

PARISH OF HEATH AND REACH WITH EGGINGTON

Annual Parochial Church Council Meeting 23rd April 2023

Report from the St. Leonard's Sub-Committee on activities during 2022

Committee Membership

Revd Noel McGeeney; Nicole Waldock, lay vice chair; Richard Page, Church Warden; Jane Dempster, Church Warden (resigned November 2022); David Duckworth, acting Church Warden from November 2022; Jill Thomas, Treasurer; Ann Gomersall, Secretary; Tricia Humber, Deanery Synod representative; Linda Page; Tony Mellodey. Kim Anwyl, resigned during the year. Nicole Waldock, Jill Thomas, Ann Gomersall's terms of office come to an end but all are willing to stand again.

Jane Dempster's family commitments caused her to tender her resignation. We are very pleased that David Duckworth has agreed to serve as Church Warden to support Richard.

The St. Leonard's committee meets monthly except when there is a full PCC meeting. At one of the joint PCC meetings we were pleased to welcome the Bishop of Bedford. The Standing Committee meets as required.

We were saddened by the death of some of our long-serving church members, Jean Lowrence, Monica Major, David Ellis and Geoff Urie.

Last year started under something of a cloud when we discovered that we had lost a lot of money to a fraud, allegedly perpetrated by our then Administrator. The matter is in the hands of the police whom we believe have passed the matter to the CPS. So far no charges have been laid and we are informed the matter is in a queue caused by Covid. Our recruitment of Vicki Worden as our Administrator and Church Hall Manager has proved a welcome move.

After a long wait occasioned by BT, and the purchase of an up-to-date laptop, our permanent broadcasting platform was installed which enables us to live stream services via Zoom. It has not been without teething troubles which are still being ironed out. It came rather late, when services were again held in church after the Covid crisis, and is used by only a few of our congregation at present. We were still able to Zoom the Tuesday evening services using Noel's phone which proved popular especially during winter months. This has been suspended during Noel's time away.

No sooner had the cemetery wall been well repaired, than it was hit again. On this occasion the driver has accepted responsibility and his insurers will pay. We are still awaiting a decision about which contractor will be acceptable both to the Diocese and the car insurer.

SLOBS were hit by ill health early last year but happily are up and running again with increased numbers.

SLAP have decided that they no longer have the resources to put on a pantomime, their main activity in the past, and that they will no longer continue as a separate entity but come under the auspices of the PCC. They have offered to spend the last of their accumulated

profit on new chairs for the church hall, which will be very welcome. SLAP still managed to stage a well-received music and laughter evening demonstrating that there is still talent there.

Alan Gomersall organised another successful afternoon of music showcasing talent in the church and local community.

We have held special collections for Dementia UK, The Ukraine and latterly for the Turkish/Syrian earthquake disaster.

The Social Committee have worked tirelessly, as Rosemary Forsyth's report demonstrates, and provided much needed funds.

The Quinquennial inspection went ahead in July but we had to wait several months for the report which the church warden's report will highlight. We received a generous donation from Eggington towards the cost of the inspection.

We continued to hold the Quiet Afternoons during the year. In November we also held a recollection day for members of the PCC.

Seasonal lunches began again in July, the first on a Thursday morning. This was well attended and the second, held on a Saturday in October, proved even more popular. We are fortunate in having a good number of volunteer helpers, several of whom are from the wider community.

Jointly with the WI, we planted a Jubilee tree at St. Leonard's School and opened a time capsule which had been laid down 25 years ago by the then pre-school children.

Safeguarding is in the competent hands of Esther Clausen with the assistance of Anne Sheppard. She is endeavouring to encourage all members of the PCC to do basic training (as required by the Diocese) in Safeguarding and Domestic Abuse. Relevant people have been or are due to be DBS checked. Our Safeguarding policy complies with the House of Bishops' directive.

During the year we were able finally to complete the glass in the porch doors by dedicating the last panel to the memory of Jean Lawrence. Her family were able to attend the service.

Jill Thomas again provided our contribution to the Christmas tree festival. She would welcome more help in future.

Some of the Christmas season services were not as well attended as in the past, notably the Christingle and Crib services. We did not have the travelling crib due to the problems encountered organising it and getting sufficient volunteers the previous year.

At the end of the year, David and Linda Duckworth took the initiative and opened the church hall as a "Warm Space". This did not elicit any interest and made us consider the role the church and hall can play in such initiatives, given our location and how we present ourselves. This, and a renewed effort to encourage Heath and Reach to become a Dementia Friendly Village will be on the agenda for the committee in 2023.

Preparations were made for Noel's Sabbatical, and, although this took place in 2023 and is not strictly a subject for this report, we would like to thank all the visiting clergy and Lay Readers who have helped to maintain our services and supported us. We are very grateful to them. It is, nevertheless, a great pleasure to have Noel back with us and look forward to hearing more about his exploits in Malawi.

There are many, many, people to thank for what they give to the life of St. Leonard's and if I tried to name them all as individuals, I would run out of space and inadvertently forget someone. We have been joined by a number of new and every welcome volunteers in 2022. Service and chalice assistants, wardens and vergers, sides-people, readers, sacristans, our flower arranger, choir, musicians and church cleaners all contribute to our worship. Many others are active as PCC and Social committee members, with our finances, in SLOBS, SLAP, Holiday Club, and as helpers at all the fund raising events, seasonal lunches, men's breakfasts, coffee mornings, in magazine production and delivery. Suffice it to say that St. Leonard's continues to be a thriving, welcoming church because of the dedication, hard work, friendliness and faith of its members. Thank you to everyone.

Ann Gomersall, St. Leonard's Committee Secretary. April 2023

SOCIAL COMMITTEE REPORT 2022

The year started with a very popular Winter Cream Tea after the months of restricted events. We then restarted our 50/50 Auction and a very successful May Fayre with the popular Heath Band, Aldbury Morris Men and Dog Show. We held a Jumble Sale and very colourful Christmas Bazaar. During the past two years we have lost two of our very supportive committee members – Jean Lawrence and Monica Major. Over the year we have raised over £3500 for Church funds and have involved a lot of people in the village. At the moment we are preparing for our May Fayre on 20th May 2023, please come along and support us.

Many thanks to the hard working committee members and all the people who help and support us throughout the year.

Rosemary Forsyth.