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## ***Team Vicar's Review***

### **Dear Friends**

What a remarkable and blessed year 2025 has been for our church family at St John's. In everything we do, we continue to be guided by our core mission statement to grow closer to God, to serve our community, and to share the Gospel of Christ. Our regular worship has seen wonderful revitalisation over the past year. Our normal 9.30 am Sunday service has grown beautifully, which is reflected in our October count showing Sunday adult attendances reaching up to 43 people. We also successfully launched our fifth Sunday worship in Chestfield, which is going really well and helping us expand our reach. Our wider worshipping community continues to grow, and our current church electoral roll now stands at 70 members. It was particularly joyous to see 185 people attending our Christmas

Eve and Christmas Day worship services, and 57 joining us for Easter, though many more than the Easter attendance at some of our All-Age and Parade services which Jane and Emma have run throughout the year.

A huge and heartfelt thanks must go to the Diocese of Canterbury for their incredible support. We were exceptionally blessed to receive a £135,000 grant from the Diocese which is payable to us over a number of years, and which is a truly transformative gift for our parish. This generous funding enables us to continue the vital work of Jane Myhill, whose dedication has been so central to our life here. Furthermore, it has enabled us to officially employ as from early in 2025, Emma Rafferty as our new youth worker, opening up wonderful new possibilities for our ministry with young people. Details of how this grant is being used can be found throughout this Annual Report.

Beyond our Sunday gatherings, I am delighted to highlight our 10 am Wednesday mid-week services in the centre, which provide a vital, quieter touchpoint for prayer and fellowship during the week. Furthermore, our fortnightly Look and Learn Bible study continues to be a highly fruitful way for people to engage deeply with scripture and grow in their faith alongside one another. We also successfully ran our annual START course in January and offered a Quiet Time with God during Lent and Advent, providing wonderful pathways for seekers and long-time disciples alike. This year, we have intentionally aligned our vision with the Leading Your Church Into Growth principles. To give us clear direction, the church committee met in November and agreed on three core priorities for 2026: to grow our prayer life, to sustain and develop our children and families pattern of worship, and to build our youth outreach and discipleship work. We have already taken steps toward these goals, such as introducing a monthly prayer flyer and offering prayer ministry after Sunday worship.

While we have shifted some focus to wider discipleship, our outreach to families remains a deep joy. As highlighted above, we are so grateful that Jane's role is

secured, allowing us to continue benefiting from her energy and skills in growing this aspect of our church life so successfully. Our weekly groups like Blast and Chatterbox are thriving. Messy Church, our monthly fresh expression for families, continues to be incredibly well received. To support this vital area, we are blessed with a dedicated team, including a large number of volunteers guiding our ministry with children and young people. Having Emma step into her new role alongside Jane to disciple our older children has been a wonderful addition to the team. The use of the Rectory garden continued to be a vital aspect of our ministry, enabling us to run regular outdoor events and clubs which connect so well with our community.

We maintain a strong and positive presence in our community through a wide range of activities. The Saturday market had a phenomenal year, hitting a five-figure fundraising total for the first time in its history. We also continue to serve practical needs and build relationships through the Whitstable Community Wardrobe, FairShare, and our regular Coffee Break gatherings.

One of the most notable aspects of church life is our burgeoning ministry team. Originally it was just Rev Pat Strowger and I. Now we have Rev Jayne Edinboro, Karen McKane, Jeremy St John, Emma and Jane, Canon Amanda Boucherat and Lorri Currie all regularly leading services or preaching, and the very welcome arrival in the autumn of Rev Alison Newman and her husband Mark. Alison was a vicar in the Rochester Diocese before retiring and Mark is a Reader. We very much look forward to their ministry.

I want to express my deepest gratitude to everyone who makes this mission possible. We honour the ministry of Rev Pat, who led her final service with us at the end of 2024 but who is still an important member of our congregation. A huge thank you to Ann Poole, who stepped down as churchwarden but continues her vital safeguarding oversight, to Joan Hughes for all her work helping look after our Fabric, to Mary Fuller and Val Martin for their help with Baptisms, and to Barbara Brenson for

verging for funerals and weddings. We are also incredibly grateful to Jan Bailey and Stewart Neame for their ongoing dedication as churchwardens, and to Jack Dale, our treasurer, for his excellent stewardship of our finances. Nick Widdows continues to do so much behind the scenes in terms of administration and technical support which is absolutely invaluable and for which we remain so grateful. Finally, thank you to every single volunteer who pours their time into St John's. We strongly feel it is essential that we love people as they are, and your service reflects that love beautifully.

As I reflect on all that has transpired over the past year, I am powerfully reminded of the words of the Apostle Paul when he said that he planted the seed, Apollos watered it, but God has been making it grow. The sheer breadth of our shared life at St John's, from our flourishing Sunday services and vibrant youth ministry to the quiet devotion of our midweek gatherings, is a testament to the fact that God is indeed granting us a beautiful harvest. We have seen firsthand how the body of Christ functions beautifully when every part does its vital work.

Whether leading worship, managing finances, tending the garden, welcoming a newcomer, or serving at the Saturday market, each of you has used your unique gifts to build up this community. Our burgeoning ministry team and the multitude of dedicated volunteers remind us that the harvest is plentiful, and thankfully, so are the workers here in our parish. As we step out in faith towards our new priorities of deepening prayer, sustaining our family worship, and building youth discipleship, let us remain rooted in Christ. May we continue to love without condition, trusting that the Lord who has begun this good work will carry it on to completion.

***Rev Simon Tillotson***

## **Team Rector's Review**

I give thanks to the on-going energy and ministry that continues to bubble up at St John's Swalecliffe, creating all kinds of good ripples in your surrounding community. For example the successful launch of worship services in Chestfield and the Youth Group started this year, which build on the strong networks and investment you've already established at church and the church centre, thanks also to your investment in a full time Children and Families Minister, and the support you give to each other. All of this is underpinned by the very evident commitment you share to prayer and worship, including encouraging new worship leaders and preachers, and groups that are open to others in the wider parish. I would like to honour the ministry of Rev Pat and her generous commitment to St John's in the past few years, and to Ann, stepping down as Churchwarden and continuing to work alongside me in offering oversight of safeguarding across the 5 churches in our parish. A huge thank you also to Jan and Stewart for their hard work as Churchwardens this year, and to Jack your Treasurer, while blessing your community with a new baby in the church family! I look forward to continuing to see you all at the parish worship services on Ascension Day and Advent Sunday and also at our APCM.

*Ascension Day parish eucharist:  
Thursday 14th May 7.30 pm at St John's.*

*APCM: Monday 18th May 7.00 pm for  
7.30 pm at St Alphege Whitstable.*

*Advent Sunday carols: Sunday 29th  
November 5.00 pm at St John's.*

**Rev Rachel C Webbley**  
**Team Rector, Whitstable Team**  
**Ministry.**

## **Church Fabric**

Another year and an opportunity to thank everyone who helps in any way to keep our lovely Church in such good condition and repair. We thank the Churchwardens for all they do in their

many varied tasks, the flower arrangers, cleaners, sides-persons, refreshment servers, those who wash and launder the linen, count, bank, and manage our finances, not forgetting those who arrange the intercession and reader rotas, and those who perform these tasks. There are others and apologies for missing anyone out. We must not forget Chris who cuts the grass and his helpers, who are not all church-goers, who come along so willingly to help him and for those who appear on our regular churchyard clear-ups. There were nine helpers on one occasion this year. Chris also did a temporary repair on the floor and doorway between the Church & the vestry. Nick Widdows should always be thanked for all he does in managing the projector, composing and printing St John's Update, among the many other jobs he is involved in.

We held two open days this year, one to celebrate V E Day and the other the Ride & Stride Day. Thank you for those who helped and came to support us.

The usual servicing of the boiler, organ and fire extinguishers have been completed, the tiles checked, gutters cleaned. The electrics checked and a PAT test completed. A few repairs and replacements have been carried out. A Fire and Safety check has also taken place.

The buttresses continue to be a concern and a report on their condition and that of the church in general was organised earlier this year. A small leak in one of the flat roofs was identified and will be dealt with shortly. As the five-year quinquennial is due this year; a survey will take place for advice on what needs doing and how to proceed. It is hoped that we may be able to secure a grant to cover at least some of the expenses.

Thank you everyone for keeping a watch over the Church and informing us of anything that needs doing. We are always grateful for your help to keep our Church in good order and make it such a welcoming place. If you have time to spare please offer your help as it is always welcome and much needed.

**Joan Hughes**

## **Church Warden's Yearly Update for 2025-26**

I would like to preface this report by paying tribute to the huge amount of work that Jan, and her husband, do behind the scenes at St John's.

I didn't know Jan that well before I became her co-pilot, but I have been absolutely astonished to find out how much she and Jez do, they are everywhere, working hard, and totally reliable. So thank you Jan, and you can all be very thankful it hasn't just been left to me! **Stewart**

This year, as always, we would like to thank all of the volunteers who help and support us, as we strive to promote a fantastic and welcoming church. It is because of all your hard work that our numbers are growing. In particular we are indebted to Joan Hughes who puts in an amazing amount of time and effort in monitoring and maintaining the condition of our building. She is incredibly efficient and effective, and we owe her more than we can count.

With regard to the structure, we have had a comprehensive structural report carried out, to inform us of the best way to deal with a collapsing buttress on the south side. We are hoping that the report is sufficiently detailed to count towards our Quinquennial inspection, due this year, and that it may give us a cost saving on this. During this year a great deal of time has been spent on organising various risk assessments, hosting electricians, fire safety officers, and mobility experts and purchasing a ramp for improved accessibility, all to make the church as safe as it can be.

Looking at the churchyard, this is in better shape these days than it has been for a long time, thanks go again to Joan, for organising the churchyard clean ups, and to Chris McKane for his dedication and hard work in regularly mowing, and keeping the grass down. We know this is much appreciated by the local community, many of whom have family buried there. It is not only the exterior that is kept so well, we have a fantastic team of cleaners who, together with our wonderfully talented flower arrangers, make such a good job of keeping the church so pleasing to be in. It

would be easy to take them all for granted, I can assure you we do not.

We are privileged to see the whole of the church in action, and we can assure you that what goes on here, with children, family, and young people's ministry, worship leading and preaching, and the fantastic Saturday Market (thank you Mary and helpers), etc, etc. is not typical of most churches. We are very fortunate.

We feel we must mark the great service performed for us by Nick Widdows. Nick is everywhere, designing and doing all our printing, managing our sound and media systems in church, managing and refreshing our noticeboards, taking DCC minutes, reading, serving at the altar - the list is exhausting. We thank you for all of this Nick, (and also for the fantastic meal you invited us all to, in honour of your 80th).

Finally, the V word. We work very closely with Simon, and if anyone can find a vicar who works half as hard, we'd like to meet them. It is our great fortune that Simon took us on, and although we share him with All Saints', there is no sense of his being anything other than full time in his dealings with us. We thank you sincerely Simon for all the very prayerful effort you put in for us.

**Jan Bailey and Stewart Neame  
Churchwardens**

## **Children & Families**

I wonder if you have ever wondered what a Children and Families Minister does all week? If you have, here's a taster!

**Blast, afterschool group** on Wednesdays, for primary school age children (5 - 11yrs) Each week is different, activities range from board games and craft activities to pool and table tennis alongside a very popular tuckshop and plenty of toast to keep the after school hunger pangs at bay (as well as an occasional trip to the chippie for a treat)

During the summer term Blast moved to St John's Garden where there is plenty of space and is now well equipped with swings, sandpits, mud kitchen, pirate boat and a digger pit as well as a new firepit which has already been well used as camp fire cooking is always very popular! Our year in the garden finished in October with a popular 'Spooky Afternoon' with lots of spidery crafts and some scary stories around the campfire while toasting marshmallows and making s'mores.

The average weekly attendance at Blast this year was 21 (up from 15 average last year) which means we are often at full capacity. It has been great to see an increase in the number of adults staying for a cuppa and chat while Blast takes place; an average of 8 adults (excludes helpers), and sometimes as many as 15 (compared to just 3 or 4 last year).

On Friday mornings the hall fills with noise, mess and a moderate amount of chaos as **Chatterbox, our baby and toddler group** meet. Chatterbox continues to thrive, a small bouncy castle and a climbing frame are popular for the most energetic while plenty of toys keep everyone occupied from trains and cars to dolls and duplo as well as a sand tray, dressing up, a sensory activity, baby area and at least one special activity each week such as painting or biscuit icing. We also provide a healthy snack each week where we encourage all the children to sit at tables together, before finishing with a story or bubbles or parachute games and a song time to finish.

Average weekly attendance at Chatterbox this year was 25 children and 22 adults, again meaning we are at full capacity. (Last year 21 children and approximately 18 adults).

Once a month at Chatterbox we also have a 'free' toy sale to help promote **Whitstable Toys**, parents are welcome to help themselves and give a donation if they wish. Whitstable Toys, a free children's books and toys exchange group continues to thrive with plenty of donations. During last year as well as a monthly table at the Saturday market and the monthly table at Chatterbox we rehomed a further 3,450 children's books and 8,293 toys, games and puzzles. Total: 11,743 (last year just over 10,000)

During school holidays we take a break from these regular groups and run Family Fun Mornings, each with a different theme such as Valentines, Splish, Splash, Splosh (in the garden in summer!) or Harvest.

All of these groups allow us to purposefully develop and grow friendships with families in our community, so they can get to know us and feel warm, welcomed and safe in our buildings. In turn, this then makes it easier to invite families along to activities and services such as....

**Messy Church** meets on the first Saturday afternoon of each month. As people gather we have a time of games, activities and crafts across a number of tables followed by a 'celebration' time where we will think about

what we have made or talked about and how it ties in with the theme for that month. We may have a short talk or act out a bible passage as well as a prayer activity and some child friendly worship songs before finishing with tea together. Over the last year themes have included Loving our Neighbour, Loving our World, The Lord's Prayer, The Good Samaritan as well as marking Easter, Harvest and Christmas.

This year at Messy Church we have welcomed an average of 17 children, 2 young people (year 7+) and 19 adults every month (includes helpers). This is a huge increase on the numbers attending TOAST on Sunday mornings last year (average just 5 children and 6 adults), so definitely the right decision to change to our Saturday Messy Church format.

We have also developed four **All age services** in the year marking Palm Sunday, Sundaes Sunday (the last Sunday of the school year), Harvest and Christingle. These services are probably not for the faint hearted as they are often noisy and chaotic, loud and busy but they are joyful occasions where we can enjoy being the family of God altogether, worshipping and learning with each other and from each other. An average of 46 adults and 23 children attended our All-age services this year.

I must also mention the **Scout Parade services** which are always a joy to be involved with, it is lovely to see St John's full of the young people in the Scout group who are always keen to be involved and take part, they produce excellent readings and dramas alongside prayers and worship. We have also hosted two Beaver groups and a Rainbows group looking around St John's Church as part of their badge work. During the past year it has also been a privilege to speak at two baptism services and then just before Advent delivered Advent candles to these families along with our Christmas Newsletter.

A now regular highlight of our year is hosting **Whitstable Community Wardrobe** in St John's Centre for around 4 days. The first day involves many hands as we label, sort and display thousands of items of preloved uniform followed by 3 days of open sessions for any families in our community to come and select for themselves the items they need for the coming year. Prior to this though all the donated uniform is washed and ironed by a small army of volunteers behind the scenes. During our open sessions this year we welcomed 141 families (236 children) and gave away 1657 items. During

the year I also responded to 73 messages which saw another 438 items given out (73 families, 115 children). Across Whitstable Team Ministry the totals were 370 families, 641 children and 3,267 total items. (Last year 600 children and 3,000+ items).

And finally.....this year it was an absolute delight to host an afternoon tea to thank all those who volunteer in a whole myriad of ways, from washing and ironing school uniform to helping week in, week out at groups, as well as those who have made endless teas and coffees, washed up, baked cakes, helped cater for Messy Church, have collected junk modelling or donated flower pots and joined in with all the other plentiful and random things I come up with (and with a smile on your face).....I continue to be full of gratitude for everyone's endless generosity, support and encouragement, I really am so grateful to every single one of you, THANK YOU.

**Jane Myhill**  
**Children and Families Minister**

## ***Finance Report***

You will see from the attached figures that we operate two budgets - one for running our church and one for running our community outreach work (Jane and Emma's ministries and all our Centre activities). St John's is a small church with a big heart!

Through our stewardship campaign, we hope that you feel a little more involved in the finances at St John's. Please be mindful that the campaign took place in October of 2025 and so, lots of the positive results will not be easily spotted in the accounts which run for the calendar year of 2025.

It's always good when we are in the black rather than red in finance right? Well, in 2025 we made a small surplus of £3,139 made up of interest on our savings, making ends meet in our budget for community and outreach and beating our budget for income on our church budget.

We ended up with a total amount of money of £66,797. We have some petty cash for church flowers and children & families ministry, some money set aside for the Rectory garden, some reserved

money to go towards our garden Portaloo ongoing costs and a small amount of unspent grant money for our outreach work. After all that, we are left with £62,123 that can be spent as the church committee (DCC) sees appropriate.

### **CHURCH INCOME HIGHLIGHTS**

You will see that we had less funerals and other services in the church compared with 2024. This could be a sign of the times with direct cremations being an option. Regular giving increased above inflation by 8% naturally without the stewardship campaign. Gift aid was on target but looks low because 5 quarters of claims fell into the 2024 accounts. Don't worry, Maxine is not slacking! Collections and donations increased by 16% from a growing congregation and an overwhelming generosity - thank you everyone! The Saturday market smashed it out of the park hitting a five-figure total in 2025 for the first time in its history.

### **CHURCH EXPENDITURE HIGHLIGHTS**

Parish share increased in line with our congregation growth. We had to invest a little in some of the tech in the church which was the overspend there. Utilities have increased by 8% roughly in 2024. The remainder of the large increase on 2024 was due to an outstanding gas bill from 2024 paid in 2025. Everything else ticked along quite nicely.

### **PROJECT INCOME HIGHLIGHTS**

Now Jane and Emma's work have started to soar, the donations from families at these events are also starting to take off, as seen in the activities donations. Our grant funding of course has been the money that has enabled St John's to boldly go where we want to go to be an even bigger part of our community, and we are immensely grateful to all those who made this grant award possible. We didn't quite reach our fundraising target but our hire of St John's Centre we have worked hard to maximise. Coffee Break continues to make a great contribution too.

**PROJECT EXPENDITURE  
HIGHLIGHTS**

Our wages costs are increased due to the successful grant funding that secured Emma’s youth minister position. Activities costs are being recorded in the accounts more accurately. The project setup costs are all part of the grant funding. We kept garden running costs from general funds to a minimum so we can sustainably use the garden in the future. We were over budget on Centre repairs due to a necessary electricals assessment and some repair work. Everything else was as expected.

**LOOKING AHEAD**

As you know, our six year grant for our children, families and youth work is a tapered grant meaning that it reduces year on year. Thank you to all those that responded to our October 25 stewardship campaign - the increases we have already seen in regular giving mean that we are largely on target to break even for 2026 (just £2,000 still to find). 2027 will be a bigger challenge as our grant funding reduces still further, but we believe God is working his purpose out at St John’s and we trust in His provision for all our needs. Please pray!

My thanks to Ann and Jane for maintaining the petty cash funds. Mary and Joan continue to count cash from the various church services which saves me a huge amount of time – I couldn’t do it without them! Chris, Stewart and Amanda are our second approvers on all our church payments helping the church keep to best practice for financial controls. Maxine works hard as gift aid secretary to claim back as much as we can from all your donations; thank you so much for another year from Maxine. Finally, Karen, Currie and some others already mentioned give up their time on the finance sub-committee to support me with planning and budgeting. We make a great team!

**Jack Dale**  
**Honorary Treasurer**

**Funds**

**TOTAL FUNDS IN ALL BANK ACCOUNTS FOR THE  
YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2025**

| <b>CASH HELD IN THE BANK</b>                   |               |
|--|---------------|
| <b>Total Funds held at 1 Jan 25</b>            | <b>63,658</b> |
| Church Fund Budget                             | 2,182         |
| Project Fund Budget                            | 227           |
| Interest on Savings                            | 729           |
| <b>Total Funds held at 31 Dec 25</b>           | <b>66,797</b> |
| <b>Total Surplus/(Deficit) as at 31 Dec 25</b> | <b>3,139</b>  |

| <b>FUNDS HELD</b>           |               |
|-----------------------------|---------------|
| <b>RESTRICTED FUNDS</b>     |               |
| C&FM Cash Accounts          | 457           |
| Church Flowers              | 313           |
| Rectory Garden Fund         | 1,064         |
| Toilet Fund                 | 829           |
| Funerals, Weddings & Fees   | 0             |
| Grants                      | 2,011         |
| Special Appeals             | -             |
| <b>RESTRICTED SUB TOTAL</b> | <b>4,674</b>  |
| <b>UNRESTRICTED FUNDS</b>   | <b>62,123</b> |
| <b>TOTAL FUNDS HELD</b>     | <b>66,797</b> |

## Church Accounts

### Annual Budget versus Expenditure for the year ended 31st December 2025

|                           | 2025          | 2024          |
|---------------------------|---------------|---------------|
| CHURCH INCOME             | £             | £             |
| Funerals, Weddings & Fees | 2,647         | 3,538         |
| Restricted Donations      | 1,278         | 899           |
| Special Appeals           | 1,632         | 2,303         |
| Regular Giving            | 29,177        | 26,979        |
| Gift Aid                  | 7,938         | 10,414        |
| Collections & Donations   | 7,237         | 6,247         |
| Saturday Market           | 10,872        | 8,999         |
| Legacies                  | -             | 7,034         |
| <b>TOTAL</b>              | <b>60,782</b> | <b>66,413</b> |

|                      | 2025          | 2024          |
|----------------------|---------------|---------------|
| PROJECT INCOME       | £             | £             |
| Activities Donations | 4,320         | 2,522         |
| Grants               | 40,842        | 24,549        |
| Fundraising          | 3,226         | 4,576         |
| Regular Hiring       | 11,779        | 8,437         |
| One-off Hiring       | 1,558         | 800           |
| Coffee Break         | 912           | 935           |
| <b>TOTAL</b>         | <b>62,637</b> | <b>41,819</b> |

| CHURCH EXPENDITURE        | £             | £             |
|---------------------------|---------------|---------------|
| Funerals, Weddings. Fees  | 1,757         | 1,742         |
| Fundraising Costs         | -             | -             |
| Special Appeals           | 1,819         | 2,066         |
| Parish Share & PCC Quota  | 40,791        | 32,868        |
| Church & Service Supplies | 603           | 310           |
| Contingency               | -             | 18            |
| Flowers & Churchyard      | 1,282         | 1,140         |
| Gas, Electricity & Water  | 2,275         | 1,398         |
| Bank Fees                 | 157           | 178           |
| Insurance & Licences      | 2,402         | 2,619         |
| Miscellaneous             | 275           | 119           |
| Organists & Music         | 2,270         | 2,070         |
| Printing & Stationery     | 619           | 640           |
| Repairs & Maintenance     | 3,788         | 4,202         |
| Technology                | 560           | 404           |
| Support for Project Work  | -             | -             |
| <b>TOTAL</b>              | <b>58,600</b> | <b>49,773</b> |
| <b>Surplus vs Budget</b>  | <b>2,182</b>  | <b>16,640</b> |

| PROJECT EXPENDITURE      | £             | £             |
|--------------------------|---------------|---------------|
| Activities Costs         | 3,705         | 561           |
| Wages, taxes and pension | 38,235        | 26,773        |
| Caretaker Wages          | 6,313         | 6,110         |
| Project Setup Costs      | 4,735         | 30            |
| Fundraising Costs        | 342           | 234           |
| SJ Garden                | 294           | 1,726         |
| Miscellaneous            | 137           | 17            |
| Printing & Stationery    | 751           | 782           |
| Kitchen Costs            | 211           | 213           |
| Insurances               | 742           | 725           |
| Cleaning & Expenses      | 335           | 439           |
| Repairs & Maintenance    | 2,595         | 1,509         |
| Gas, Electricity & Water | 3,803         | 2,512         |
| Wifi & Technology        | 210           | 284           |
| <b>TOTAL</b>             | <b>62,409</b> | <b>41,915</b> |
| <b>Surplus vs Budget</b> | <b>227</b>    | <b>- 96</b>   |

## ***St John's Centre***

This year has seen a significant change in the running of the Centre. Suzanne, who has been our caretaker for well over 20 years, decided it was time for her to step down. She was very much the face of the Centre to the hirers, and everyone else involved, so we wish her the very best for the future, and give her our grateful thanks for all her past service.

We have always had a caretaker, but, going forward, we have decided on a new approach. We have employed a cleaner, and issued long term and trusted hirers with their own keys, and we can manage with volunteers to give access to new and occasional hirers. This new system is working very well, thanks in no small part to the very large amount of work put in by Jane, our scarily efficient and hard working Children and Families Minister, and Chris McKane, who has the notional title of Bookings Secretary, but who could give master classes in venue and hirer management. Many, many thanks to both, this does only work because of the extra responsibilities they both now shoulder.

There is another, who has more than played his part in the success of the Centre. Jack Dale, our treasurer, has managed to edge up fees to a more profitable level this year, without disadvantaging those community groups who are struggling financially. This was no mean feat, and has put us back, at last, on a firm financial footing. I'm going to take this opportunity to thank Jack for all he does for St. John's. He goes far beyond his remit as Treasurer, his hand can be seen in nearly every aspect of our church's life, and wherever he is involved we are the better for it. Thank you Jack.

There are, of course, as is always the case, many others who contribute much to the operation of the Centre, and the committee gives genuine thanks to all those who have played their part this year.

With regard to usage, we're delighted to be able to report that, almost without exception, the centre is used for activities that are of benefit to the community. Nearly all hirers are

community groups, and the incredible number of activities organised by Jane, and others, are well documented elsewhere in these reports. It is difficult to overemphasise the importance of the Centre to the St. John's Mission, it is absolutely pivotal.

The Centre is to be redecorated internally this year, organised by Jack and Chris, and we have asked our friendly surveyor, Robert Sissons, to walk us round the exterior, so that we can compile a prioritised schedule of necessary works going forward.

On a more discordant note, we continue to be plagued by unauthorised parking for the shops and the pharmacy on our car park, and in Rectory Gardens. None of the businesses have shown any interest in helping us stop this, and we are in ongoing discussions with Rectory Gardens residents as to how best this can be dealt with.

Finally, we do still have one or two gaps available for hire, so if anybody knows of potential future hirers, we'd love to hear from them.

**Stewart Neame**

## ***Safeguarding***

During the last year I have again attended support meetings and the annual safeguarding conference by Zoom meetings, In the Zoom meetings we are put into chat rooms with four or five other people. It is always interesting to hear other people's experiences of Safeguarding. Most battle to get people to do their training! At St Johns we are very fortunate that people are completing training when asked.

I have had several meetings with other safeguarding officers in the Whitstable team and work closely with Rev Rachel in coordinating meetings and supporting others.

In November Jane kindly spoke at our service during Safeguarding week. Reminding us that Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and it would be wonderful if as many as possible could complete the basic training.

I now along with other churches in the Diocese have access to a hub and dashboard which makes things much easier to record and keep up to date with DBS renewals and training records,

Thank you to all who have done their training. Please ask if you are unsure about training on line; I am able to go through it with you.

Remember Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and if you have concerns, please talk to me.

**Ann Poole**  
**Safeguarding Office**

## ***Friends of St John's***

Our "Friends of St John's" membership continues to grow, bringing together all those in regular contact with St John's. Started in 2022, membership at the end of 2025 was 544 (up from 467 in 2024). Membership is free, and members receive monthly emails highlighting key events in the life of St John's.

In 2025 our 'Friends of St John's' planning team again organised a range of social and fundraising events, including quiz nights, indoor boot fairs, Christmas Craft Fair and another fantastic Summer Fete in St John's Garden. A massive thank you to Jane Myhill, whose role as Children & Families Minister means she is well placed to be the main point of contact for our various Friends events - and somehow manages to coordinate them all as well! Thank you to all those who have volunteered at all our various Friends events - we couldn't do it without you! We could still do with more helpers if you would like to join us in 2026?

Meanwhile I would also like to thank the various Friends of St John's who, while not regular church attenders, have quietly but effectively and regularly volunteered their time this year to support the work of St John's in a number of largely unsung capacities. These include helping at the market, helping at Coffee Break, helping to deliver our community

newsletter and helping to keep our churchyard (and garden!) tidy - and more besides. Thank you all so much!

To join Friends of St John's or to get in touch please contact:

**FriendsOfStJohns.Swalecliffe@gmail.com**

**Karen McKane**

## ***Saturday Market***

Thank you everyone for making our 25th year such a huge success. We have had our best year financially raising nearly £11,000 this is a fantastic amount. Our ebay sales have gone up as well as our Vinted sales and the things we have sent to the auctioneers have been amazing.

Of course the biggest improvement of all has been in our outreach; I cannot begin to tell you just how much the difference has been in the number of people coming through those doors at St John's Centre at 9 o'clock on the first Saturday of each month. Even when it is cold and raining the queue is still there. For many we are on first names terms with our customers which is so nice and makes the atmosphere even more special.

In 2025 we said goodbye to Jill Stickels, also Bob and Sheila Tomlinson - our grateful thanks to them for all their hard work over so many years. Thank you.

Please whatever it is you do for the Saturday Market, however great or small, whatever shape or size please carry on, we really need your help to keep going. My thanks go to the wonderful Saturday Market Team, who come rain or shine are there every month, Friday afternoons setting up and Saturday mornings selling all your wonderful donations. Thank-you all.

**Mary Fuller**

## **Coffee Break**

Tuesday mornings are always a favourite of mine as the Centre is filled with the smell of coffee and cakes alongside the gentle hum of numerous conversations carrying on and the world being put to right! Coffee Break offers a warm welcome and plenty of company regardless of whether you come every week or once in a while, all are welcome.

We now have a weekly notice slot where we can celebrate birthdays (for those who want to!) and share other information such as market reminders, church services or upcoming events. We also have a monthly book and jigsaw stall on the Tuesday following the market each month and occasionally a quiz or raffle. We celebrated Christmas with a carol request sing a long and raised £50 for Pilgrims Hospice at this.

Our thanks go to those who faithfully serve and make cakes each week, without each one of you Coffee Break wouldn't exist so a big thank you to you all.

There is much to look forward to so why not come along and join us any Tuesday between 10.00 am and mid day, we'd love to see you!

**Jane Myhill**

## **Prayer Shawl Group**

The prayer Shawl group meets on the 1st and 3rd Wednesday of each month in the St. John's Centre from 10.45 am until 12.15pm. We make prayer shawls, knee blankets, hats and scarves to be given to people in our local community and beyond who are in need of a 'Wooly Hug'. Our sessions begin with prayer and a short reflection and our work is blessed at one of our church services before being sent out.

We have sent out some 15 shawls and blankets this year, 2 going to France, 1 to Wales and 1 to the Isle of Aran.

We also support a charity in Sierra Leone which is registered by the Soroptimists, by knitting little jumpers and hats for babies.

We would welcome any knitters or

crocheters to join as regularly or occasionally and have plenty of yarn and needles to get you started. When our stocks begin to run down we ask for a £1 donation towards supplies.

For more information please speak me to on 01227 907536.

**Maureen Denney**

## **Charitable Donations**

### **Christian Aid**

Last year I paid in to the Whitstable Team collection a total of £271.75. This was through envelope collections in Church and money collected and donated by Coffee Break. Thank you all,

Plans are in place for a coffee morning on Saturday 16th May to have a coffee morning with a raffle refreshment and a few of our smaller Saturday market stalls. I do hope you will support this event and help raise more for this charity.

### **Children's Society**

Our number of box holders is decreasing but I was able to pay in a total £379.04 in October. Thankyou box holders for your generosity.

For the first time this year we had an All-age Christingle Service, This was very well attended and a donation of £100.00 was paid in. 72 oranges and candle kits were assembled into Christingles. Thank you to all who donate oranges sweets etc. to make this a lovely service.

If anyone would like to have a home collection box for your unwanted change please contact me.

The Children's Society saying for this year is "Together we are building a world where no teenager has to face life alone."

**Ann Poole**

## **6th Whitstable Scout Group**

As a Group we now have 100 young people of varying ages coming along to our Section meetings. Amazing! The Group are very proud and delighted to have had a Scout selected to attend the World Scout

Jamboree 2027 in Poland in the Kent contingent. An amazing and life-changing experience if you are chosen to attend and the Group will be helping with fundraising and supporting this Scout and his family preparing for this trip.

We continue to run two Beaver Colonies, two Cub Packs, a Scout Troop and an Explorer Unit catering for ages between 6 and 18, boys and girls. Our Leaders are offering a varied programme week after week including activities outside the Scout Hall and of course annual camping trips. The Group is extremely fortunate to have leaders who are committed to sharing their skills and knowledge together with laughter and fun for all to experience with their peers. Thank you leaders!

The NHS continue to use our premises; we have the Whitstable Stamp Collectors using the Hall quarterly and the Rainbows, Brownies and Guides use the Hall weekly. We are very fortunate to have such a versatile Hall that is well looked after and maintained to enable ourselves and other groups to make use of the facilities.

Last year the Group committed to locating a defibrillator on the outside of the Hall and this has indeed happened. It is ready for use if necessary situated on the outside wall overlooking Long Rock. This of course is there for the community to use and the Group are happy to have been able to provide this. The Fundraisers continue to organise Jumble Sales, Wine and Wisdoms, a Christmas Bazaar and Sponsored Walk to keep the Group supported financially and to fund the Scout Hall.

Jane and Emma are doing such a great job making our Church Parades fun for the young people and we seem to fill the Church on these occasions! It is a lovely opportunity to parade our Section flags with the Union Flag leading the procession and for the young people, friends and families to see these and feel how proud everyone is of our Group.

This year I have stepped down from the Group Scout Leader role after 12 or so years! All the Leaders have rallied round and have taken on extra 'jobs' (for no extra pay?!) enabling me to keep the

Group Scout Leader title on paper only for the sake of the Scout Association communications. The adult leaders and helpers are all very supportive of each other and remain a strong and enthusiastic set of people encouraging each other all the time.

During the year the Beavers have been to the cinema, visited the Fire Station and Pets at Home, had a Mario themed sleepover, had a visit from a Guide Dog, achieved the Disability Awareness badge, had a water fight, made pebble poppies and Mothering Sunday photo frames and celebrated Australia Day amongst many other activities.

The Cubs have done so much including visited Howletts, seen the panto (oh yes they did!), achieved the science badge, had a walk in the dark, a Parent Challenge night, a 70s themed disco, done air rifle shooting, achieved the International Badge and had a night all about chocolate!

The Scouts have had their annual Monopoly Run in London, the real life Monopoly game! They have had a chip shop challenge, Lego challenge, visited the aircraft museum at Manston, had a vehicle maintenance evening, done pumpkin carving, made pizzas, had wide games and done map reading. They do so much more - this is just a taster!

The Explorer Unit, our oldest aged Section, arrange their own activities with the guidance of their leaders. These have included microlighting, tug of war, a board game evening, waffle making, cake baking and a hike in Clowes Wood. They join the Scouts on some activities too.

We will be celebrating 50 years of the 6th Whitstable Scout Group at our AGM in May when we will be having a display of memorabilia, sharing past and present members' and adults' stories and feelings of their time in the Group. All are welcome to come along to our AGM to have a look at these memories.

Another great year of positivity, encouragement, learning, sharing, laughing and friendship for all ages connected to this Scout Group. Thank you everyone!

***Tessa Dale - Bagheera***

## **Electoral Roll**

A verbal report will be given at the meeting.

## **Dcc**

### **Membership**

The following served during 2025/26:

Canon Amanda Boucherat (*as member of Diocesan Synod*)

Jan Bailey (*as Churchwarden*)

Lorri Currie

Jack Dale

Chris McKane

Karen McKane

Maxine Gambrill

Joan Hughes

Jane Myhill (*as member of Deanery Synod*)

Stewart Neame (*as Churchwarden from 1 May*)

Ann Poole (*as Churchwarden until 1 May*)

Sue Scott (*as ordinary member until 1 May then as PCC Rep*)

Jeremy St John (*as PCC Rep until 1 May, then as ordinary member*)

Nick Widdows

The church is entitled to two members of the Deanery Synod & PCC. One of these posts is currently vacant. Our churchwardens and Deanery Synod Reps are 'ex-officio' members of PCC.

### **Meetings**

The DCC held five meetings during the year, all in person. The council discussed:

- Considering the amount that we should offer as our contribution towards the Parish Share paid by Team Churches
- Stewardship Campaign and other Finance matters
- Grants and appointment of Youth Minister
- 'Leading your Church into Growth'
- The service at Chestfield WI Hall
- Issues regarding safeguarding.

*Please note I would like to stand down as DCC Secretary at the ADCM.*

**Nick Widdows, DCC Secretary**

## **Whitstable PCC**

The Whitstable Parochial Church Council (PCC) navigated a year defined by administrative transition and focused strategic growth throughout 2025. This period saw a significant emphasis on governance and leadership, beginning with the successful complete renewal of the Electoral Roll across all five churches. To bolster administrative resilience, the Council discussed setting up a new secure online storage system designed to protect digital records for the long term. Leadership transitions were also a key highlight, most notably the appointment of Angela Maxted as the Chair of Governors for the Whitstable Endowed Foundation School.

Sadly due to a Health and Safety audit in the summer, St Andrew's church building was deemed unfit for use and had to close with immediate effect. Its future remains unclear at the time of writing this report.

The spiritual vitality of the team was nurtured through the development of 'Just 3 Things' mission plans tailored for each church to encourage growth and renewal. These strategic efforts were underpinned by a rigorous commitment to safety and compliance.

The PCC streamlined its protocols by aligning local safeguarding policies and mandating a comprehensive fire safety audit across all buildings. Furthermore, training record-keeping has been successfully migrated to 'The Hub,' complemented by in-person training sessions for members of the District Church Councils and PCC.

Environmental stewardship remained at the forefront of the parish's identity as progress toward the Church of England's Net Zero 2030 target accelerated. St Alphege Whitstable distinguished itself by achieving a Silver Eco Church award, while All Saints and the Seasalter Christian Centre maintain their Bronze status. Participation in the Joint Rochester and Canterbury ECO conference has further aligned the parish with national goals, leading to several churches commissioning energy audits to identify

carbon-reducing opportunities such as LED lighting and improved insulation. These environmental initiatives are supported by available Diocesan grants for immediate improvements.

Financial management and human resources were handled with careful attention to rising costs and the need for operational parity. The parish managed a 5% increase in the Parish Share for 2025 and is currently preparing for an additional increase in 2026, which will be distributed based on a three-year average of weekly attendance. To support staff during these economic shifts, the PCC has recommended a 3% pay increase for parish employees for 2026.

The clergy team meet regularly on Monday mornings, three times every month, for three and a half hours to share and pray together, led by our Team Rector Rev Rachel Webbley. Ascension Day and Advent Sunday Team services brought the whole Team together, and a special Team Shakespeare event is planned for the All Saints vicarage garden in 2026. Sadly we had to say farewell to the Rev Claudette Gayle who has become a vicar in Maidstone but we welcomed Rev Eddie and Ripeka Bijl to our Team who together are one full time post, based at St Alphege Whitstable for their training.

**Revd Simon Tillotson**

## ***Reculver Deanery***

The Reculver Deanery Synod began its 2025 journey on 3rd February with a strong emphasis on youth ministry, featuring a plenary session with Jen Tobin, the Diocesan Lead Officer for Children and Young People's Ministry. Jen highlighted that effective outreach should prioritize sowing spiritual seeds and engaging families rather than fixating on attendance numbers, noting that teenagers often seek values-based conversations with caring adults. During this meeting, the synod also viewed a Tearfund video regarding ecological stewardship and discussed sensitive matters like the Living in Love

and Faith course and the need for creative safeguarding training using online modules in small groups.

Following this, the Deanery Mission and Ministry Committee met on 14th May to address the ongoing vacancy in the Reculver Parish, where it was felt that a part-time incumbent would be preferable over a merger with another parish. The committee decided to replace the idea of a formal eco-subgroup with a library of information to help churches share research on practical improvements like heat pumps and solar panels. They also noted significant legal confusion and delays regarding the appointment of a new Archbishop and refined the agenda for the upcoming June synod to include discussions on governance and leadership.

The full synod reconvened on 16th June at St Bartholomew's Church, focusing heavily on the practicalities of Mission Action Plans. Canon Amanda Boucherat and Jane Myhill from St John's Swalecliffe led a session encouraging parishes to use the RADAR and SMART principles to identify achievable outcomes for the year, and shared the value of mission planning within their own context. During the business session, the synod approved a formal motion requesting a review of the difficulties surrounding the Vacancy in See Committee processes. It was also reported that while six churches were up to date with their parish share, four remained in arrears, illustrating the financial strain on the deanery. The evening concluded with a peaceful closing prayer based on the New Zealand prayer book.

Finally, on 6th October, the year's work culminated in the Three Things initiative, where parishes presented their specific strategic priorities for the coming twelve months. These plans ranged from All Saints Whitstable's hopes for building utilization and spiritual nurture to Herne's concentration on a new welcome team and the Bubble Church model. A major milestone was reached when the synod unanimously passed a motion to support a grant bid for youth projects in Seasalter and Herne Bay. The meeting also

celebrated the news of Dame Sarah Mullally's appointment as the new Archbishop and rescinded the previous motion regarding the Vacancy in See process after receiving a satisfactory explanation from the Archdeacon. Looking

ahead, the synod agreed that safeguarding would be a primary focus for their first gathering in 2026.

**Rev Simon Tillotson**  
**Area Dean**

## ***Minutes - Vestry Meeting & ADCM 2025***

### **MINUTES OF THE VESTRY MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 1 MAY 2025 AT 7.00 PM IN ST JOHN'S CENTRE**

**1. Welcome and Opening Worship**

The Chairman, Rev Simon Tillotson, welcomed 23 church members to this year's Vestry Meeting and ADCM.

**2. Apologies for absence.**

Chris & Corina Cowie, Jack Dale, Robert & Caron Dubery, Nicola Hillier, Chris & Karen McKane, Jill Stickles, Bob & Sheila Tomlinson, Jeremy St John and Clive Williams.

**3. Chairman's Opening Remarks.**

The Chairman said that he would leave his remarks until the end.

**4. Minutes of the Vestry Meeting held on 28th April 2024.**

The minutes had been agreed by the DCC and were accepted by the meeting.

**5. Elections.**

**(a) Two Churchwardens.**

Jan Bailey was proposed by Ann Poole and seconded by Jane Holness.

Stewart Neame was proposed by Jane Myhill and seconded by Lucy Myhill.

There being no other nominations, they were declared elected.

**(b) Deputy Churchwardens.**

There were no nominations.

**(c) Assistant Churchwardens.**

Lorri Currie was proposed by Jan Bailey and seconded by Ann Poole.

Robin Vickers was proposed by Amanda Boucherat and seconded by Sue St John.

Their election was agreed unanimously.

**4. Churchwarden's Report (Extra Item).**

Ann Poole, standing down as churchwarden, said she would like to give a verbal report. This is appended. A floral presentation was made with thanks from the Team Vicar and the whole membership of St John's. She would continue as Safeguarding Officer

**Rev Simon Tillotson**  
**Chairman**

**Nick Widdows**  
**Secretary**

**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL DISTRICT CHURCH MEETING  
HELD ON THURSDAY 1 MAY 2025 AT 7.20 PM  
IN ST JOHN'S CENTRE**

**1. Apologies for Absence.**

As Vestry Meeting.

**2. Minutes of the ADCM held on 28th April 2024.**

The minutes had been agreed by the DCC and accepted by the meeting.

**3. Elections:**

**(a) Two PCC Representatives.**

Sue Scott was proposed by Jane Myhill and seconded by Lorri Currie. There being no other nominations she was declared elected. It was noted that there was a vacancy

**(b) Representatives for the DCC.**

The existing ordinary members of the DCC - Lorri Currie, Jack Dale, Maxine Gambrill, Joan Hughes, Chris McKane, Karen McKane and Nick Widdows, plus Jeremy St John and Emma Rafferty - were proposed by Mary Fuller and seconded by Lesley Moxon.

There being no other nominations and the maximum of nine ordinary embers not being exceeded they were declared elected and their election was acclaimed by the meeting.

**(c) Sidespeople.**

The following were confirmed as sidespeople:

Sally Collins, Lorri Currie, Jane Holness, Joan Hughes, Val Martin, Chris McKane, Sue Scott, Jeremy St John and Grace Williams.

**4. Reports required by law.**

**(a) Electoral Roll.** Jane Myhill read a verbal report: "The Electoral Roll is the official list of members of St John's who have signed the appropriate paperwork showing their commitment to St John's and as such are eligible to both stand and vote in any elections applicable to us such as DCC, PCC and Deanery Synod. This year,

2025, has required a full revision of our electoral roll. Sadly during the past year two members of our old roll have passed away while 11 members have not renewed membership. We have however welcomed 10 new members to our roll so our current total is now 70.

Let us continue to pray not only for spiritual growth but also for numerical growth."

The report was received by the meeting.

**(b) DCC Report.** The report was received by the meeting.

**(c) Fabric Report.** The report was received by the meeting.

**(d) PCC Report.** The report was received by the meeting.

**(e) Deanery Synod.** The report was received by the meeting.

**(f) Treasurers' Report and Presentation of Accounts for the Church and St John's Centre for year ending 31st December 2024.**

The report was received by the meeting. Unfortunately, Treasurer Jack Dale was unable to attend the meeting. It was noted that income from funerals and weddings had declined due to changing social habits. A vote of thanks to Jack for all his hard work was passed with acclamation.

**5. Other Reports.**

**(a) Children & Families Ministry.** The report was noted. Jane said she was very thankful for all who assisted in her work but more helpers at the three weekly events – Explorers, Blast and Chatterbox – and the monthly Messy Church were always welcome.

- (b) **Other Reports in Annual Report book.** There were no comments on the other reports. It was agreed that there should be written reports from 'Quiet Time with God' and 'Look and Learn' in future years.
- (c) **Canterbury Diocese.** Simon asked Canon Amanda if she would like to say a few words as a member of Diocesan Synod and the Archbishop's Council for the Diocese. Amanda said a new Diocesan Secretary had taken over in February and was looking at new ways of improving the Diocese's financial problems without continually putting up the Parish Share.

There was no other business.

## 6. **Chairman's Closing Remarks.**

The Chairman said that definite progress was being made. We now had both Jane and Emma who were doing great work although we faced a challenge on maintaining the funding for these posts long-term as grants were reducing and responsibility would fall more on our shoulders. Numbers at the 9.30 am service were increasing and a new initiative would be launched in June – holding the 9.30 am service on the fifth Sunday of the month in the WI Hall, Chestfield Road. This would aim to increase our impact in Chestfield but it was hoped that those members of our congregation who did not live in Chestfield would also attend. The intention was to hold about four such services a year. It was hoped to deliver the eye-catching Newsletter that Karen McKane had produced to every house in Chestfield.

Personally, looking after St John's and All Saint's and being Area Dean was not easy and could be tiring so he hoped people would keep him in their prayers.

**Simon Tillotson**  
**Chairman**

**Nick Widdows**  
**Secretary**

**June 2025**

### **Appendix -CHURCHWARDENS' REPORT**

As I step down from being Churchwarden, I just wanted to look back over the last year as so much has happened in the life of St John's and the community around us.

The word I have used most is 'thankyou' and tonight will be no exception. Firstly, I want to thank Simon for his work between two churches. Not an easy task. Simon's pastoral care is wonderful and much appreciated by all in their time of need.

I must also mention Canon Amanda and Rev Pat Strowger, Jane and now Emma who along with visiting clergy have enhanced our worship, along with readers and writers and readers of prayers.

In December Pat led her final service with us. A very moving time on Christmas Day. Pat did so much for us at St John's and much of it behind the scenes, guiding and supporting us all. In January we had a lovely afternoon tea and presentation to celebrate Pats ministry with us .

While speaking about worship in this review I need to thank Jane and Emma. Palm Sunday saw the church filled with 46 adults and 19 children plus a donkey! So many wonderful comments about the service. We have also been blessed to see the Church full on Parade service Sundays. These have been led by Simon and Jane.

As you have read in your report booklet we have been blessed to receive a grant from the Canterbury Diocese to support Janes and now Emma's work. Karen McKane worked so hard along with Simon and Jack in getting figures together and grant applications in. Thank you all. Special mention should be made to Amanda here as due to her connections in the Diocese, we had a good insight in to the way ahead for applying. The work to receive all the grant is reviewed annually and will depend on our giving increasing and attendance figures increasing.

This leads me onto Janes work. Jane works tirelessly for St John's and our community. So many activities and conversations helping people that we never hear about.

Thank you to Lucy as you do so much in supporting our groups. We welcome Emma now to work with the older children. Thank you Jane for your wonderful work, patience with all ages and your wonderful ideas. A highlight of the last year for me was the donkeys arriving in the Centre for the Nativity.

Thank you to all who help with groups, cooking food for Messy Church and bake cakes for coffee break, the market and other occasions.

This leads me on to our outreach work, the Saturday Market has a great team of helpers coordinated by Mary. It is amazing to see how much care there is for all who attend and how much money we raise. Thank you all who help, spend money and buy and donate. This along with FairShare, the community wardrobe and Whitstable Toys, shows that we are a caring group.

St John's Centre runs smoothly and thanks go to Suzanne for cleaning and putting tables out and general maintenance that she does. Chris McKane works hard with the bookings and liaises with everyone.

Joan Hughes keeps a very good eye on our beautiful Church building and church yard, this has certainly made our work as Churchwardens easier knowing that all the servicing is up to date and correct.

So much happens in the background and when needed it happens. Pastoral care group and the Memorial Service, Baptisms and people who support Simon at the services and offer a warm welcome to our visitors,

A warm welcome is what so many visitors and clergy say about St John's.

We are also fortunate to have many talented people in our St John's family eg leaders of prayer groups, writers of prayers, people who give talks. Special mention must be given to Jack our treasurer for his accounting skills, to Amanda and Stewart who work tirelessly for St John's and has so much knowledge to share when needed. To Nick who must be mentioned for producing the weekly newssheet setting up the technology for our services and producing the Annual report book.

There is so many more people to thank but a big thank you to all who have written reports on their part of life at St John's and all that has happened. To Jan and Karen who I have shared this journey with. I hope in this way everyone is thanked who should be.

In conclusion on a personal note, I would like to thank you all for the love and support I have received and I am sure Jan and Stewart will continue to receive this.

One last thanks must go to Mike my husband who has heard the saying. "Please can you just....". I know this must be a common saying to churchwardens husbands, wives or partners.

**Ann Poole**