and would encourage everyone to get connected in to one or more aspects of our shared prayer life. Do drop us an email on prayer@allsaintsworcester.org.uk to find out more.

Kath Johnson

WORSHIP

It's been a great year for the worship and creative team^[1] here at All Saints. Looking back through the year we have led worship and constructed PA systems in barns, marquees, and local churches. We've reached 13,000 people online through our live streaming in countries all over the world including Nigeria and India. We've led training days, had team nights, provided tech for several conferences and diocesan events and planned the installation of a brand-new tech system within our St Helen's building.

All of this is exciting and a testament to how far we have come as a team. In this next section I would like to shine a spotlight on some areas of growth and opportunity in 2022/23:

Team Growth

We have seen both the worship team and the creative team grow considerably in number this year. We now have 30 musicians actively playing each Sunday and 12 creative team members. We are still growing, with several new team members being processed as I write this.

What has been especially encouraging is the amount of under-18s now involved with worship and tech each week. Each young person within the team has shown a great level of commitment, maturity, and leadership, this has been a real source of joy for me, and I look forward to everything God has in store for them this year. We should continue to pray for new tech volunteers especially and electric guitarists as we move into 2023/2024 as we still need all the help we can get to take the team to the next level.

Christmas 2022

I think we can all agree the Christmas gatherings last year were especially brilliant and I want to extend my thanks to all of those involved. It was a joy to oversee last year's services. Not only was the musical standard exceptionally high, our tech volunteers also had to ensure a 30-person choir, 5-piece band and string quartet were all 'plugged in' and balanced, no small feat. We also must not forget that the scope of Christmas is much wider than the Business Community Carols and Carols by Candlelight gatherings, the team worked hard on several other carol gatherings and Christmas services; RGS Springfield's Carol Service, the 6pm Alternative Carol Service, Christingle and Christmas celebration to name a few.

The inclusion of other creatives in the Christmas services was encouraging. I will speak more into the direction of the team regarding this in the next section. However, Helen Dean's spoken word was outstanding and was commented on throughout the run-up to Christmas also Liv Hardiman's dance group was another fantastic addition to the alternative carol service.

I'm not entirely sure (yet) how we continue to raise the bar this Christmas. Which is a great place to be in, knowing we did our best in 2022 to honour God through our creativity and planning. I hope our hard work and passion was a good witness to those attending and perhaps raised some questions for those who have not yet encountered the gospel.

A Culture of Creativity

Having already mentioned some of the creatives involved with the Christmas gatherings one of our objectives this year is to develop further a culture of creativity at All Saints. This will include the musical aspect of creativity, songwriting and composing etc... however the culture we are trying to develop goes beyond that into artistic spheres including, dancers, artists, videographers, and other many other creators.

This culture is already being developed in places like ArtSpace and we want to get behind them as a team and think about ways we can use their gifts to support the church's mission. There are additional avenues we wish to explore in addition to this:

1. Hosting a *Renaissance Collective* – Birthed out of SAINT Church in Hackney, they have defined a renaissance collective like this:

"Renaissance collectives are local gatherings in cities around the world with space to connect with other creatives + Entrepreneurs, encourage one another, let your imagination run wild and see how God works through your creativity"

What this would look like in All Saints is a gathering termly of artists, creatives and entrepreneurs to receive so encouragement from each other and share how they have been developing their craft and how they have used it to honour God and share His kingdom.

2. Intentionally using songs *generated* from our community – As we move forward as a team we are endeavouring to use our own, unique voice as a local church to worship God. Ben Dunnett’s “As we Gather in Your Name” and my own “Praise Christ Emmanuel” have been great additions to our church song list and this term we hope to introduce “Who You Are” another song written by myself. We’re looking forward to having Alex Williams back from his travels later this term who has been a key figure in developing this culture of song writing and creativity and bringing more songwriters on board as we move forward.

3. *Enabling* creatives to contribute to key events within the life of the church – we all recognised the impact our home-grown creatives have had over the Christmas period. Although Christmas is uniquely positioned to be an outlet for creativity, we do have a whole year in-between to further utilise the creative talents and giftings our church has been blessed with. We want to encourage creative thinking throughout the year, enabling the gospel to be shared through Art and expression not just limited to a Sunday morning. This could mean poetry, art installations, drama or dance etc...

Any ideas would be welcome as we move forward in this objective.

Resourcing

Lastly a quick note on resourcing, as a team we have been sending musicians and tech volunteers to different resourcing projects each month. This could be to lead the worship at a morning gathering or have a look at a sound system and suggest improvements; I have been asked everything from “How do I get youth involved with worship?” to “how do I mic up an organ?” over the last year. I know many churches have benefitted from our help and are grateful for our support – especially Norton and Inkberrow (two of our resourcing partnerships).

Conclusion

Keep praying for us! There are so many opportunities for the Worship and Creative teams this year and we don’t want to miss them. I want to extend another thank you to everyone who gathers in church each week to worship as we seek God together and I pray, for 2023, we encounter more of Him, more of His Spirit and more of his creativity. A few extra volunteers would be great too!

Phil Wade
Worship Director

[1] The Creative team refers to all volunteers who do sound, visual and streaming.

GATHERINGS

10am gathering

The 10am is full of life and people again and that is a joy to behold! We have seen a noticeable increase in the numbers of new people joining the church, as well as people finding their way back into church life fully after the pandemic. The relaunch of our host teams has gone well, each of them so important to making the gathering happen and ensuring people are welcomed, experience generous hospitality and are cared for. Thank you to all of you involved in this. We have seen too a growth in the level of spiritual engagement and hunger for God's word, presence and Spirit. We continue to think carefully and pray into which teaching themes are right for any given season, and believe these play a significant part in the growth of the congregation and those part of it.

We continue to livestream this gathering on our YouTube channel thanks to the dedication of our Creative Team who also run the visual and sound desk, and for whom I know we are all very thankful!

Rev Dr Rich Johnson
Vicar

6pm gathering

The 6pm gathering has seen lots of new people join in the last year. Most weeks there is someone new trying out church for the first time. This is the main gathering the students come to and make up half of the congregation. Weekly attendance is between 30-40 people. This gathering often fluctuates in numbers depending on time of year and seasons of busyness. Despite the flux, we have seen God meet many people in powerful ways. A highlight was our recent regional celebration where we really saw God pour out his spirit on our younger generation.

We had a really successful '6pm Carols' in December followed by a party. Lots of people brought friends and the silent disco was a big hit. The gathering had creative elements and a guest speaker and the whole event worked really well. The aim was for it to be a missional event with an easy invite and I think this was achieved.

The 6pm has a more relaxed feel and we always make sure we have lots of snacks and allow space at the start for people to catch up. Creating community has been a key part of the 6pm and it's been great seeing that grow. As food is a great way to build community, we love to have evenings where we have food after the gathering. The feedback is always positive! We are continuing to see different churches join us in order for them to come and receive. This is another way we are resourcing the wider church.

Jess Fellow
Curate