



# **St Martin's Church Sherwood**

**Annual report and financial  
statements of the Parochial Church  
Council for the year ended  
31<sup>st</sup> December 2024**

**Signed on behalf of the PCC**

**Church wardens**

**Vicar**

**PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF ST. MARTIN - SHERWOOD**

**Financial statements of the Parochial Church Council**

**For the year ended**

**31st December 2024**

# PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF ST. MARTIN - SHERWOOD

## Reference and administrative details

Charity number:	1153828																										
Address:	Trevose Gardens Sherwood Nottingham																										
Trustees serving during the year were:																											
Vicar:	Rev S Pendenque																										
Licensed Lay Ministers:	Mrs L Cohen Mr G Hickson																										
Church Wardens:	Mr C Morris Mrs S Estella																										
Representatives on The Deanery Synod:	Ms V Airey Mrs L Cohen																										
Elected Members:	<table><tr><td>Mrs C Morris</td><td>until 2026</td></tr><tr><td>Mrs H Shipston</td><td>until 2025</td></tr><tr><td>Mr J Hepworth</td><td>until 2026</td></tr><tr><td>Mrs G Hepworth</td><td>until 2026</td></tr><tr><td>Ms P Breakwell</td><td>until 2026</td></tr><tr><td>Mrs A Rogers</td><td>until 2026</td></tr><tr><td>Mrs J Milbourn</td><td>until 2025</td></tr><tr><td>Mr C Budd</td><td>until 2025</td></tr><tr><td>Mrs E Barnabas</td><td>until 2027</td></tr><tr><td>Mr R Kitson</td><td>co-opted until 2025</td></tr><tr><td>Mrs J Day</td><td>until 2025</td></tr><tr><td>Ms R King.</td><td>until 2025</td></tr><tr><td>Mrs B Morgan</td><td>until 2027</td></tr></table>	Mrs C Morris	until 2026	Mrs H Shipston	until 2025	Mr J Hepworth	until 2026	Mrs G Hepworth	until 2026	Ms P Breakwell	until 2026	Mrs A Rogers	until 2026	Mrs J Milbourn	until 2025	Mr C Budd	until 2025	Mrs E Barnabas	until 2027	Mr R Kitson	co-opted until 2025	Mrs J Day	until 2025	Ms R King.	until 2025	Mrs B Morgan	until 2027
Mrs C Morris	until 2026																										
Mrs H Shipston	until 2025																										
Mr J Hepworth	until 2026																										
Mrs G Hepworth	until 2026																										
Ms P Breakwell	until 2026																										
Mrs A Rogers	until 2026																										
Mrs J Milbourn	until 2025																										
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Mr R Kitson	co-opted until 2025																										
Mrs J Day	until 2025																										
Ms R King.	until 2025																										
Mrs B Morgan	until 2027																										
PCC Secretary:	Mrs J Day																										
Treasurer:	Mr I Gordon																										
Bankers:	National Westminster Bank Plc 536 Valley Road Nottingham NG5 1JD																										
Independent Examiner:	RWB CA Limited Northgate House North Gate New Basford Nottingham NG7 7BQ																										

## PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF ST. MARTIN – SHERWOOD

### Trustees Annual Report for the Year Ended 31 December 2024

## Aims and Purpose

St Martin's Parochial Church Council (the PCC) has the responsibility of cooperating with the incumbent in promoting the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical. This includes responsibility for the financial affairs of the church, and provision and maintenance of the fabric of the Church building for worship and other activities for the benefit of the local community in and around Sherwood. The PCC complies with its duties under section 17 of the 2011 Charities Act with regard to Public Benefit.

## Structure, Governance and Management

The Parochial Church Council is a statutory body and is governed by the regulations as set out in the official Church of England Church Representation Rules. This is supplemented by the Handbook for Churchwardens and Parochial Church Councillors (revised edition 2010).

The method of appointment of PCC members is set out in the Church Representation Rules. The PCC consists of the clergy, church wardens, those elected to Deanery Synod, and other elected representatives. Members of the congregation are encouraged to join the electoral roll and to stand for election to the PCC.

The PCC members are responsible for making decisions on all matters of general concern and importance in the parish, and for all financial matters. The full PCC met 5 times during the year. The PCC operates through a number of committees, each dealing with a particular aspect of parish life.

Fabric and Finance Committee oversees the right management of those two areas, and oversees works to be done on the building. The treasurer is not a member of the PCC, but is a member of the committee.

The Worship and Discipleship Committee plans and oversees the church's worship, small groups and discipleship programmes.

The Community and Justice Committee led on social action, partnering with other agencies for mission, and shapes our financial contributions to charities – this committee was disbanded following the APCM and a new committee initiated to cover wider aspects of strategy and mission.

The Strategic Development and Mission Committee – this was formed in September 2023 and met 3 times in 2024. This committee seeks to look strategically and missionally at what we do as a church and how this aligns with our church vision, what God is calling us to in terms of growing disciples and the wider mission of the church. To listen to God and ask, what is God calling us to at this time?

The Children and Young People's Committee develops the growth of young people, and oversees Sunday children's ministry, the Sunday evening youth group, Jolly Tots, Bumps and Babies, ministry in schools, and special children's services/events.

The leadership team consists of the Vicar, Church Wardens, LLMs, Children/Families Minister, and Administrator. They meet weekly (or as in the case of the Vicar & Church Wardens whenever they can) to review and plan church activities, and to pray for the church.

The APCM for 2023 was held in church on May 12, 2024.

## Objectives and Activities

The diocesan vision was *Growing Disciples younger, wider and deeper*. In 2024 the diocese launched its renewed vision to 2030 as *Growing Disciples of Christ with Compassion, Confidence and Courage with focus on developing Inspiring Worship, Reaching Younger, Enabling Commitment, Growing Leaders, Enhancing Diversity, Encouraging Generosity and Nurturing Prayer*.

Through prayer and consultation as a church, we renewed our St Martin's Vision to *Rooted in Christ, Reaching out in love*

We intend to be: a welcoming God centred church, where people are transformed by the love of Christ, a church of all ages, transformed by the love of Christ, to nurture God's love, hope and justice, for the flourishing of our Sherwood, our City and World.

### **Our purpose:**

As followers of Jesus Christ we will:

worship God, build a community where people belong, live generously, make a difference, care for God's creation.

## PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF ST. MARTIN – SHERWOOD

### Trustees Annual Report for the Year Ended 31 December 2024

#### Objectives and Activities *continued*

The PCC is therefore committed to enabling people of all ages to become followers of Jesus Christ, to grow as disciples, and to become active participants in the church family. We aim to equip ordinary people to live out their faith in everyday life, through:

- Worship and prayer: learning and worshipping together in a variety of settings, that we may grow together in Christ, and be empowered by the Holy Spirit.
- Pastoral care for those living in the parish, or otherwise connected to the church body: including occasional offices.
- Growing together as a community through welcome and hospitality, in small “Life Groups” and informal gatherings
- Mission and community engagement: including social groups, action with other charities and organisations working for the common good (including considerations around the environment), and hiring of the church building for community use.

#### Achievements and performances

##### Overview 2024

Following a period of a year’s vacancy, Revd. Sue Pendenque was licensed as Vicar on January 14<sup>th</sup> 2024. We settled into a time of stability following our difficult years of sadness and loss. It’s fair to say that despite our joy at this new stability and a renewed sense of hopefulness, many who had worked hard in the previous years were tired. Despite this, ministries continued, people continued to serve, and the church has seen some growth as well as some members moving on. Sue is immensely proud of the way this church seeks to serve its community of Sherwood with love, commitment and compassion in many ways – please see sections below. This commitment to share the good news of Jesus and to be a blessing within our community is expressed in our renewed vision - and particularly our strapline statement - *Rooted in Christ, Reaching out in Love*.

In January Freddie Kofi joined us as our new Youth Minister, his employment being funded by SDF4 funding granted to us from the diocese. Freddie made a great start, the youth group grew regularly seeing up to 18 young people attending on Sunday evenings. However after a period of 6 months Freddie felt we weren’t quite the right fit for him. We are grateful for his contribution to our youth ministry for the time he spent with us.

During Lent as a church we focused on praying together, meeting weekly over 5 weeks to pray for different aspects of our church and community life. This has launched our monthly *Call to Prayer* evenings, attended faithfully by several church members. We shared a meal together for Maundy Thursday which was both joyous and solemn, remembered Christ’s sacrifice for us on Good Friday with 3 hours at the cross, and celebrated the resurrection on Easter Sunday morning with a misty sunrise service, a quiet 8.30 said communion and an all age service which focused on stories of the resurrection from the New Testament and from our own lives – it was powerful.

Thy Kingdom Come was led this year by Sue Estella, it was a quieter week but of great value none the less.

The PCC grew along with the church Electoral Roll. Sue P continues to proudly boast of the best PCC in the diocese and again expresses gratitude for all of their hard work with particular mention to Russell Kitson, Paul Swift and Chris Budd for their care for the church premises and grounds.

The newly reformed PCC met for an ‘away at home day’ in June which was led by Josh Smith of One Church Leicester (part of their senior leadership team), with a proven track record of growing church, also Sue Pendenque’s son. Josh came to help us think through calling, vision, and the beginnings of strategy. He helped us name what was important for us as a church here in Sherwood, and to listen for what God might be calling us into. Our renewed vision was begun here, we then moved into a process of wider church discernment before it being agreed upon later in the year. We thank Josh for his contribution on our away day.

Change happened in committees; with the Community and Justice Committee becoming the *Strategic Development and Mission Committee* which seeks to help guide the church strategically into missional growth. Sue thanks Liz Cordle and Nicky Brooks for their contributions to the Community and Justice Committee in the past, particularly for their passion in keeping matters of justice and climate change at the heart of our church.

## PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF ST. MARTIN – SHERWOOD

### Trustees Annual Report for the Year Ended 31 December 2024

Our Eco Church group – including church and wider community members have worked hard to keep us informed about matters of climate change and successfully guided us into changes which have resulted in us achieving an *Eco Church* Bronze accreditation. Thank you!

During Sherwood Arts Week we were pleased to host a small exhibition in our lobby – partnering with Refugee Roots, and also to once again host Elevation Dance for a wonderful display from their dancers.

We entered into a quieter period for the school summer holidays then to a busy autumn term, concluding with well attended Christmas services.

Hiring of the church building has continued throughout 2024. We are grateful to be able to partner with those who regularly use our building and to have the church used for various choir concerts over the year again.

There is much more not covered here, and so many people to be thanked; we rejoice to have seen God at work in us and through us in 2024.

#### ***Growing disciples: With Compassion - Meeting the world's deepest needs with Jesus' love***

Jolly Tots and Bumps to Babies continue to be known as a safe place, where support can be found and where people are welcomed. Attendance grew during 2024 thanks to Gill and a team of dedicated volunteers.

Nourish and Nourish Café continued throughout the year, friendships continued to grow, care was shared and we saw two Nourish members baptized in November.

The Chaplaincy team visited Mansfield Road businesses and shops roughly monthly, continuing to show the love of Christ in care, listening and prayer.

The Knit and Natterer's have knitted and nattered, welcoming all who come for gentle friendship regardless of skill level.

Toast club has welcomed regular families during school holidays, toast, play, chat, gently sharing the love of Jesus.

A Start course was successfully run in February, though Alpha failed to attract attendees in September and so didn't run.

During advent we welcomed Seely School again, this time Key Stage 1 for a retelling of the nativity story with Christingle making. We welcomed 130+ people across two reflective services with Baguley Brothers Funeral Directors. We had a fun and imaginative retelling of the nativity through a "search for a missing Santa" at our December all age Café Church (thanks to Penny Breakwell and Chrissie Morris), a full carol service on December 22<sup>nd</sup> and a joyful Christmas morning celebration with a retelling of the Nativity story - through chocolate!

Thanks to our tech team, we also continue to stream Sunday services weekly enabling us to reach people who are exploring faith quietly.

For more details on "With Compassion" see attached reports from church groups and committees.

#### ***Growing disciples with Confidence – Rooting our life and faith in Jesus***

Sunday children's attendance continues to be low, largely due to children getting older and moving on to the evening youth group. We have seen some new families settle with us and become regular with young children, however it's clear that we need to expand again in this area of our church life.

The youth ministry grew, with up to 18 regulars by the end of the year (new year 6 members having joined in September). Many of these young people are not children of church members, but wider contacts. It is a group which continues to feel safe, allowing the young people to be themselves and is a credit to the volunteer leaders who have worked hard to grow this ministry coordinated by Sue Estella (thank you Sue) following Freddie's end with us in August.

Facebook continued to stream 5 mornings a week, thanks to a small but dedicated team - offering connectedness and discipleship for a regular community, as well as for those simply 'having a look'.

Corporate prayer is a growing priority with weekly Wednesday prayer meetings and a once a month Call to Prayer meeting.

We continued to meet for worship, prayer and study in various ways. As with previous years, that meant two morning services, regular Life Groups and a monthly *Unplugged* (informal contemporary worship - always lay-led). We settled into a service pattern that works well for us at our 10.30 service, with 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup>

## PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF ST. MARTIN – SHERWOOD

### Trustees Annual Report for the Year Ended 31 December 2024

#### ***Growing disciples with Confidence – Rooting our life and faith in Jesus continued***

Sundays having a mix of more contemporary worship and hymns, 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday an All Age Café style church and the 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday being a more traditional style service with hymns and the organ.

For more details on “With Confidence” see attached reports from church groups and committees.

#### ***To grow in Courage – Sharing Jesus with all our hearts***

(learning how to become confident communicators of the Gospel, growing leaders, enabling our young people and children to be courageous followers of Christ.)

Life Group leaders met termly for support, inspiration and prayer.

The Strategic Development and Mission Committee met to look at how we grow our church, considering areas such as how we become confident communicators of the Gospel and how we intentionally make room for Jesus in all of our outward facing ministries.

We explored two key sermon series last year: *Rich in Christ* - considering the riches we have to share, and *Holy, Holy, Holy* – the holiness of God and our response to this.

The children and youth explored different themes across the year, all to enable them to be courageous followers of Christ. A few of the young people also took steps forward in leading aspects of the youth meetings under Freddie’s leadership. One young person - Alice, courageously volunteered to be an intern with us this year.

For more details on “With Courage” see attached reports from church groups and committees.

## **Safeguarding**

St Martin's continues to be mindful of its Safeguarding responsibilities to its congregation and the wider area of Sherwood, and there appears to be an increased awareness of issues that need reporting. Any matters that have arisen have been forwarded to the Diocesan Safeguarding Team for advice. There have been no major Safeguarding issues within the church during this reporting year. Encouraging appropriate training among the serving congregation continues to be an issue which is being addressed, and which has been noted by the Diocesan Safeguarding Team.

**Janet Kitson**

## **Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks**

The Disclosures and Barring Service (DBS) checks for the first part of 2024 were carried out by Gill James. During the year the responsibility for checking passed across to Judith Walker with support from and Lesley Cohen. Both took the appropriate introductory training and a number of updates were processed towards the end of the year. We continue to prioritize this as an important part of our safeguarding procedures

## **Financial Review**

### ***General Funds***

The Church is dependent financially on offerings received from the congregation, donations from individuals and grants from charitable trusts.

In 2024 our income and expenditure were managed by the Fabric and Finance Committee by regular monitoring against our forecasts. Regular giving rose by 18% to just under £73K which, of course led to a consequential uplift in Gift Aid to £16.3K. By the grace of God we were a beneficiary under the Will of one of our stalwart members to the tune of £40,000. Other income remained stable so our overall income totalled c£143K.

Our expenditure rose by about £20K to £137K. This was anticipated, the increase being attributed to the salary costs of the Youth Minister for part of the year, an increase in Parish Share of £7K and the upgrade to the lighting (which was flagged in last year’s report). Energy costs fell by just under £3K to £8.9K

### ***Restricted Funds***

These are sums of money that are held on trust for a specific purpose and can only be spent for that. On 31<sup>st</sup> December 2024 we were holding £1,650 in the Nourish fund, £183 given for Families in need, and £4,739 in total for children and youth work.

### ***Designated Funds***

Other monies that have been set aside for an individual project are shown as designated under the heading of unrestricted funds. On 31 December 2024 £18,388 was held for the ongoing (until 31.12.2025) children

## PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF ST. MARTIN – SHERWOOD

### Trustees Annual Report for the Year Ended 31 December 2024

and families ministry, £9,000 for the Youth Worker staff costs, £477 was held to be used towards the next parish weekend and there is a further £1,000 put aside for Nourish.

#### ***Policy on Reserves***

The policy of the Parochial Church Council is to hold a sufficient sum in reserves to cover six months of normal expenditure. On 31 December 2024 £45,000 was held in an interest bearing account to satisfy this policy

**.Ian Gordon**

#### **Thanks**

The PCC would like to thank all those who participate in so many ways to make our church a welcoming, gracious, and transformative community. The strength of our pastoral care for each other and love for Sherwood continues to be a strength. The church community have been unfailingly supportive of the leadership team and PCC in all of our decisions as always. Our particular thanks go to the Church Wardens and all the PCC, who have continued to lead us prayerfully and faithfully.

Approved by the Parochial Church Council on 23 March 2025 and signed on its behalf by: -

..... Rev. Sue Pendenque - Chair

..... Mr Chris Morris - Church Warden

..... Mrs Sue Estella – Church Warden

..... Mr Ian Gordon - Treasurer



**PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF ST. MARTIN - SHERWOOD**  
**RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 2024**

	Unrestricted funds			2024	2023
	General Fund	Designated Funds	Restricted Funds		
	£	£	£	£	£
<b>RECEIPTS</b>					
Regular Giving	47,473	25,500	-	72,973	61,929
Gift Aid	16,307	-	-	16,307	14,998
Projects	-	-	11,823	11,823	7,755
Church Hire	7,726	-	-	7,726	8,280
Fees	1,922	-	-	1,922	1,858
Maintenance	1,219	-	-	1,219	3,785
Other	42,153	200	440	42,793	12,062
Interest on deposit funds	2,957	-	-	2,957	1,637
Total Receipts	<u>119,757</u>	<u>25,700</u>	<u>12,263</u>	<u>157,720</u>	<u>112,304</u>
<b>PAYMENTS</b>					
Parish Share	56,988	-	-	56,988	50,676
Staff Costs	8,478	-	-	8,478	7,721
Maintenance	16,423	6,669	-	23,092	21,307
Finance	4,905	-	-	4,905	4,419
Worship/ Discipleship	3,920	-	-	3,920	2,581
CYP	2,304	19,234	4,542	26,080	16,418
Mission	7,307	-	5,875	13,182	13,167
Projects	-	-	-	-	-
Pastoral	88	-	458	546	1,011
Total Payments	<u>100,413</u>	<u>25,903</u>	<u>10,875</u>	<u>137,191</u>	<u>117,300</u>
Net of receipts/(payments)	19,344	(203)	1,388	20,529	(4,996)
Transfers between funds	(278)	278	-	-	-
Cash at bank and in hand at 01.01.24	<u>36,315</u>	<u>33,990</u>	<u>5,184</u>	<u>75,489</u>	<u>80,485</u>
<b>Cash at bank and in hand at 31.12.24</b>	<u>55,381</u>	<u>34,065</u>	<u>6,572</u>	<u>96,018</u>	<u>75,489</u>

**PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF ST. MARTIN - SHERWOOD**

**STATEMENT OF ASSETS AND LIABILITIES AS AT 31ST DECEMBER 2024**

**ANALYSIS OF FUNDS**

	<b>At</b>				<b>At</b>
<b>Unrestricted Funds</b>	<b>01/01/2024</b>	<b>Receipts</b>	<b>Payments</b>	<b>Transfers</b>	<b>31/12/2024</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
<b>Designated Funds</b>					
Legacies	-	-	-	-	-
Building fund	6,641	-	(6,669)	28	-
Building for Growth	-	-	-	-	-
Children's Ministry Salary	16,872	18,000	(16,484)	-	18,388
Families in Need	-	200	-	-	200
Nourish	1,000	-	-	-	1,000
Youth Worker Staff Costs	9,000	-	-	-	9,000
Parish Weekend	477	-	-	-	477
Intern fund	-	2,500	(2,750)	250	-
Chairs Fund	-	5,000	-	-	5,000
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
	33,990	25,700	(25,903)	278	34,065
General Funds	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
	36,315	119,757	(100,413)	(278)	55,381
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
	70,305	145,457	(126,316)	-	89,446
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
<b>Restricted Funds</b>					
Appeals	-	-	-	-	-
Families in Need	201	440	(458)	-	183
Nourish	2,702	4,823	(5,875)	-	1,650
Oaks - Youth Worker	-	7,000	(4,482)	-	2,518
Rose Window	-	-	-	-	-
Oakes Trip	881	-	(60)	-	821
Childrens' Ministry Salary	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
	1,400	-	-	-	1,400
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
	5,184	12,263	(10,875)	-	6,572
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
<b>TOTAL FUNDS</b>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
	75,489	157,720	(137,191)	-	96,018
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>

Approved by the Parochial Church Council on ..... and signed on its behalf by: -

..... Rev. Sue Pendenque - Chair

..... Mr Ian Gordon - Treasurer

**PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF ST. MARTIN – SHERWOOD**

**NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS**

	2024		2023	
	Unrestricted	Restricted	Unrestricted	Restricted
	Funds	Funds	Funds	Funds
	£	£	£	£
<b>ASSETS</b>				
Church of England Deposit Fund				
- PCC Building Funds	1,854	-	1,760	-
- Reserves Account	65,448	-	52,585	-
PCC Current Account	14,148	5,568	14,793	4,102
No 2 Current Account	7,996	1,004	1,167	1,082
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	89,446	6,572	70,305	5,184
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
<b>OTHER MONETARY ASSETS</b>				
Income tax on deeds of covenant gift aid due	2,482	-	3,060	-
PAYE and NI	1,276		898	
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
	3,758		3,958	
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
<b>LIABILITIES</b>				
Independent Examiner fees	816	-	768	-
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
	816	-	768	-
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>

**PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF ST. MARTIN - SHERWOOD**

**INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE**

**PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF ST. MARTIN, SHERWOOD**

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I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the Parochial Church Council of St. Martin for the year ended 31 December 2024.

**Responsibilities and basis of report**

As the charity's trustees of the Parochial Church Council of St. Martin you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ('the Act').

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

**Independent Examiner's Qualified Statement**

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

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

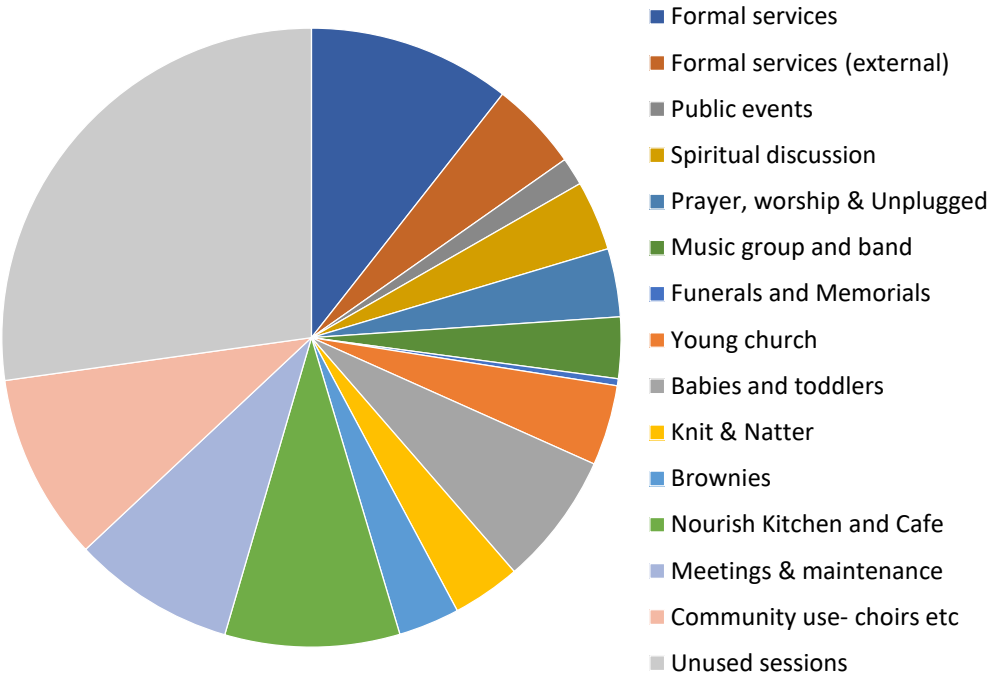
I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

**Neil Coupland FCA DChA**

Dated: .....

**RWB Chartered Accountants  
Northgate House  
North Gate  
New Basford  
Nottingham  
NG7 7BQ**

Use of the Church Building 2024



Baptisms 2024  
**12**

Funerals 2024  
**5**

Weddings 2024  
**2**

Usual  
Sunday  
Attendance  
**75**

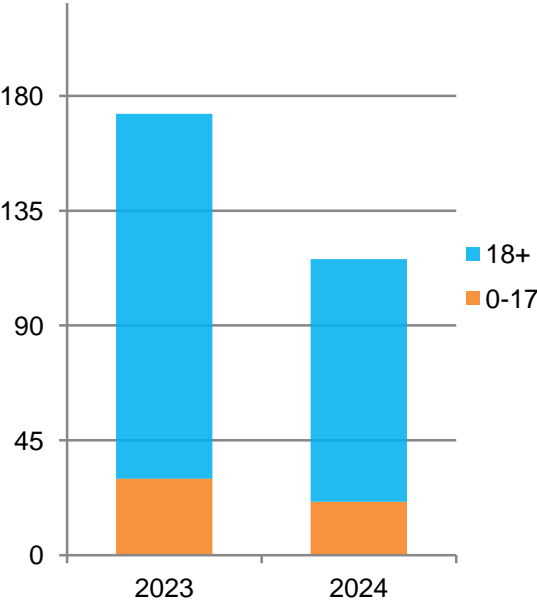
Sunday  
Ministry  
teams  
**37**

Life  
Group  
members  
**45**

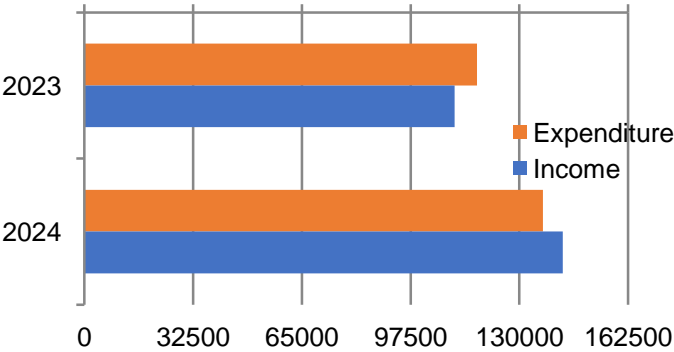
Christmas  
attendance  
**119**

Easter  
attendance  
**147**

Worshipping Community



Church Finances



## The Electoral Roll

As at 31st December 2024 St Martin's Electoral Roll stands at 109.

At the end of December 2023 our roll stood at 102. During the revision of the roll 9 people were added and 2 removed, giving 109 at our APCM. Since then, 1 person has been added and 1 removed therefore St Martin's Electoral Roll as at the end of December 2024 remains at 109.

**Julie Day**

## Nottingham North Deanery APCM Report for Jan – Dec 2024

During 2024 we held three Synods, two in person and one remotely:

### **20 February 2024: Chaplaincy**

Our first Synod was held at St Leonard's, Wollaton and we were joined by David McCoulough (Diocesan Chaplaincy Lead), Victoria Mullen (Archway Learning Trust) and Jonah Gorst (Woven Youth Worker). David and Victoria shared about their experiences as Chaplains in different arenas and Jonah shared about opportunities for the Deanery to join with the youth work at Woven.

### **13 August 2024: Elections to Diocesan Synod**

We cancelled our July Synod as the key speaker was not able to attend. The sole agenda item of our August Synod was the voting in of Diocesan Synod Representatives. The following people were appointed: Diocesan Synod House of Laity: Lee Duffield-Simms, Joanna Smith, Pauline Thomas, Paul Ward and James Willis

Diocesan Synod House of Clergy: Nikki Bates, Tim Pullen and Sue Pendenque

### **13 November 2024: AGM and General Synod Report**

The meeting took place at St Mary the Virgin in Bulwell. Lydia Corbett brought a report from General Synod, concentrating particularly on the prayers of love and faith.

This was also our AGM and following this meeting the Deanery Leadership Team consisted of:

Ex-officio members: Tim Pullen (Area Dean), Kirsty Cowley (Deanery Administrator)

Lay: John Cartwright (Lay Chair), Joanna Smith (Lay Chair), Greg Cowley (Deanery Treasurer)

Ordained: Nikki Bates, Paul Savage

Our Deanery Prayer meetings have also continued on the first Tuesday of each at Christ Church, Cinderhill.

This year we have had a number of changes in the leadership of parishes within the Deanery. Rev'd Sue Pendenque was licensed as vicar of Sherwood St Martin, Rev'd Lizzie Osborne was licensed as a mission associate at St John's in Bilborough. Rev'd Emma Rolls began her curacy at Stapleford and Rev'd Jamie Price began her curacy with Woven.

We would like to thank you all for your generous and faithful giving during 2024. We managed to pay 94% of our share allocation!

**Rev'd Canon Tim Pullen**  
**Area Dean**

**John Cartwright**  
**Lay Chair**

**Joanna Smith**  
**Lay Chair**

## Worship and Discipleship committee

We have maintained in person and online Sunday worship throughout 2023 this being two Sunday services weekly, plus monthly Unplugged (a contemporary worship evening). The 8.30 said Eucharist service remains consistent in form; the 10.30 service pattern has settled into pattern of more contemporary worship for the first and second Sundays, an All-Age Café service on the third week and a more traditional service (music and liturgy) for the fourth Sunday. Any Fifth Sunday is a service of the word at 10.30. In our meetings we have discussed service patterns, the different preferred styles of musical worship of the congregation, how we can make each service 'more distinct' in flavour – particularly the traditional service. Our main concern is not to please people, but to make it easier in each service to meet with Jesus, to encounter him. We also recognise and discuss the need to be accessible to people coming in and seeking Jesus and to people of all ages. We have discussed possible changes to communion, to Christmas services so as to reach our community wider and so on. We hold both worship and discipleship along with mission in mind as we consider these things.

During the year we have maintained effective teams for sound and visuals, music, Bible readings, intercessions, preaching and leading. Sunday attendance is averaging 68 adults across both services, but our numbers of children have fallen. Communion is not yet back to pre-covid, we infuse bread with wine and offer uninfused bread and the chalice. People still do not feel confident about taking communion as we would have done pre-covid. We are discussing how to move this forward.

Discipleship happens in a number of settings: life groups, chaplaincy, Nourish, Unplugged, Alpha and Start courses, as well as the Lent course, and ad hoc conversations.

**Sue Pendenque**

## **Strategic Development and Mission Committee**

The group consist of PCC members and co-opted members.  
Our big question is 'how do we grow disciples?'

We held our first meeting in September, exploring the question around our newly agreed vision and how we use this as a starting point for growth. We reviewed all that St Martin's does, every activity from services, to mission activities asking how will this grow disciples (new and old). We have approached all that we have done with prayerful listening to God and to the church.

We plotted all that happens from St Martin's onto a line – a discipleship continuum – from first contacts with people to fully integrated discipleship, we found that much of what we 'do' falls at the end of first contacts/fringe contacts, we asked what pathways do we have in place to help people move along this continuum and where are there points where people can fall off.

We discussed how we might better use Café Church, Unplugged, exploring faith type courses, Jolly Tots and Bumps to Babies and how we might make them more effective in enabling people to move along on a discipleship journey.

From this I (Sue) developed our growing disciples plan which the committee have fed back into. I feel hopeful for our future and our capacity to grow disciples and am very grateful for this group of innovative, reflective dreamers and strategists.

**Sue Pendenque**

## **Community and Justice Committee**

Saint Martin's engages with community and justice issues both locally and globally in a variety of ways and this is reflected in our worship, prayers, giving and practical action. Our involvement during 2024 included the following:

### ***Charity Giving***

St Martin's continues to give 10% of its income to charity, shared between 4 "major" charities usually nominated on a 4-year cycle, and up to 4 minor charities. The major charities for 2024 were as follows: Emmanuel House receiving £1000, and Refugee Roots, Water Works and Children in Distress each receiving £1250. The "minor" charities were Sharewear, Jericho Road, Bags of Blessing and Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust (whose youth team manage Woodthorpe Meadow opposite Trevoze Gardens). The minor charities shared gifts totalling £1250. We had speakers from Emmanuel House and Bags of Blessing at two of our morning services.

### ***Christian Aid***

St Martin's hosted another successful Christian Aid fund raising afternoon in early October including tea and cake, games and stalls. This social event was enjoyed by many and raised over £1000 for Christian Aid.

### ***Environment/ Climate change***

A small "eco church" group has been meeting since June 2023. The church was recently awarded a Bronze A Rocha Eco Church Award. This award recognises the wider efforts of many people in St Martin's, often amidst the busyness of other activities, including in recycling, installation of new LED lighting, managing our energy usage and applying for funding to support some of these activities. The church also took part in the RSPB bird count and plastic count and one of our café church services focused on the environment. Thank you to St Martin's for your commitment to caring for our creation.

### ***Amnesty International***

Members of the congregation signed around 40 physical "solidarity" cards to prisoners/ activists for justice as part of Amnesty International's annual "Write for Rights" campaign during Advent 2024.

### ***Food Bank***

St Martin's members continue to make donations which are much appreciated. Donations are taken to Daybrook Baptist Church, the base for Arnold Foodbank, part of the Trussell Trust network.

### **Sherwood Art Week**

St Martin's hosted an exhibition by Refugee Roots and served refreshments during Sherwood Art Week

**Liz Cordle**

### **PCC committee for children and young people (PCC CYP)**

This group takes a strategic overview of our ministry with children and young people at St Martin's. This year we have set the following priorities:

#### ***Engaging with the community***

Our community groups (Jolly Tots and Bumps to Babies) are well attended and very much appreciated. Toast club in the school holidays has also done well. We are developing a very positive connection with Seely Primary School with events at school and at St Martin's being well received.

#### ***Nurturing next steps***

With relationships being well developed some community group members are asking for prayer. Some families have come for Baptism and some now attend Sunday services. We continue to work to provide services which are more accessible. This has some success, especially at Christmas.

#### ***Growing discipleship in children and young people***

Our main work is in children's group on Sunday mornings and youth group on Sunday evenings. These are tailored to the children's and young people's needs. The youth group have also enjoyed residential weekends at a Christian activity centre and social contacts with other local youth groups. Our aim for all children and young people is to foster a deepening in faith both in understanding and living their lives.

#### ***Overall***

Much is being achieved in our children, families and youth ministry, given current resources – mainly people to lead and/or help our activities. If we are to grow and develop the work we need to build our capacity.

**Lesley Cohen**

### **The Fabric and Ornaments of the church**

The fabric and ornaments of the church continue to be in good order, although our chairs are continuing to show their age. Also we are having some boiler issues which affect the warmth of the building - we are working with our boiler support company in an attempt to rectify this.

A number of pieces of work have been completed, co-ordinated by Russell Kitson, Paul Swift and Chris Budd, including

- Replacement of a major portion of the building lighting
- A thorough clean and polish of our flooring
- Electrical safety tests
- On-going maintenance of the building and grounds
- Finding "new homes" for unused items accumulated over the lifetime of our church!

Projects for 2025 being considered include

- Replacement of more lighting
- A new "deeper" sink in the flower room
- On-going maintenance of the flooring
- Recovering or replacement of our chairs
- On-going maintenance of the building and grounds

**Chris Morris and Sue Estella**

## **Compassion**

### **Children's and Youth Ministry**

The children's ministry at St Martin's is providing a children's group for primary school age children, providing a service for our existing families and working to reach the wider community of Sherwood. Our three goals for this area of ministry are still *growing discipleship*, *engaging with the community*, and *nurturing next steps*.

#### ***Growing Discipleship***

The children's ministry is run on Sunday mornings at our 10.30 service. We provide a crèche for children aged 0-4 years and a group for primary school aged children. Many of our children have moved up to the youth group and are thriving under the care of the youth team. Children's ministry is available every week except the third Sunday of the month, when we are all together in the All Age service.



The children and young people had another successful trip to The Oakes, with children from a number of local churches. They had a weekend of fantastic gospel teaching, bible study, outdoor activities - muddy assault course, high ropes and zorbing balls amongst other activities and worship. The weekend grew friendships and faith and the next weekend is planned for November 2025. We are very grateful to the team of leaders who supported the children and young people on this weekend and those who supported this venture in prayer and finances.

We also supported faith development through our collaboration with St Nic's church again, for a holiday club held over Easter in April 2024. This was an engaging three days of science, stories, cooking, physical activity, craft, film and song. A number of team members and children were part of this.

We celebrated a number of Baptisms this year from amongst our families and the toddler group community. We celebrated the major festivals as a church community including Easter, Advent and Christmas events.

### ***Engaging with the community***

Our toddler group on Tuesday mornings is still very popular and I am very thankful to the committed team, who reach out to our community with love. We are building strong community connections and the group is well attended by parents and toddlers. We provide opportunity to play, have stories, snacks, make a craft and sing.

We also run a successful Bumps to Babies group on Wednesdays aimed at pre-walking children aged 0-18 months. This group forms a vibrant community supporting the needs of parents and their babies and providing much needed community.

"Toast club" has run successfully through a number of the school holidays, this is capably led by Charlotte H and Hope W and provides support and community to families through the school holidays.

We hosted the local Seely Primary and Nursery school for a number of events; including an "Experience Easter" event, where a team dressed up and explored the Easter Story with 300 children. They investigated the story at a number of stations, where they were taken through the Easter events and invited to reflect, through a number of activities.

We also hosted a Christingle Event at Christmas for several year groups at Seely school. The children made their own Christingle, explored the Nativity story and enjoyed a craft activity. We have strengthened our relationship with Seely school and very much enjoyed our time with the pupils and staff.

### ***Nurturing next steps.***

Throughout all of our groups, including Sunday children's ministry, weekday toddler and baby groups, holiday club, Oakes, celebration of festivals and our work with Seely School we provide opportunities for faith development.

Within our interaction with the community we explore ways of supporting members to make their next steps in faith. We invite families to All Age services, Celebration of Festivals and any other events that are accessible for all ages. Our team are building relationships at all our groups and we are ready to have conversations regarding faith, support families through any difficulties and when asked discuss next steps such as Baptism. We have had a number of families bring their children for Baptism, attend Sunday worship and we aim to support the faith of group members and provide stepping stones to faith

**Gill James**

## **Youth Group**

Our Sunday night youth group continues to be popular. There are approximately 14 regular members with others attending from time to time. The group is a mix of children whose parents attend St Martin's and friends from elsewhere.

A typical evening includes chat, tuck shop and games, followed by Bible focused activities, discussion and prayers. We also celebrate birthdays throughout the year, and have outings together. This year those included ice skating, laser tag and McDonalds, and some of the young people took part in the Bow Down prayer event in the Market Square.

We joined with youth members and leaders from other local churches for our now annual weekend away at the Oakes Christian Centre in November. We learned more about how Jesus is for everyone, and took part in activities from archery to climbing and the muddy assault course. We are looking forward to a reunion with our friends from other churches in March. We also plan to re-advertise for a new youth minister to join us at St Martin's in 2025.

**Sue Estella**

## **Nourish**

### ***Nourish Meals***

Nourish has now been running since November 2020. Last year, we continued providing wholesome meals for any who asked. We give out an average of 70 meals a week. Some of the people coming for meals are not in great need, for others it is so needed. Many are lonely and benefit from the friendships made. Nourish Café is a wonderful time for many and it is great to see people thriving there. A lot of love and care is shown among volunteers and the people who come for meals.

Everything is done by volunteers, of course, although we have fewer available in the afternoon, which makes cleaning and tidying harder. Shopping and cooking is shared between some of the volunteers. People keep funding Nourish in a variety of ways and we are thankful for this and the generous provision of the St Martin's building and resources. We continue into 2025 with a heart to love and serve our community, always praying that many will find joy in a relationship with God and peace in a world full of trouble for some.

### **Nourish Café**

Our Mission Statement is to minister to each one showing the love of Jesus with compassion, without prejudice, with respect, dignity and to give hope. (23.07.2024)

Nourish Café is open every Monday 1.45 pm – 4pm. ( Last orders 3.45pm, new times ). It continues to flourish and provide a warm, welcoming and safe place. There are our regulars and many pop-ins, of who some have become our regulars.

We continue to be recommended by other organizations/agencies.

To our delight in 2024, 2 people from Nourish Café were baptised, have completed an introduction to faith course and have now joined one of our Life Groups. Some have joined us at our *Unplugged* service.

On 16<sup>th</sup> December we had our first Christmas Party; with piano played so skilfully by Judith (trying to keep up with Helena and John's sing-along). Something not to be missed next year!

A BIG thank you to all our volunteers - they are fantastic, and committed- enabling Helena to have one Monday off a month! We can always do with more helpers if you feel this is where God wants you - let's celebrate what God is doing through Nourish and Nourish Café. It is hard work but worth it. Praise the Lord. Pop in any Monday and meet us. You are very welcome.

**Chrissie Morris & Helena Shipston**

### **Chaplaincy**

We have continued to head out in twos onto Mansfield Rd, popping into the businesses, saying 'Hi!', asking how people are and offering to pray, we have done this around 10 out of 12 months. We continue to be warmly welcomed and are building good relationships. We regularly hear about genuine concerns from the people we talk to and it is an honour to be asked to pray for them.

In addition to this, Monday's Nourish community café continues to flourish, see section above for more information.

**Sue Pendenque**

### **Pastoral Outreach**

We are a small team of five church members who are happy to visit anyone of our Church Family who are struggling to get to church on a regular basis. We also visit those who are unwell, either at home or in hospital. Two of us are licensed of to offer communion at home where it is required.

We try to visit every four to six weeks so that we can build up a relationship through prayer, friendship and love.

Please contact me if you know of anyone who is in need and we shall do our best to make a visit as soon as we possibly can.

**Penny Breakwell**

### **Services at Abbeyfield**

It is a joy to hold our monthly services at Sandwood residential home. The residents who attend are committed Christians who cannot come to the church building because of physical limitations. Services are broadly based on the Morning Prayer liturgy and include lively Biblical exploration and discussion and well known hymns/songs. We also visit and pray with residents who are unable to leave their rooms. Services were led by Lesley, Brenda Charles, Sue (White) and Beryl (Clough). Towards the end of the year Sue was unable to continue and a new person joined the team. We are looking to build up the team in the year to come.

Diane, who works in the bungalows and flats, keeps us informed of any pastoral concerns with residents. As in previous years, a large and enthusiastic group of singers from St Martin's came to Larch House to celebrate Christmas with carols and readings.

We are thankful for the warm welcome we receive at Abbeyfield and the invaluable support given by Emma at Sandwood and Diane in the supported housing.

**Lesley Cohen**

### **Buildings, and hiring out of church premises**

Presently the church has regular weekday external bookings for two choirs and an orchestra. We have continued to offer a discounted supplementary use of the church where previously some groups had used the chapel. There were several evening concerts during 2024, the 53<sup>rd</sup> Nottm Brownies continued to meet

each Friday night, and the Church of Pentecost UK services on Sunday afternoons continued to be well attended by their congregation.

**Judith Walker**

## **Knit & Natter**

We continue to meet on Monday afternoons between 2pm-4pm for fellowship & craft.

I am pleased to report that our number has grown in the past year & we have supported several local & international charities with our donations including Shareware, Hayward House, Maggie's Cancer Research, Christian Aid & the City Hospital. We also work on our own individual projects.

It has been a very productive year & I am amazed & thankful to each & every member who contribute to the vision of our church to cultivate community, live generously & make a difference.

**Christine Baldwin**

# **Confidence and Courage**

## **Media**

### ***Website Team During 2024***

The website has been maintained without significant changes during 2024. Regular updates to information on the website are handled by Judith in the church office, with other team members making changes if required. We are now able to embed most of the recordings of our services on the website but there are also clickable links that redirect to the videos on Facebook. We plan to do a full review of the website content in 2025.

### ***Tech Team During 2024***

The Tech Team provided projection (to church monitor screens) and live streaming video (to Facebook) for the main service each Sunday and for the occasional services plus, weddings, and funerals. Live streaming via Zoom was also provided when requested.

We met with the Worship Group and liaised with the music leaders to optimise our procedures while retaining flexibility.

The loading of services remotely continues to work well although the 250MB file size limit on our free cloud services account is occasionally problematic.

We lost one of our team to university in 2024 and so we now have a team of five – three who load the services and four operators.

**Chris Hellen**

## **Cursillo**

Cursillo is an International movement of the Anglican Church providing a method by which Christians are empowered to grow through Prayer, Study and Action, enabling us to share God's love with everyone.

We have met monthly at each other's Churches completing a short service called Ultreya.

After our *Pilgrims Weekend* last year was cancelled due to not enough pilgrims, the Cursillo family here in Nottingham were offered the booking and had a great meditative weekend on Christian paintings, painted by various well known artists. This was led successfully by our spiritual director Father Matthew.

Our next weekend is 1<sup>st</sup> -3<sup>rd</sup> August 2025 at Launde Abbey. Please talk to Helena Shipston if you are interested in joining us this year.

**Helena Shipston**

## **Thy Kingdom Come**

We invited everyone to join in with TKC week in a number of ways. Some of us took part in the Bow Down prayer event at Old Market Square, whilst others joined in the evening of worship, testimonies and prayer at the Vineyard. We encouraged St Martin's members to make use of the daily prayer notes. At café church one group constructed a prayer tent to tie in with the church's vision from Isaiah 54, and during the week we also had our monthly Wednesday evening prayer gathering as well as a refreshing morning of worship and reflection for those in busy roles at St Martin's.

**Sue Estella**

## **St. Martin's Men's Group**

We are pleased to report that The Men's Group has really taken off in 2024, having been restarted at the end of the previous year following a long hiatus. We meet every two or three months on a weekday evening at a local pub to share a meal and plan events linked to our faith and shared interests. The focus is on developing fellowship, supporting one another and is very informal. We vary the evenings to take into account other regular commitments some may have. The Men's Group has expanded from 13 to 21

members and includes a wider age-range with some younger fathers of families in our congregation. Our WhatsApp group has been a very useful platform for organising events and drumming up volunteers among us to help the church in practical ways. In June, we had a successful historic country walk at Cromford in the Peak District, led by Barry Ford, and we look forward to organising other trips and visits together in 2025.

**Glenn Hickson & Tony Rayment**

## **Unplugged**

We continue meeting most months to worship, pray and seek our God. It is a space to dwell in worship, and we are open to God speaking to us through prophecy and scripture. It is also a place where the use of God's spiritual gifts are openly encouraged. We had the delight to see two people express faith in Jesus in August and celebrated together in their baptism in November. We enter 2025 in expectation that we will continue to see His blessing and more people come to faith as we continue together.

**Chrissie Morris**

## **Facebook Morning Prayer**

We are still meeting and sharing God's word via Facebook - live streaming at 9am. Through 2024 we streamed Monday to Friday for almost every week of the year.

There continues to be 6-10 people join us and according to Facebook numbers, many more join in during the day. The 'streaming' is kept on for 30 days giving time for those who miss 9am to catch up. Many people continue to tell us it is a valuable service and they appreciate it

**Sue Pendenque, John Hepworth and Helena Shipston**

## **Burlington Life Group**

About ten of us continue to meet together most weeks, for fellowship and fun. We worship together, pray together, study God's word. On occasions we get together with others from St Martins, and the food and fun continues! There is room for more – in 2025 we expect to meet mostly on Thursday evenings.

**Chrissie and Chris Morris**

## **Seekers Life Group**

Due to ongoing health issues, Sue White stepped down from leadership of the Group before Christmas.

The Group continued to meet up socially and it was eventually agreed that Rachel King and Catherine Lowe would lead the group together.

We have been meeting once a fortnight on Tuesday mornings and are currently looking at a book that Sue Pendenque suggested called "16 Bible Studies for your small group".

Some of our group have unfortunately quite challenging health problems but we are hoping these will improve and we can keep meeting as planned.

Rachel has been unwell for several weeks but has been supporting me by making suggestions by email, one of which is that we should keep a "Prayer Journal" for our Group.

**Rachel King & Catherine Lowe**

## **Acorn Life group**

We continue to meet every second and fourth Thursday of the month. Until the end of last year we met at Brenda Charles' home, but have changed to meeting at the home of Janet and Russell. We felt that Brenda deserved a break after 20 years of faithful hospitality! We thanked her for her commitment to the group, and hope that she will continue to provide us with her delicious cakes. We are still watching The Chosen series, which we have enjoyed and which has shone a very realistic light into the life of Jesus and his disciples. In the summer we shared a meal in the garden with the Burlington Group. We support one another in love, friendship and prayer.

**Russell and Janet Kitson**

## **Sanctuary Life Group**

We continued to meet every other Wednesday at 5pm – 6.30pm in the side chapel. We have a mix of personal support and prayer, friendship and fellowship and study/discussion to help us in our growth as disciples. We draw on materials (Bible study; books or videos) suggested by our members or St Martin's as a whole.

We are very thankful to Sue Bellamy who faithfully provides refreshments on our arrival most weeks. We all enjoy sharing food and fun. We had a lovely summer visit to Rufford where we had a picnic.

Members said these things about what the group means to them: “friendship, fellowship and the opportunity to contribute”; “listening to others’ ideas and gaining a deeper understanding of faith”. “It’s a place where we can share our personal concerns as well as studying and discussing our faith”.  
For me, I am so joyful to have the companionship in this group as we walk together through our lives.  
In 2025 we are moving the group to every other Tuesday at 3pm to 5pm.

**Lesley Cohen**

### **Orchard Life Group**

The Orchard Life Group meets on the first and third Tuesday evening of each month. We take turns in hosting and leading sessions in our homes with a focus on facilitating discussions on various aspects of the Bible in an informal way. We encourage everyone to share their thoughts on passages they have chosen and that are meaningful to them. We have begun communicating the themes for discussion a week ahead with questions to consider, so there is plenty of time to prepare. This has led to some very fruitful conversations about our faith journeys in following Jesus and our responses to scripture. Over the past year, the Orchard Life Group has had some changes in membership so now there are six of us. This means we have room for two or three more for anyone who would like to join us.

**Glenn Hickson and Helena Shipston**

### **Elect Life Group.**

Elect is a new group that first met on 07/06/2024. There were 5 members. We decided to call ourselves ELECT. Elect is Greek for CHOSEN. We meet 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday mornings in the month 10.30am – 12.00 in St Martin’s Side Chapel. In October the cold weather and illness caused one member to leave. (another has since joined returning our number to 5.) I took the decision to postpone our meetings until the warmer weather. It is a lovely group and gelled instantly.

We decided to look at our favourite verses in the Bible, followed by studying the book of Colossians; which we are presently halfway through.

If you are not in a Life Group and would like to join us, please come and chat with me; Helena.

### **Prayer Ministry**

Prayer ministry is a very important part of St. Martin’s Church and it has been an honour to pray and know that God has helped and comforted many with his love and healing. The aim is to provide a ministry of prayer for individuals, which is approved and overseen by the church. This is additional to the personal prayer for one another within the fellowship. In the last year we have been able to continue offering prayer after the 10.30 am service and when requested for other services. This has been a very successful part of St Martin’s Ministry. Beryl Clough has joined the team and Helena continues to be responsible for the rota. All seems to be working well.

**Helena Shipston**

### **Lunchtime Prayer**

The Wednesday prayer group continues to meet in church at lunchtime at 12 noon. There have been times during the winter months when we have met together away from church. There are a number of church members who attend to pray regularly for our church, its members and our community of Sherwood and for our City. Its focus is mainly on St. Martins. These times together have been a wonderful experience of God’s love in action. There is always a warm welcome for anyone coming along. We often share lunch together.

**Judith Milbourn**